Radical Left Parties and Social Movements: Strategic Interactions

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Strategic Interactions

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ABSTRACT

Since the 1990s, the progressive transformation of social-democratic parties into catch-all organizations, with a light ideological baggage and lack of social rootedness, has negatively influenced their relationship with the social movements. While losing their traditional institutional reference point, social movements are experiencing new forms of interaction with other party families – e.g. the Greens, the radical left and hybrid parties such as the Italian Five Star Movement. Accordingly, this study examines the 'strategic interactions' between the main 'renewed' (or 'refounded') radical left-wing parties (RLPs) and the left-wing social movements in Italy and Greece from 1999 to the present. The goal is to identify the processes by which the interactions between the two actors take shape, and the factors that contribute to success and failure in building them.

To this end, I take into account both the adaptive changes that the RLPs have enacted under the impulse of social movements and the reactions of social movements to those party transformations. First, I distinguish between three party dimensions – organization (structure and internal mechanisms), political culture (values and political issues), and strategies (alliances within the political system) – and verify whether social movements represented a stimulus for RLPs to set in motion a process of change. Second, I consider how movement-oriented party transformations retroact on the movements' perception of RLPs.

The analysis shows that movement mobilization was an opportunity for the RLPs to emerge from the sidelines and achieve greater recognition. Nonetheless the changes they implemented differed, nor was their transformation equal in its strength and duration. While variation can be observed even over the same case through time, the macro result is that Greek RLPs adopted greater movement-oriented changes that helped them in cultivating stronger ties to social movements than their Italian cousins. The explanation for these differences is found in the combination of the RLPs' heterodox political culture, higher and constant levels of double membership in both the party and the movements, and social movements' instrumental attitude towards political institutions.

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Introduction

Since the late 1960s, political parties in western countries have had to face the challenge deriving from the independent mobilization of social movements. The emergence of these new collective actors questioned the primacy of political parties within liberal democracies and their fundamental role as political links between state and citizens. The connections between political parties and social movements have therefore rapidly become a central issue for contemporary democracy. On the one hand, particularly in Europe, movements have tried to establish alliances with parties in order to influence public policies and other political outcomes; on the other, (especially leftist) parties have tried to co-opt movements and channel their claims within public institutions. Nonetheless, in the last decades, an interruption in the linkages that once connected social-democratic parties and social movements has been noted. The progressive transformation of social-democratic parties into catch-all organizations, with a light ideological baggage and lack of social rootedness, has negatively influenced their relationship with the social movements. While social movements are losing their traditional institutional reference point, they are experiencing new forms of interaction with other party families – e.g. the Greens, the radical left and hybrid parties such as the Italian Five Star Movement ('Movimento 5 Stelle'-M5S). Little explored by both party and movement literature, the phenomena may offer fertile terrain for reflection on democratic theory and the quality of contemporary democracy.

Accordingly, this study analyses the current 'strategic interactions' between political parties and social movements in Southern Europe, focusing on the experience of the main 'renewed' (or 'refounded') radical left-wing parties (RLPs) and the left-wing social movements in Italy and Greece from 1999 to the present. More specifically, the focus is on the Communist Refoundation Party (PRC) and Left Ecology and Freedom (SEL) in Italy; the Coalition of the Left, of Movements and Ecology (SYN) and the Radical Left Coalition (SYRIZA) in Greece. The movements considered are the Global Justice Movement (GJM) and the more recent anti-austerity protests. The goal is to identify the processes by which these interactions take shape, and the factors that contribute to success and failure in building them. Thus, my main research questions concern the reasons why we observe differences in the interactions between RLPs and social movements across different national cases (and across time in the same nation) over the last fifteen years. Cases of success are understood as cooperative strategic interactions, in which the RLPs and social movements choose to connect to increase their chances of triggering a process of social change. The cases of failure involve situations of tension or indifference between the two political actors. The latter may occur when political parties start prioritizing their action in the political arena, when the social movements assign prominence to defending their radical identity or when they perceive the parties as too marginal or too diverse in their political culture.

To capture why and how the RLPs and social movements interacted in Italy and Greece, I bridge two subfields of social and political sciences: movement studies and party studies, thus responding to the appeal recently launched by movement scholars for more interaction between cognate academic literatures (McAdam and Tarrow 2010; Tarrow 2015; della Porta et al. 2017).

In particular, I hybridize two theories: the dynamic approach to party change, which considers transformations within parties to be triggered by external stimuli and conditioned by multiple factors; and the strategic approach to collective action, which sees it as resulting from a complex of continuous 'strategic interactions' between players. Drawing on these theories, I define the strategic interactions between political parties and social movements as 'the transformative actions that parties undertake to strengthen their connection with the social movements and the reactions of social movements to the party transformations'. This broad definition points at analysing two sides of the same process: a) the adaptive changes within existing political parties to the emergence of social movements; and b) the retroaction of party transformations on the strategies of social movements and their perceptions of the RLPs. The main argument considers the mobilization of social movements as a powerful external stimulus that leads RLPs to implement organizational, strategic and value changes. The depth and duration of these changes is expected to depend on three factors: the party's prevailing political culture, whether mostly heterodox, orthodox or moderate; the frequency of cases of double membership in both the party and social movements; the attitude of social movements towards representative institutions. More specifically, three theoretical assumptions are formulated that predict more vigorous party changes when:

- The party's prevailing political culture is heterodox and both orthodox communist and moderate mentalities and factions are weaker;
- The cases of double membership in both the party and the movements are more frequent;
- The movement is instrumental and tends to develop a dialogical attitude towards political institutions, such as parties.

In their turn, party transformations are expected to retroact on social movements' strategies towards parties. If a party is perceived as more open than before, the movement is more likely to engage in a process of collaboration. Should a greater separation between the two actors be observed, this would result in more conflictual interactions.

From a scientific point of view, selecting a two-faceted issue requires a case-oriented comparison that could offer an in-depth understanding of complex and dynamic social processes such as those considered here. Therefore, multiple methods of qualitative analysis and data collection have been adopted. First, I relied on both secondary and institutional sources for the analysis of the political and social context in which both political parties and social movements are embedded. Previous literature is important also for reconstructing the general characteristics of the GJM and the anti-austerity protests, and to highlight the similarities and differences between them. Second, I collected various official documents, especially party texts, which are subjected to 'critical discourse analysis'. This technique allows the mapping of the movement-oriented transformations in the organizational, cultural and strategic dimensions of the RLPs. Finally, I conducted 44 semi-structured interviews with movement activists and party members. Rarely used in political science, this method complements the analysis of official documents providing a more realistic account of the actual party transformations and of the dynamics of interaction between the political and the social arenas.

The dissertation is organized in three parts. The first part is devoted to the framework of analysis: in Chapter One, I trace the evolution of the relationships between political parties and social movements through time, particularly focusing on RLPs. I then provide a complete overview of

the literature in the field and develop the theoretical framework for analysis of the 'strategic interactions', drawing on the 'strategic approach to collective action' and the more classic 'party change' perspective. In Chapter Two, I illustrate the comparative research design and explain how and why the empirical cases were selected. I also propose a conceptualization of the notion of 'strategic interactions' between parties and movements and present the methods and data used to measure them in this work.

The second part of the dissertation focuses on the contexts within which the phenomenon under investigation takes place. Accordingly, in Chapter Three I explore the main characteristics of the Italian and Greek institutional landscapes from the 1990s to 2015, looking at three main systemic dimensions: the relations between political parties and civil society, the format and functioning of the party system, the patterns of government formation. In fact, the systemic differences between the two countries are fundamental to understanding the origins and subsequent trajectories of both the RLPs and the social movements taken into account. Chapter Four is instead dedicated to a detailed description of the general characteristics of the Greek and Italian sections of the two 'families of social movements' considered here: the Global Justice Movement and the anti-austerity movement. It is noted how both of them introduced innovations that posed organizational, programmatic and strategic challenges to political parties, particularly those on the left. The differences between the social movements in their attitude towards institutional politics are also assessed, as well as the frequency of cases of double membership in both social movements and political parties; both factors are expected to influence the processes of interaction between parties and movements.

In the third part of the dissertation I develop the empirical analysis of the case studies. Chapter Five examines the transformations that occurred in the structural dimension of the Italian and Greek RLPs as a response to the mobilizations of the GJM and the anti-austerity movement, in order to test the theoretical conditions expected to make party changes deeper and more long-lasting. More specifically, I investigate variations in the mechanisms for recruiting new members and sympathisers, the forms of internal participation, the models of internal democracy, and the type of leadership. Chapter Six looks at the impact that the agenda of the social movements had on the political culture of the parties considered, by analysing their policy orientation and ideological profile. Chapter Seven detects the strategic changes in the political line of the RLPs under the influence of social movements. The aim is to verify the extent to which the interactions between the two contribute to shifting the focus of party activity from public institutions to action in the streets and squares and encourages RLPs to pursue independence from the centre-left national forces.

In the Conclusion, I extensively present the findings that emerged from the empirical analysis and discuss the theoretical propositions formulated in Chapter One in order to explain why more vigorous changes appear within the Greek RLPs compared with the Italian parties. I then consider the reactions of social movements to transformations (or missed transformations) in the RLPs and draw some conclusions on the relationship between them and the social movements in Italy and Greece, clarifying if (and when) it was of cooperation, tension or indifference. Finally, I reflect on the implications that the type of connections between political parties and participatory actors such as social movements have for representative democracy,

and point out the contribution that the innovative theoretical framework and the findings presented in this work make for future investigation in the field.

My thesis shows that the 'renewed' RLPs are complex and dynamic actors which tend to introduce changes in order to respond to external challenges. The empirical analysis highlights that both the Italian and the Greek RLPs seized the opportunity represented by a new wave of social mobilization to overcome their electoral and organizational crisis. The connection with the social movements was actively pursued through adaptive strategies that affected the structural, cultural and strategic dimensions of all the case studies. At the organizational level, social movements represented a stimulus to rethink the vertical party model inherited from the communist past. At the cultural level, involvement in social movements led to the adoption of issues, expressions and values raised by mobilized actors. At the strategic level, the RLPs were pushed to shift the focus of their activity from public institutions to the streets and the squares, and to take a distance from the larger social-democratic parties. While revealing the impact that social movements had on the 'renewed' RLPs, the analysis also proved that parties belonging to the same family did not implement the same changes, nor was their transformation equal in its strength and duration. Variation can be observed even over the same case through time, particularly in Italy, where significant movement-oriented party changes occurred only in coincidence with the GJM. More in general, a macro difference emerged between the two countries under examination: in the Greek case the transformation was more visible and durable, while the Italian RLPs followed a less coherent development. As a consequence, the Greek RLPs were also able to cultivate stronger ties to social movements than their Italian cousins.

In Italy, a cooperative relationship developed between the Communist Refoundation Party and the GJM; later, tensions between the Italian RLPs and social movements increased constantly. In Greece, collaboration began at the turn of the millennium, continued over the 2000s and reached its apex during the anti-austerity mobilizations.[1] Therefore, the Italian and Greek cases represent respectively a case of failure and a case of success as regards interactions between the social movements and the RLPs. The explanation for these differences is found in the combination of the RLPs' heterodox political culture, higher and constant levels of double membership in both the party and the movements, and social movements' instrumental attitude towards political institutions, thus proving the validity of the theoretical propositions formulated in the first part of the thesis.

To conclude, the interest of this work lies in updating the scientific knowledge of RLPs in Europe focusing on an aspect that scholars have overlooked, that is their relationships with social movements. Not only are previous studies investigated and synthesised, but new evidence is obtained through a profound and multi-level empirical analysis that was lacking in current literature. Various differences are identified among cases belonging to the same party family and similar social movements and are explained within an innovative theoretical framework. While research on the topic has tended to focus on either of the two subjects, here the relationships between political parties and social movements are investigated by considering both actors. The results challenge both the typical vision upheld by social movement research of political parties

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[1] A new dynamic of *hostility* surfaced in very recent times, the consequences of which are beyond the scope of this work.

as just a component of fixed 'political opportunity structure' to which the movements tend to adapt, and the underestimation of social movements as external stimuli for processes of party transformation generally maintained by party studies.

Part one

Framework of analysis

1. Theoretical framework

This Chapter describes the analytical framework within which the relationships between political parties and social movements are observed in this study. First, it traces the evolution of these interactions through time dating from the mobilization of new social movements in the 1960s until the most recent cycle of protest. Second, it provides an overview of the literature on the relationships between these two political actors, looking at both studies of political parties and social movement research. The question of what factors shape the interactions among parties and movements is considered and an answer is proposed by hybridising two theories: the 'strategic approach to collective action' recently developed within social movement studies, and the more classic 'party change' perspective. Finally, an inventory of propositions relative to the factors that are expected to explain party and movement interactions within and across the specific cases under examination are presented. The Chapter ends with a summary of the main arguments.

1.1 Evolving strategic interactions: From hegemony to horizontality?

1.1.1 Movements as a challenge to party monopoly of politics

Since the late 1960s, political parties in western countries have had to face the challenge deriving from the independent mobilization of social movements. The emergence of these new collective actors marked a watershed in the history of political representation as, for the first time, the absolute primacy of political parties within liberal democracies was questioned. Indeed, the new social movements challenged them in their most fundamental role as the political link between state and citizens. Precisely when the mass political party started losing its potential to attract new followers (Andeweg 1989), the sphere of political action had extended well beyond the traditional channels.

Social movements imposed themselves on the political scene as new actors, unaligned and different from parties, trade unions and lobbies, but similar in their ability to mobilize and aggregate political demands. Scholars defined them as "a distinct social process" (della Porta and Diani 2006, 20) "consisting in networks of informal interaction between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in a political and/or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity" (Diani 1992, 3). For our purposes, they differ from parties essentially in a) their organizational structure and b) form of action.

First, although they can count on some material and communications infrastructures, movements have a low level of structuring. While in the case of parties, collective action takes place mostly within the boundaries of the organization, social movements consist of dense informal networks (Melucci 1989; Diani 1992) which involve both individual and (more or less) organized actors that coordinate their strategy to pursue a common goal. In movements, interactions between the subjects involved are mainly informal, the membership is indefinite and

intermittent, the leadership emerges according to adherents' preferences rather than being selected by applying codified procedures. The network facilitates horizontal connection between the hubs, each of which keeps its autonomy and independence. This organizational form is consistent with the political culture prevailing in the new social movements, based on conceptions and practices of direct and participatory democracy which are alternative to traditional representation. On the contrary, as the groundwork for the study of political parties has highlighted (e.g., Ostrogorski 1903; Michels 1911; Duverger 1951; Neumann 1956; Kirchheimer 1966), parties are (more or less) vertical and bureaucratic structures and their behaviours follow formalized procedures (both internally and in relation to the external environment).

Second, while in normal democratic times parties compete in the electoral arena for citizens' votes, collective movements mobilize their activists and influence public opinion through protest. Indeed, rather than using the conventional forms of political participation, since their appearance, social movements have engaged in a broader set of new and unconventional political activities (such as boycotts, petitions, demonstrations, sit-ins and so on). Even if most of these new forms have become increasingly legitimized (Barnes et al. 1979), the repertoire of action (Tilly 1986) of social movements is usually broader and different to that of political parties, whose action is primarily directed towards the occupation of elected roles at various levels. Again, the repertoire of action of social movements is linked to their political culture. Indeed, social movements are usually characterised by their criticism of institutionalized politics, which explains their efforts to maintain some distance from political parties in order to preserve their independence.

In principle, political parties and social movements also present similarities. Social movements are engaged in a "conflict meant to promote or oppose social change" (della Porta and Diani 2006, 21). This conflict pits actors carrying opposite interests against one another. The issues at stake might be political, cultural or economic, but in order for a social movement process to be in place, collective efforts have to be addressed against precise targets (for instance the state, the EU commissioners, the Vatican and their respective supporters). Similarly, political parties should represent the interests of their constituency against other coalitions of interest. However, the shift from mass to catch-all parties has implied a "de-emphasis of the classe gardée" (Kirchheimer 1966, 190) and a parallel weakening of the conflictual character of mainstream parties. More recently, the cartel party thesis (Katz and Mair 1995) has stressed a further detachment of centrist parties from society, their interpenetration with the state and the containment of political competition.

Finally, participants in movements develop a distinct collective identity, defined as "an individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community" (Polletta and Jasper 2001, 285). Constructed in the early phases of protest, it enables individuals and organizations to engage in collective action and subsequently provides the motivation necessary to promote mobilization despite its high costs. Identity is also important for parties, especially at their foundation (Pizzorno 1980). In its early stages a party is a 'system of solidarity' based on 'collective identity incentives' and a type of participation similar to that of movements. With its 'consolidation' (or 'institutionalization'), this becomes a 'system of interests' in which the distribution of 'selective incentives' (such as prestigious positions and internal careers) and a

professional type of participation prevail. However, collective identity incentives will continue to nourish the involvement of the members and the 'electorate of belonging' (Panebianco 1988).

From these briefly sketched differences an intrinsic tension between movements and parties, which are at the centre of representative democracy, emerges. Although this tension has existed since the participatory shift of the late 1960s, political parties and social movements could not ignore each other as if they acted in a vacuum. Parties interact with their social environment for multiple purposes, such as electoral mobilization, social control or the attempt to reconstruct their social base in a context of low popular confidence in parties (Verge 2012). As mediators between public institutions and civil society, the parties need to mobilize public opinion and voters. As a consequence, they cannot be indifferent to social movement pressure (della Porta and Diani 2006, 213-218). On the other hand, social movements, especially instrumental ones (Kriesi et al. 1995), need institutional allies to strengthen their impact on the political system, particularly in terms of public policies (Cress and Snow 2000; Amenta et al. 2010). For these reasons, different movements have developed special links with a specific party or party family (e.g. ethnic movements tend to support regionalist parties and environmental activists often vote for the Greens).

As previous research has shown, the traditional allies of the new social movements have been mainly the leftist parties (Kriesi 1989a; Kriesi et al. 1995; della Porta 1996), which addressed themselves to the same constituencies and shared with them a common universe of values (Müller-Rommel 1990; Kriesi 1993). The programmes and membership of the institutional left in Europe have been altered by interaction with the social movements (Koelble 1991; Maguire 1995; Duyvandak 1995; Koopmans 1995; Piccio 2011). Despite this substratum of common transformations, the strategy adopted by leftist parties towards social movements has changed through time and space, taking on three main forms: hostility (or competition), negotiation and cooptation (della Porta and Diani 2006, 214). Notwithstanding variations, the fundamental characteristic of the relationship between political parties and the movements of the past has been a dynamic of mediation and slow political integration of under-represented claims and social groups within the institutional arena (Müller 2000). For social movements, the presence of powerful allies has reinforced their capacity for mobilization and chances of success, but at the same time has had a moderating influence on their tactics, resulting in the adoption of direct pressure on institutions and the reduction of protest (della Porta and Rucht 1995). Although party-movement relations started when the mass party model entered into crisis, the imbalance of power and resources between large parties and movements often gave rise to a tendency towards cooptation, which affected the organizational and ideological structure of movements. For example, between the late 1960s and the 1980s, the strong Italian Communist Party ('Partito Comunista Italiano'-PCI) chose a strategy of absorbing and hegemonizing which heavily conditioned the characteristics of the social movements (Tarrow 1990; della Porta 1996).

This brief diachronic reconstruction highlights that, particularly in Europe, movements have tried to establish alliances with parties in order to influence public policies and other political outcomes, while leftist parties have tried to coopt movements and represent their identity within the institutions (della Porta 1995; Tarrow 1998). But what happens in the current context, in which the whole party family of the left is undergoing restructuring and re-thinking?

From the 1990s onwards, the transformation of the social-democratic parties into catch-all organizations in western democracies (Kirchheimer 1966) exacerbated the tensions between them and social movements. Indeed, these parties have gradually shifted towards the centre (Budge et al. 2001), lightening their ideological baggage and embracing a 'light party' model. When in government, they have often made compromises with the neoliberal agenda (Moschonas 2002; Crouch 2003, 2011; Streeck 2014; Roberts 2017) and post-democratic governance (as more policies now tend to be formulated and implemented through contractual devices, Bobbio 2000). These transformations have become even more visible since the spread of the global financial and economic crisis in 2008, as neither at the national nor at the European level have social-democratic parties proposed (nor implemented where in government) alternatives to neoliberal solutions, thus contributing to translating the economic crisis into a crisis of democracy. An example of this shift is seen in the choices made by Francoise Hollande, the socialist President of the French Republic from 2008 to 2017, who 'accepted' the constraints of the fiscal compact, despite having opposed it during the election campaign in 2012.

The progressive transformation of social-democratic parties had two consequences for the issue at hand. On the one hand, it opened a space on the left of the political spectrum, an area which has become a "hunting ground" (Panebianco 1988, 53) for the radical left-wing parties (RLPs). In some countries, in the context of economic crisis the current difficulties of the mainstream centre-left parties have increased this portion of political space on the left (mirroring what is happening on the right wing of the spectrum). In Greece, for instance, in only three years the Panhellenic Socialist Movement ('Panellinio Sosialistiko Kinima'-PASOK) fell from 43.9 per cent of the votes in the 2009 national elections to 12.3 per cent obtained in the second elections of 2012 (a drop of 31.6 per cent), collapsing to just 4.7 per cent in 2015. Conversely, the Radical Left Coalition ('Synaspismós Rizospastikís Aristerás'-SYRIZA) rose from being a small party of intellectuals (4.6 per cent in 2009) to becoming the country's second party (27 per cent) in June 2012, and then the governing party (36.3 per cent) in 2015.[2]

On the other hand, however, while the social movements are losing their traditional institutional reference point (della Porta 2007a), they are also experiencing new forms of interaction with other party families – e.g. the Greens, the radical left and hybrid parties such as the Italian Five Star Movement ('Movimento 5 Stelle'-M5S). In pointing out the electoral recovery of many RLPs, some party scholars challenged the recurrent predictions of a definitive decline of the radical left in Europe (March and Mudde 2005; March 2008, 2011; Hudson 2012), and also underlined the connections between this family and social movements (March 2011). More recently, the impressive rise of SYRIZA in Greece and 'Podemos' (We Can) in Spain and their acknowledged closeness to anti-austerity movements definitely refuted the expectation of an increasing and irreversible separation between movement and party politics (della Porta et al. 2017).

These new processes of interaction between parties and social movements have so far been very little explored and could be fertile terrain for reflection on democratic theory as they allow for

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[2] Source: Greek Ministry of Interior, http://www.ypes.gr/en/Elections/.

the reconstruction of spaces for interaction between representative democracy and society in a context of widespread mistrust towards institutions.

Nowadays, citizens particularly stigmatize political parties. In the last decade, mistrust in them has increased in all European countries, reaching its apex in the central years of the economic crisis: between 2011 and 2014, 81 per cent of citizens polled in the member states of the European Union stated that they did not trust political parties (Table 1.1). In the countries worst hit by the economic crisis – the GIIPS[3] – this figure was even higher (87 per cent on average). However, mistrust also remains high in countries whose economy is healthier, such as France and Germany (respectively 90 per cent and 64 per cent mistrusted political parties in 2015-2016), suggesting that the roots of the problem are not only in the economic situation, but also in a widespread dissatisfaction with representative democracy. Even though in all mature democracies a large majority of citizens (around 90 per cent) still supports the concept of 'democracy' and maintains that it is the best form of government (Dalton 2004, 42), the degree of satisfaction for its actual functioning is indeed low (Table 1.2). Citizens are predominantly dissatisfied in the Mediterranean region, especially during the economic crisis and most notably in Greece (78 per cent). As in other austerity-ridden countries, Greeks and Italians exhibit low levels of trust towards both national and supranational political institutions. In 2013, only 10 per cent of the citizens trusted their government in both cases. In 2016, the level of trust had increased to 15 per cent in Italy and decreased to 9 per cent in Greece. Mistrust in the EU is also particularly high (62 and 58 per cent respectively in 2013 and 2016 in Italy; 77 and 78 per cent in Greece) (European Commission 2013, 2016). These figures suggest that the financial crisis was accompanied by a crisis of political representation.

Table 1.1 Trust in political parties in 12 European countries and the EU (2003-2016)

	2003-4			2005-6			2007-8			2009-10			2011-12			2013-14			2015-16		
	D.T.	T.	D.K.	D.T.	T.	D.K.	D.T.	T.	D.K.	D.T.	T.	D.K.	D.T.	T.	D.K.	D.T.	T.	D.K.	D.T.	T.	D.K.
EU	77	16	7	76	17	8	75	19	6	78	17	5	81	15	5	81	14	5	78	16	6
BE	73	23	5	70	27	3	72	27	2	78	21	2	75	24	2	75	22	3	76	21	4
DK	51	39	12	55	38	8	49	47	5	48	50	3	62	36	3	62	34	5	60	33	7
FR	82	13	6	82	11	8	80	15	5	84	12	5	84	11	6	90	7	4	90	6	5
GER	82	12	7	80	17	5	74	20	6	75	20	6	76	18	7	72	21	7	64	28	9
GR	39	19	3	77	23	1	83	18	0	86	14	0	94	5	1	93	6	2	92	8	1
IR	68	20	12	68	23	9	68	23	10	80	15	5	81	13	7	82	12	6	74	20	7
IT	75	16	10	74	19	8	76	16	8	74	18	9	86	9	6	86	8	6	87	9	5
LU	56	31	14	50	36	15	52	20	14	48	41	12	67	27	7	62	26	13	54	31	16
PT	78	17	6	79	17	5	78	16	6	77	18	5	79	16	6	86	12	3	83	14	3
SP	67	25	8	64	26	11	63	16	7	81	16	3	88	9	4	93	6	2	89	9	3
NL	63	30	8	58	36	7	54	43	3	56	41	4	63	33	4	66	31	4	61	34	6
UK	79	14	8	80	13	8	78	17	6	83	14	4	85	12	4	83	13	5	77	17	7

Source of Data: Eurobarometer, various issues

D.T.= Don't trust
T.= Trust
D.K.= Don't know

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[3] Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain.

Table 1.2 Dissatisfaction with the way democracy works in 12 European countries and the EU (2000-2016)

	2000-2004	2005-2008	2009-2012	2013-2016
	% of not satisfied			
EU	39	45	49	47
BE	25	0	20	33
DK	12	0	5	11
FR	38	44	43	49
GER	37	36	30	29
GR	**24**	**0**	**35**	**78**
IR	13	0	21	**35**
IT	**63**	**58**	**61**	**68**
LU	**16**	**0**	**6**	**18**
PT	**44**	**0**	**33**	**69**
SP	**21**	**0**	**27**	**69**
NL	25	0	13	25
UK	31	35	38	35

Source of Data: Eurobarometer, various issues

The widespread mistrust of mainstream parties is accompanied by a crisis that is both electoral and organizational. The trends towards electoral volatility manifested in the late 1970s continued throughout the 1990s and well into the twenty-first century (Dalton et al. 2000; Mair 2005, 2008; Drummond 2006; Gallagher et al. 2011; Bischoff 2013; Dassonneville and Hooghe 2015). This evolution towards electoral instability has been considered an indicator of party dealignment in Western Europe and has therefore been related to trends such as the decrease in electoral turnout levels (Franklin 2004) and a sharp decline in party membership (van Biezen, Mair and Poguntke 2011; van Biezen and Poguntke 2014; Hooghe and Kern 2015). On the other hand, alternative forms of political participation have seen constantly growing numbers of followers. Social movement scholars observed a transfer of activism from parties to movements: if parties are losing members and the "more conventional forms of participation (such as voting or party-linked activities) are declining, protests are increasingly used (Dalton 2004). Citizens vote less, but are not less interested in […] politics" (della Porta 2013, 34). In addition, they have shown that if "political participation […] no longer passes through parties" (Pizzorno 1996, 1028), other types of civil society associations – such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), volunteer associations, citizens' committees – enjoy growing legitimacy (della Porta 2013), prompting Kitschelt (1993) to envisage their increasing specialization in the respective areas where parties and social movements are active.

This shift in participatory activities began in the late 1960s and grew constantly until, in the 1990s, Topf (1995) spoke of a "participatory revolution" (p. 78). While in the 1980s and mid-1990s, scholars had noted a trend towards institutionalization and bureaucratization of Social Movement Organizations (SMOs) and an evolution of their repertoire of action towards political pressure (Rucht 1995; Meyer and Tarrow 1998; van Aelst and Walgrave 2001; della Porta and Diani 2004), at the end of the 1990s, a new 'cycle of protest' (Tarrow 1998) emerged bringing direct action back into the sphere of movement activities (della Porta 2007b). Protagonists of the

cycle of protest that started at the turn of the millennium have been the Global Justice Movement (GJM) (della Porta 2007b) and, more recently, the anti-austerity movements which mobilized in the context of economic and democratic crisis (Tarrow 2011; Flesher Fominaya and Cox 2013; della Porta 2014, 2015a; della Porta et al. 2016).

The GJM was a transnational social movement critical of the globalization of corporate capitalism (della Porta 2007b). This definition describes the network of individuals and organizations engaged in numerous types of collective actions, on the basis of shared claims on justice (economic, social, political and environmental) for peoples of the world, and opposition to the global expansion of corporate and financial power (ibid.). The GJM was active in particular between 1999, when around 90,000 people protested in Seattle against the Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO), and 2006, when the last internationally visible European Social Forum (ESF; see Chapter Four) was held in Athens.[4]

The anti-austerity movements were instead the complex of self-organized actors which have emerged both in the United States and in Europe from to 2008 onwards. Mobilizations reached their apex in 2011 in coincidence with the mass protests in Madrid, Athens and New York and were in opposition to the growing social and economic inequality, and democratic exclusion which both movements (see della Porta et al. 2016) and critical scholars associated with the triumph of neoliberal doctrine (Crouch 2011; Gallino 2011; Streeck 2014, 2016; della Porta 2017). At the roots of inequality and oligarchic rule were: a) the connection between politics and the market aimed at leaving large margins of manoeuvre to corporations and the global financial system; b) the spending cuts and austerity measures implemented by national governments in agreement with powerful international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund.

As illustrated above, the shift of social democratic parties towards the centre meant that the movements of the new millenium could not consider them as viable allies: their transformation had "reduced the room for mutual understanding" between them (della Porta 2007a, 243) and activists had lost faith in their ability to channel new demands within the political system. In this context, the institutional allies remaining available to social movements were other (less powerful) party families, particularly the radical left (Tsakatika and Lisi 2013). Recent empirical studies have shown that activists of the main social movements and members of RLPs share a common universe of values (Flanagan and Lee 2003; della Porta 2015b) and that the radical left is by far the main party group in protest politics (Hutter 2012). As this proximity is generally

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[4] In this thesis, I take into consideration the characteristics of the movements in their period of maximum activity. However, social processes related to the GJM also continued after 2006, as seen in: 1) the on-going process of the World Social Forum (WSF), the last was held in Montreal in August 2016; 2) the process centered on 'environmental justice' and 'climate justice' issues: a) the Alternative Climate Forums (in Copenhagen in 2009, Cancun in 2010 and Durban in 2011) to contest the United Nations Framework Conferences on Climate Change-UNFCCC), b) the 'people's conference' ('cupola dos povos'), in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, at the time of the UN summit Rio+20, an international 'thematic' Social Forum on the alternatives to the current model of development; 3) The Alternative World Water Forum (last organized in Marseilles in March 2012), against the corporate-driven Forum of the multinationals (the World Water Forum, which the social movements consider to be an illegitimate process for the governance of water); 4) the Florence 10+10 international meeting, held in November 2012 on the 10th anniversary of the first European Social Forum.

Similarly, the strict separation between the GJM and the anti-austerity movements is due to analytical reasons. Indeed, despite important differences, elements of continuity can also be retraced. For instance, the Florence 10+10 meeting, at which Spanish and Greek groups of *Indignados* participated, incorporated anti-austerity claims. It was aimed at rebuilding a common "European public space" through initiatives and strategies for a Europe of rights and against the austerity measures (Florence 10+10 network, Report 14-16 Sep. 2012).

acknowledged, I have chosen to analyse the largely unexplored interactions between social movements and this party family in Europe.

The point of departure of this thesis is therefore that, mirroring events in Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s (Roberts 1998; Levitsky and Roberts 2011; Roberts 2014), the wave of mass protests that began at the turn of the millennium constituted an important 'window of opportunity' for the parties of the radical left who were then facing a deep electoral, organizational and cultural crisis. A decade after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the parties that emerged from the different communist traditions or splits in the social democratic sphere found themselves having to reckon with the progressive erosion of the political capital deriving from their main resource – that of having kept their radical leftist identity. Organizationally weak and unprepared to ride the waves of bipolar competitive systems, some of these parties seized the opportunity for growth offered by the return of massive activism and intensively participated in movement activities both during the GJM and the anti-austerity mobilizations (della Porta 2007a; Kotronaki 2015; della Porta et al. 2017; García Augustín and Bak Jørgensen 2017).

However, we know very little of the effects that proximity to movements has had on the RLPs' organizational model, political culture and strategies as well as how their involvement has been perceived by movement activists. While there is a tendency in literature to study the foundation of new parties emerging from movement activities, processes of party adaptation to the new participatory environment are much less researched (see Section 1.2). In particular, much attention has been devoted to the influence of anti-austerity movements on the birth and the rise of Podemos in Spain (Fernandez and Portos 2015; Chironi and Fittipaldi 2017; della Porta et al. 2017; Caruso 2017), but not to the transformations that the already existing parties of the European left might have undergone to meet the claims of social movements. As a consequence, the attitudes of recent social movements towards these parties, as well as the processes that lay behind the interactions between these two actors, have not been analysed in-depth. If, as mentioned above, the power imbalance between mass parties and social movements led to hegemonizing attempts and cooptation, the evolutions described in this Section would suggest that contemporary party-movement relations might have taken on more horizontal forms. Similarly, as noted for Latin American leftist parties (Anria 2016), proximity with movements might have resulted in an infusion of direct democratic procedures within party organizations currently stigmatized for their vertical and oligarchic structures. The importance of investigating contemporary processes of interactions between parties and movements lies precisely in the rapprochement that could potentially develop between institutions (such as political parties) and 'participation from below' in a context which is now dominated by elitist politics.

This study aims to fill the gaps in the literature on the connections between political parties and social movements and contribute to the debate on the quality of contemporary democracy. I analyse the 'strategic interactions' (Jasper 2006; 2012) between political parties and social movements in Southern Europe, focusing on the experience of the main 'renewed' (or refounded) RLPs (Bull 1995) and the left-wing social movements in Italy and Greece from 1999 to the present. The focus is on the Communist Refoundation Party ('Partito della Rifondazione Comunista'-PRC) and Left, Ecology and Freedom ('Sinistra Ecologia e Libertà'-SEL) in Italy; the Coalition of the Left, of Movements and Ecology ('Synaspismós tīs Aristerás tōn Kinīmátōn kai tīs Oikologías'-SYN) and the Radical Left Coalition ('Synaspismós Rizospastikís Aristerás'-

SYRIZA) in Greece. The movements considered are the GJM and the anti-austerity movements. My goal is to identify the processes by which the interactions mentioned above take shape, and the factors that contribute to success and failure in building them. By comparing the Italian with the Greek cases, I find variations in party-movement interactions, which help to reveal the causal factors and thus provide answers to the following key questions: why do we observe differences in the interactions between RLPs and social movements across different national cases (and across time in the same nation) over the last fifteen years? Which factors lead to cooperation, tension or indifference? This leads to some secondary questions: what changes have the RLPs enacted in order to meet the opportunity constituted by the appearance of strong social movements? How do these changes retroact on the movements' perception of the party and shape their strategic choices?

Before presenting the main arguments put forward here, I will briefly summarize the developments in party studies and social movement studies with regard to the issue at hand.

1.2 A subject bridging two sets of literature

This work contributes to the literature that connects social movements and political parties. Although studies on social movements and political parties have usually treated them separately, some empirical analyses have shown that they are closely intertwined. Parties are born out of social cleavages (Rokkan 1999) and in their first phase of life, their *statu nascenti*, they develop a fluid and enthusiastic participation similar to that of social movements (Panebianco 1988). When formed after intensive waves of protest, they may incorporate some movement features leading scholars to speak of 'movement parties' (Kitschelt 2006; della Porta et al. 2017) or 'movement-based parties' as their strength is drawn from connections to grassroots social movements (Lee Van Cott 2005; Anria 2016). Parties are influenced by social movements through the double membership of many of their members in both the party and social movements and, under challenging conditions, they try to respond to movement claims by adapting their structure and political culture (Goldstone 2003a; Piccio 2011, 2016; della Porta et al. 2017). In some cases, movements can develop within the boundaries of a party as a protest against the official party line or the leadership (Bergan Draege et al. 2017). On the other hand, parties have proven to play a pivotal role in the politics of movements themselves by supporting or inhibiting mobilizations (Kriesi 1995; Tarrow 1998). The identification of these processes of mutual interpenetration between the two political actors proves the benefits of cross-fertilization and suggests that the effort to bridge movement and party studies is important and timely. With an eye to this situation, eminent movement scholars have recently complained of the segmentation between cognate fields and have advocated for improved collaboration (Goldstone 2003b; McAdam and Tarrow 2010; Hutter 2013; Hutter and Kriesi 2013; Tarrow 2014; Piccio 2016; della Porta et al. 2017; March 2017).

Compared with movement literature, party scholars observing the western political systems have not often crossed the boundaries between the two disciplines. Studies on the evolution of political parties have stressed that the features they develop over time strongly depend on the relations they have with state institutions, party systems and voters (Gunther et al. 2002), but have rarely analysed how parties responded to social movements and interacted with them (Kitschelt 1990; Piccio 2011, 2016). They have focused more on the emergence of new political parties from waves of grassroots activities, and often on the relationship between parties and trade unions or, more in general, interest groups (see for example Pizzorno 1980; Lawson 1980; Marks 1989; Thomas 2001). As Kitschelt has observed: "too little attention has been given to the adapting strategies of the party systems in responding to the challenges and proliferations of those [social movements] organizations" (1990, 179). When party scholars took social movements into account, they generally considered them as a) an indicator of the crisis of political parties; b) a challenge to their monopoly over political representation; c) an external stimulus for the foundation of new parties. Less attention has been paid to the concrete adaptation processes that parties may have undertaken to face the challenge deriving from the independent social mobilizations, not to mention the processes of interaction that may have involved political actors that, albeit different, share a common social environment and similar political values.

The rise of a massive and diffused wave of social mobilization, which emerged and developed independently from traditional party channels, led party scholars to recognize the significance of the topic in the late 1970s, when European party literature saw the presence of new social movements as symptomatic of a crisis in the representative capacities of political parties (Pasquino 1980; Mair 1998; Katz 1990; Schmitter 2001). Indeed, academic concern over a 'crisis of parties' emerged precisely at the time when social movements developed. In 1980, when an intense wave of social mobilization was coming to an end, the political scientist Gianfranco Pasquino argued that whilst Italian parties had failed to renew and adapt to a society in deep transformation, trade unions and social movements had undertaken a "substitutive role in the function of aggregation of general interests" (1980, 137), with major consequences for "the standards of functioning of the system" (ibid., 139). Similarly, the comparative volume *When Parties Fail: Emerging Alternative Organizations* (Lawson and Merkel 1988) explained the widespread presence of 'alternative' political organizations (single-issue movements, neighbourhood committees, interest groups and minor parties) as the result of the inability of major parties to maintain linkages with the citizenry and respond to emerging social demands.

Moreover, party literature underlined that social movements challenged parties in their vital role as mediators between society and the state (Rohrshneider 1993). In particular, it was pointed out that movements have imposed programmatic, electoral and organizational challenges on established parties (ibid.). First, they raised unrepresented issues forcing existing parties, particularly those of the old left, to incorporate some of their claims in their programmes. Second, they mobilized new sectors of European societies who often became the constituency of the Green or 'new left' parties. Finally, they introduced a new, participatory and horizontal style of political activity which conditioned the organizational features of the Greens (Kitschelt 1989)

and the 'new left' parties, while having less influence on traditional hierarchical parties. The same conclusion is drawn by Piccio (2011) in her comparative work on *Party Responses to Social Movements*, which stands out as one of the rare studies on the processes of party change under the influence of social movements. Piccio argues that in the 1970s and 1980s, both in the Netherlands and in Italy, major parties (partially) met the programmatic challenge posed by movements by incorporating some new issues in their official discourse, but were less successful in transforming their organization. Leftist parties enacted deeper changes than others, but they did not meet all the social movements' claims (see Section 1.4).

Moreover, western political party scholars focused on movements when they constituted the driving force behind the formation of a new political family, thereby shaping the European party systems (Poguntke 2006). Particular attention was dedicated to the transformation of the labour, the libertarian-left and the green movements into structured political parties. An example of this attention is Kitschelt's work (1989, 1990, 2006) on the emergence of left-libertarian parties in Western Europe in the 1970s and 1980s. Kitschelt (1989) illustrates how "any account of the left-libertarian party growth would be incomplete without an examination of the major role of social movements" (p. 25). The left-libertarian parties were indeed spawned by diverse coalitions of social movements seeking to change not only particular policies, but also the form and substance of politics and to construct a more participatory, decentralized, egalitarian political model (ibid.). The working methods experimented by these parties in the early phases of their existence led Kitschelt (2006) to introduce the concept of 'movement parties' to define "the coalitions of political activists who emanate from social movements and try to apply the organizational and strategic practices of social movements in the arena of party competition" (p. 280).

However, in this case too, the concrete translation of participatory aspirations into different party models was little researched. At the end of the 1980s, Poguntke (1987a) suggested that the participatory claims and behaviours promoted by various social movements might have influenced both the ideological and organizational dimensions of political parties founded in the wake of their mobilization. He also provided an in-depth analysis of the organizational structure of the German Green Party (Poguntke 1987b) where he singled out how the participatory norms and aspirations of the movements were reflected in the party, although the full realization of democratic ideals was hindered by the imbalance of power between the parliamentary branch and a weak membership. More recently, scholars of European party systems assessed a causal relation between the anti-austerity mobilizations and the foundation and electoral rise of Podemos (Fernandez and Portos 2015; della Porta et al. 2017). Moreover, it was proved that movement mobilization played a large role in shaping Podemos' foundational choices, particularly with reference to its fundamental principles, electoral strategies and innovative experiments of internal democracy (Chironi and Fittipaldi 2017). Nonetheless, the influence of horizontal models on the organizational structure was limited overall, as Podemos accepted the verticality typical of parties.

The work of Poguntke (2002, 2006) also emerges as one of the most relevant analyses of the relationships between political parties and social movements in Europe from the perspective of party politics. He analysed the linkages that political parties had established with three kinds of organizational environments: collateral organizations, the party membership and the new social

movements. As regards the latter, Poguntke observed that both their lack of formal organization and need for autonomy made it very difficult to establish formal ties with parties. Informal ties were instead more likely, but only during phases of high protest mobilization, as any connection with movements would be "of little [electoral] value in quiet times" (Poguntke 2002, 49). In a recent contribution, he confirmed that "the entire spectrum of the protest movements from the 1970s onwards […] have not connected formally with political parties" (Poguntke 2006, 400). These findings, however, are contradicted by evidence from Latin America (see below), movement literature (see Section 1.2.2) and studies on RLPs (see Section 1.2.3), thus confirming the need for further investigation.

An approach focusing on the emergence of new parties from social movement mobilization has recently been adopted to analyse the evolution of political systems in Latin American countries. These studies have often stressed that the foremost leftist parties were often the product of the transformation of grassroots organizations into viable political parties. The Brazilian Workers' Party ('Partido dos Trabalhadores'-PT; Keck 1992), the Mexican Party of the Democratic Revolution ('Partido de la Revolución Democrática'-PRD; Bruhn 1997), the Bolivian Movement toward Socialism ('Movimiento al Socialismo'-MAS; Anria 2013, 2016), the leftist organizations in Peru and Chile (Roberts 1998) and several ethnic parties (Lee Van Cott 2005; Madrid 2008) were originally organized leftist movements, with strong ties to unions, social movements and community organizations. Refusing the mainstream account that explained the political trajectory of Hugo Chavez on the basis of his authoritarian charisma, Ciccariello-Maher (2013) describes the Venezuelan 'Bolivarian Revolution' as a long-term, multifaceted process of political transformation that involved grassroots groups and former leftist guerrillas. As already noted in relation to the Greens and left-libertarian parties in the European context, these Latin American leftist parties pushed an agenda that found no representation in the political system, and thus gave a voice to weak social groups.

The increased power of many of these leftist parties by the end of 1990s has been linked with the centre-left parties' loss of representative capacity. New politically left governments emerged in those countries where historic labour-based populist and centre-left parties had adopted market principles and promoted unpopular neoliberal policies (Roberts 2014). Leftist governments had a stabilizing effect on liberal democracy in the region, but were less successful in pursuing the 'deepening democracy' principle that had inspired their political development (Levitsky and Roberts 2011; see also Roberts 1998). Despite attempts to promote participatory modes of democratic governance, results in this area were modest. Similarly, the experience of governing brought about programmatic moderation and a slow erosion of linkages with the grassroots (Levitsky and Roberts 2011). As with the literature related to Europe, scholars have only rarely analysed changes in the internal life of the so-called movement-based parties once they had become institutionalized. Exceptions are the works of Hunter (2007, 2010) and Ribeiro (2014) on the Brazilian PT and that of Anria (2016) on the Bolivian MAS. Both Hunter and Ribeiro emphasize the progressive 'normalization' of the PT and its inability to sustain bottom-up participation while in government. In contrast, Anria describes the MAS as a "deviant case" (p. 3) as it has facilitated grassroots impact and constrained elite control, even after assuming power at the national level. In his understanding, these outcomes were due to the vitality and

unity of civil society which provided grassroots social groups with the strength to condition internal party dynamics.

When analysing the alliances between the left and social movements, this recent literature on Latin America goes beyond the 'supremacy' of the party. While recognizing that since the 1930s leftist parties have been responsible for mobilizing and organizing groups of people behind an electoral project, studies illustrate how the severe electoral defeats they had suffered in most countries during the 1990s caused social movements to reject their domination and manipulation, which had characterised prior relations between the two (Lee Van Cott 2005, 15; Ciccariello-Maher 2013).

The evidence provided by the Latin American context gives strength to the underlying argument of my research: the recent developments within political parties, and transformations in the forms of participation, might have changed interactions between leftist parties and social movements to a more horizontal relationship. As I will explain more in detail below, this new trend has also been highlighted by social movement literature.

1.2.2 Evidence from movement literature

Social movement studies have investigated the linkage between political institutions and movements in detail. The recognition that movements did not emerge to the same extent and form in all western societies and that in some countries they had an impact on the institutional policy agenda whereas in others they were less successful, led scholars to ask questions about the institution-related variables that could explain this diversified pattern of outcomes (Schmitt-Beck 1992). The importance of the institutional context has been underlined in particular by the 'political process theory' that was developed in the United States to analyse civil rights struggles in the 1980s (for a review see Caren 2007). This approach has emphasized the role of political opportunities, mobilizing structures and framing processes, stressing that when analysing social movements it is crucial to consider the social and political conditions of the countries in which they are located.

The presence of institutional allies is considered one of the key independent variables constituting movements' 'political opportunity structure' (POS), which helps explain both internal and external dynamics (Kriesi 1995; Kriesi et al. 1995). Trade unions had been an important ally for left-wing social movements, particularly in Europe, and above all where they were less recognized within the neo-corporatist system of industrial relations (della Porta 1996). The supporting role played by leftist political parties also proved decisive for the birth and evolution of movements, both in terms of levels of mobilization and outcomes (Kriesi 1989a; Kriesi 1995; Tarrow 1998). The alliance with the traditional left in the protest arena has reinforced social movements' capacity for mobilization (Wallace and Jenkins 1995), but has also had a moderating influence on movement strategies (della Porta and Rucht 1995; della Porta 1996). In the 1970s, hostility on the part of powerful left-wing parties led to the isolation of movements and their consequent adoption of violent repertoires (della Porta 1995; della Porta and Rucht 1995). Allied political parties also influence movements' outcomes by channelling some of their issues into the institutional arena (Giugni 2004). Participation by left-wing parties

in government decreases protest (Koopmans and Rucht 1995) but also facilitates the translation of the most moderate movements' claims into public policies (Kriesi et al. 1995).

As previously mentioned (Section 1.1.1), parties adopted three different strategies towards social movements: hostility, negotiation and cooptation. When reviewing the literature on this topic, della Porta and Diani (2006, 213-218) isolate six factors that have influenced the reaction of potential allies towards movements. First, the rigidity of the left-right division, especially in the presence of a strong communist party, favoured the old left's support to social movements (Tarrow 1990). Second, party divisions within the left between social-democrats and communists increased the relevance of class-related issues and discouraged addressing the new movement issues (Kriesi 1991). Third, electoral instability pushed parties to support protest in order to win new voters (Tilly 1978; Piven and Cloward 1977; Jenkins 1985). Fourth, proximity to government is also said to influence parties' attitude towards movements: when in opposition they are more supportive, whilst when in government they are forced by institutional constraints to limit their alliances (Kriesi 1989b; Kriesi 1991). A fifth factor is the weight of the parties within a governmental coalition: when they are in coalition with moderate parties they tend to accept policies less favourable to social movements (della Porta and Diani 2006, 216). A final factor is willingness to reform politics: it has been noted that when leftist parties move toward the centre they become less available to channel the demands of movements (della Porta and Rucht 1995).

This literature demonstrates that the presence of allies is a powerful explanatory factor for the success of social movements. However, some criticisms can also be raised. First, the literature is discordant in its findings (della Porta and Diani 2006, 213-218); second, it generally focuses on the structural context, devoting little attention to the social construction of opportunities, emotions and strategic choices (Goodwin and Jasper 2004); third, it reflects a conception of politics and democracy which is in crisis nowadays (and criticised by social movements). Indeed, it locates social movements at the borders of the political system and stresses their need for alliance with powerful gatekeepers (such as parties) to make their voice audible. As a consequence, to date movement literature has proved that institutional allies are necessary for the success of social movements, but has generally overlooked a complementary aspect: the influence of social movements on parties. Most literature has focused on movements' political outcomes (Amenta et al. 2010), however the effects of social movements on party politics remain largely unexplored (Piccio 2016).

At the beginning of the last decade, the book *States, Parties, and Social Movements* edited by Goldstone (2003a) already stated that the approach described above should be abandoned, assuming that social movement research can no longer treat institutionalized politics (elections, parties, lobbies etc.) as 'primary' and the non-institutionalized actions of movements as a mere effort to influence the former's decisions from the 'outside'. On the contrary, contributors observed, the very existence of institutionalized political actors is nowadays permeated by social movements not only in extraordinary periods but on an on-going basis. These scholars sought to go beyond the dominant conception of movements as 'rivals' of the political system (Jenkins and Klandermans 1995), 'challengers' (Tilly 1978), 'outsider groups' (Gamson 1990), 'necessarily extra-institutional' actors (Katzenstein 1998). They argued that this interpretation gives rise to the normative idea that as movements gain access to the political system, their protest action will

fade away. Conversely, contentious politics does not shift from protest to institutional politics in a linear way, rather it expands to include both. Thus, movements should be considered "an essential element of normal politics in modern societies" and, similarly, the boundary between institutionalized and non-institutionalized politics is only "fuzzy and permeable" (Goldstone 2003b, 2). In addition, if it is by now clear that movements cannot be studied independently of their context, including the operation of political institutions, the reverse is also true: state institutions and parties are interpenetrated by social movements, have often developed out of them, respond to and act in association with them.

This last consideration constitutes the original contribution of this volume to the comprehension of contemporary political dynamics. If other scholars (Meyer and Tarrow 1998) have already claimed that movements are now part of normal politics, Goldstone's authors go further, showing that social movements are not simply another form of routinised political expression, alongside courts, parties, legislatures and elections. Rather, they are one of the environmental and social factors that shape and give rise to those institutional actors (parties, courts, legislatures, elections). Thus, Goldstone's volume figures among the few recent studies which have underlined how movements have been able to influence parties' behaviour, arguing that "in the US and Western Europe, parties and movements have become overlapping, mutually dependent actors in shaping politics to the point that long-established political parties welcome social movement support and often rely specifically on their association to win elections" (Goldstone 2003b, 4). Other scholars have found the same interdependence in Latin America (Hochstetler and Friedman 2008). Similarly, when analysing the impact of the GJM on the RLPs and the perception of the parties within movements, della Porta showed that between the two actors there are significant differences but also points of contact (2007a/c; 2015b).

These findings suggest that research into the relations between social movements and political parties should be advanced in order to bridge the gap between the two fields of research. There is an evident absence of systematic recent analyses on two fundamental processes: the influence of movements on institutionalized parties and the new forms of interaction between the two actors in Europe. In particular, the actual adaptation processes that the RLPs may have undergone in order to respond to social movements since 1999, and the ways in which social movements may have reacted to these party changes, remain empirically understudied. The original contribution of my research derives from the attempt to go beyond the limits within the current literature outlined above, by: a) providing an in-depth analysis, b) incorporating the role of agency in the explanation, c) updating current knowledge on the two subjects.

1.2.3 Literature on the radical left parties

My research has the secondary effect of updating and broadening the literature on RLPs, specifically the parties that emerged from the restructuring of the communist party family after the collapse of the Soviet system between 1989 and 1991. The events in Eastern Europe represented the external 'catalyser' (Botella and Ramiro 2003a) or 'challenge' (Bosco 2000) that accelerated a general rethink of the communist parties, which had been in serious crisis for a long time. Many of them, including the Italian Communist Party (PCI), accelerated their social-democratization, previously initiated by the internal élites. Others, such as the French (PCF) and

Greek (KKE) Communist Parties, resisted the change and remained loyal to orthodox Marxism and the Leninist model. Lastly, the 'refounded' or 'renewed' communist parties accentuated discontinuity from their ideological and organizational traditions to try out a more innovative model (Bull 1995). I focus here on parties belonging to this latter category and verify whether their adaption strategies were influenced by proximity to social movements.

While parties of the first group generally entered the social-democratic party family, most scholars tend to include parties of the second and third groups within the broad 'radical left'. Recent works in English adopting this label are: March 2011; Tsakatika and Lisi 2013; Visser et al. 2014; Charalambous and Lamprianou 2016; Fagerholm 2017; Amini 2015; Damiani and Viviani 2015; March and Rommerskirchen 2015; March and Keith 2016; Ramiro 2016; Chiocchetti 2017).[5] This political area has been defined (March and Mudde 2005) 'radical' because it not only rejects the underlying socio-economic structure of contemporary capitalism and its values and practices, but also advocates alternative economic and power structures involving a major redistribution of resources. Two factors characterise these groups as 'leftist': their identification of economic inequity as the basis of existing political and social arrangements, and espousal of collective social rights as their principal agenda; secondly, their refusal of capitalism even if combined with a substantial acceptance of liberal-democracy. Moreover, "this left is internationalist" (ibid., 25) both for its promotion of cross-national networking and solidarity, and the stress on the global structural causes of national and regional problems.

During the 1990s, scientific literature had paid little attention to the process of adaptation of the radical left-wing party family, considering it likely to disappear (Bull 1994; Bull and Heywood 1994). Scholars concentrated on the transformation of the larger communist parties into social-democratic parties and studied less the orthodox and 'refounded' communist parties, seen as a residual presence. The subsequent two decades, however, brought unexpected developments. Neoliberal reforms progressively eroding the twentieth century European social model were met with sustained popular resistance. General strikes and union-led demonstrations increased (Kelly et al. 2013) testifying to the renewed importance of labour issues. Social movements mobilized on several issues throughout Europe (see Chapter Four). In this context, the RLPs experienced an electoral recovery almost everywhere in the continent (with an increase from 5.1 per cent in 1993 to 9.6 per cent in 2015 at the aggregated level), and saw major breakthroughs in the 2015 national elections in Greece (45 per cent), Spain (25.8 per cent) and Portugal (21.5 per cent) (Chiocchetti 2017). Their aggregated governmental strength remained low (on average, 1.8 per cent between 1994 and 2015), but they supported or participated in centre-left governments in several countries, and assumed the leading role in Cyprus (2008-2013) and Greece (since 2015) (ibid; Katsourides 2016).

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[5] I espouse here this widely adopted label, despite being aware of several scholarly debates around the subject. Other terms are indeed used to define the left parties that do not belong to the socialist or green families. Some authors simply call them 'left' (Hudson 2000, 2012; Hildebrandt and Daiber 2009; Olsen et al. 2010) implicitly implying that social-democratic parties would no longer be part of the left. In France some scholars talk of 'the left of the left' (Pingaud 2000) and 'ultra-left' (Bourseiller 2003). Dunphy (2004) introduced the label 'transformative left' to stress the aim for transformation of these parties. Finally, Calossi (2016) has proposed transposing the adjective 'anti-austerity', which movement literature associated with recent mobilizations, to the party field. Calossi states that, during the recent economic crisis, 'austerity' has operated as a new cleavage separating social-democratic parties, supportive of the austerity measures, from the 'anti-austerity left' parties, fiercely opposing them.

Overall, despite the many announcements of terminal decline, this family of parties not only has not disappeared, but includes parties which carry an important weight in contemporary political systems, either at the national or subnational levels. As a consequence, the contemporary radical left once more became the object of scholarly interest. If, at the beginning of this decade comparative knowledge was still limited or dated (Hudson 2000; Bosco 2000; Botella and Ramiro 2003b; March and Mudde 2005; Backes and Moreau 2008), since 2010-2011 a large number of scholarly articles, monographs, book chapters and edited chapters have analysed the more recent evolutions within this party family (for an updated overview see Escalona et al. 2017) and the mechanisms of their transnational coordination (Sozzi 2011; March 2011, 149-166; Calossi 2011, 2016). This emergent literature has explored several understudied aspects, focusing on the RLPs' vision of Europe, the motivations and consequences of their participation in government, and the structural factors behind their divergent electoral performances (March 2017). However, as March (2017) stressed, "vital work can still be done" (p. 24) both by improving comparative research and covering topics that have been overlooked, among which he considers the nexus between the RLPs and social movements to be the most important (ibid., 37).

Experts of the RLPs did not devote much attention to their interactions with social movements, with few exceptions, starting from Tsakatika and Lisi's (2013) edited special issue. Here, the authors underline that the radical left party family represents an exception to Katz and Mair's (1995) thesis on the distancing of political parties from their social roots. Indeed, RLPs retain a vivid 'linkage' with both their members and their broader social environment, within which Tsakatika and Lisi (2013) include also social movements. Contrarily to Poguntke (2002), they conclude that RLP's links to social movements may be mostly informal, but they are not necessarily weak or short-lived. In Chapter Eight of his book *The Radical Left Parties in Europe*, March (2011, 167-179) focuses on the relations that RLPs entertain with their 'front' non-party organizations (such as sympathetic unions) and ancillary organizations (such as the youth leagues), as well as with the social movements, particularly the GJM. March observes how, while party affiliated organizations have weakened through time, independent social movements offered to RLPs a new radical environment of intervention. In his view, "this new radicalism has yet been only partially conducive to broadening RLPs' social support" (p. 167), especially because of the anti-party sentiments that would prevail within the movements. In their contribution to a recent comparative volume, García Agustín and Bak Jørgensen (2016) arrive at the opposite conclusion, however. Studying parties that have emerged after massive waves of protests, they find that the size and persistence of movement mobilizations had major consequences for the RLPs, which influenced their organizational forms and strategies. Where protests were more intense, they set off more horizontal organizations and compete with social-democratic parties for the leading role in the left. Due to these verified "strong links between the social and political actors", these authors encourage "further research on organizational change in RLPs and their linkage strategies" (p. 73). In this thesis I intend to contribute to this debate.

1.3 Analysing party-movement strategic interactions

As a consequence of the division between party and movement literatures, no specific theory has been developed to explain the relationships that political parties establish with social movements and vice versa. I therefore draw (mainly) on two theories to analyse the interactions between parties and movements over time: the dynamic approach to 'party change', and the strategic approach to collective action. Starting from these well-established theories, I formulate an inventory of propositions on the factors that are expected to shape party-movement interactions within and across the cases under examination.

1.3.1 Party change in response to social movements

The dynamic approach to party change helps to analyse the reactions of existing parties to the emergence of social movements.[6] Scholars have generally considered party change to be triggered by external stimuli. However, they have also understood parties as 'purposeful actors' that do not deterministically react to transformations in their environment. First, they filter exogenous demands through internal processes which follow their own logics, preferences and mechanisms (Easton 1965; Sartori 1968). Second, not only are they subject to external pressure, but also attempt to control and influence their environment of reference (Panebianco 1988; Raniolo 2006). Moreover, organizational studies underline that organizations have a propensity for preserving their status quo (Harmel and Janda 1994; Harmel 2002; March and Olsen 2006; Ware 2009) and each proposed change will be met with a "wall of resistance" (Harmel and Janda 1994, 267; see Section 1.4). For the purpose of this study, these considerations imply that movement mobilization does not per se entail any automatic response from political parties.

A shared argument in party literature is that for an external stimulus to produce changes within political parties it must be perceived as a shock, a challenge (Panebianco 1988) or "at least a serious danger for the life of the organization" (Ignazi 1991, 524). Introducing the notion of 'party control', Peter Mair (1983) also emphasized that changes occur when parties lose control over their environment, particularly when they lose their mobilization capacity or their influence over the political agenda.

The literature stresses different types of shocks that contribute to bringing about party change. Rational choice-driven approaches underline that parties respond mainly to pressures originating in their electoral environment (Katz 1986). For this interpretation it is crucial to look at the rules of party competition, particularly changes in the electoral system, as well as at conjunctural shifts, such as variations in the party's electoral performance and the emergence of competitors. Historical and sociological institutionalism has instead identified alternative drives behind party change based on parties' individual priorities, political identity and goals. Stating that "parties are more than electoral machines" (Kitschelt 1990, 180), scholars have identified a number of other incentives that shape parties' behaviour: seeking office, launching specific policies, offering

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[6] Studies on the evolutions of political parties have generally adopted a 'dynamic approach' or a 'typological approach'. The first takes into consideration a limited number of parties, over a limited time period and explains party change through a phase matrix – challenge, crisis, change (Panebianco 1988). The typological approach instead aims at identifying the party model prevailing in a certain historical epoch.

internal participation to their members, representing new issues and so on (see for instance Kitschelt 1990; Deschouwer 1992; Harmel and Janda 1994). Following this approach, parties will be more likely to change when an external stimulus affects their performance on what is considered a primary goal (Harmel and Janda 1994). Such goals are always influenced by their political culture and historical legacies.

In sum, the literature has emphasized that parties react to changes in their environment by following one of two logics: an instrumental, electorally-driven logic or, when losing control, an individual, historically-dependent logic. However, every proposed change will be met by internal resistances that will limit it. Bringing social movements into the picture, evidence from party literature translates into the arguments that follow:

a) The more the party is losing control over its environment of reference, both in terms of mobilization capacity or electoral stability, the more likely it is that it will respond to movements by introducing changes in one or more of its three dimensions (organizational structure, political culture, strategies).

b) The more political parties' individual identities and priorities are affected by social movements' innovations, the greater will the ensuing party change be.

As highlighted above, relations between the parties and their external environment are always dynamic. Not only does the external environment (in our case, social movements) influence party change, but in its turn the transformation of a party should (and is designed to) retroact on the environment. Following this line of reasoning, I would expect the RLPs to adopt strategic changes in order to respond to the emergence of social movements, and that in their turn these movements would strategically choose what types of interaction to establish with these renewed parties. In fact, if parties are 'purposeful actors', movements have been defined as 'strategic players', acting and reacting to other actors' moves within a broader social and political arena.

1.3.2 Movements as strategic players reacting to party changes

The strategic approach developed within social movement studies to go beyond the 'political process theory' was briefly presented in Section 1.2.1. Despite combining five elements (political opportunities, mobilizing structures, framing processes, protest cycles and contentious repertoires) to explain the rise and decline of social movements as well as their outcomes, with time the 'political opportunities' component of this theory became largely prevalent. The expressions 'political opportunities' and 'political process theory' were often used interchangeably (Karen 2007) until they attracted various criticisms from scholars of social movements focusing on cultural and psychological dynamics. These scholars saw the political process theory as overly structural and deterministic. While rejecting the possibility of identifying invariant causal variables to explain movement dynamics, they stressed the need to bring back non-structural factors such as emotions, symbols, moral principles and choices (Goodwin and Jasper 2004). As Jasper has recently affirmed, "while recognizing the role of structural context, we can also rethink that role, casting structures in a new vision of the world around us as ever changing, ever open to human effort" (2012, 8). This approach attempts to connect structure and agency in the study of collective action, affirming that it arises from a complex of

continuous 'strategic interaction' between players (Jasper 2006). In fact, "if agency means something it would seem to involve choices. Individuals and groups must initiate or pursue one flow of action rather than another, respond in one way to events rather than in others" (Jasper 2004, 2). In the context of this study, this means examining the act of selecting and applying strategies within a social movement in response to a certain party behaviour.

Players' ends and means, as well as the arenas in which they interact and the dilemmas they face, are the core concepts of the strategic approach for the study of social movements. There are simple players (individuals) and complex players (teams, groups, organizations, networks and other aggregations of individuals). Every player has a variety of goals and different means (physical coercion or threat, persuasion and money) to reach them (Jasper 2006). Players act within 'arenas', which are "sets of resources and rules" that channel actions and "offer rewards and outcomes" (Jasper 2004, 5). In line with the 'political process theory', these structured arenas shape players, players' decisions and the outcomes of interactions, but according to the strategic approach "we cannot assume effects without looking at the choices made, the interactions, and the results" (Jasper 2004, 4). All strategic action is interpreted culturally and psychologically because each player is an audience for the statements, symbols, and actions of other players. Finally, strategic choices typically take the form of dilemmas: each option comes with a list of potential benefits, risks, and costs.

The concept of 'strategic interaction' covers almost all the actions of social movements. The most obvious strategic engagement is between movements and their opponents, but strategic interaction also occurs between movements and their potential allies (such as parties) and other players operating in the same context, such as the media and various government agencies. Covering a complex of movement behaviours ranging from indifference to conflict and cooperation with a set of opponents or allies, the concept of 'strategic interaction' proves to be fruitful for my research.

1.3.3 Explaining party-movement strategic interactions

By hybridising the two aforementioned approaches, I obtain a dynamic theoretical model for the analysis of the processes which could explain success and failure in the party-movement interactions. The cases of success entail cooperative strategic interactions. The cases of failure involve situations of tension or indifference between the two actors.

In their compendium of studies on social movements, della Porta and Diani (2006) stress that the strategies adopted by the left towards social movements have been of hostility, negotiation and cooptation. All three concepts refer to a period in which social movements represented a challenge to mass parties (see Section 1.1.1 above). The concept of 'negotiation' implies a process of bargaining between actors who hold different political views and goals. Here, I prefer the concept of 'cooperation' in order to emphasize the collaborative processes between political parties and social movements belonging to the same political area and with similar goals. 'Hostility' is substituted with 'tension', again to stress the existence of a common background. Finally, I do not take into consideration dynamics of cooptation because they imply subordination of the social movement to the political party. I would rather evaluate the

possibility of social movements' indifference towards parties thought to be too small or too diverse in their political culture to provide a chance of influencing the policy-making process.

When applied to the specific types of parties and social movements under examination here, the two main arguments presented in Section 1.3.1 translate into the following three general expectations:

- The mobilization of social movements represents an opportunity for weak RLPs which may be losing control over their environment of reference. The more their electoral performances and their mobilization capacities decline, the more likely it is that they set in motion processes of organizational, strategic and value changes in order to respond to the new claims coming from movements;

- Changes are expected to be deeper and more long-lasting in parties whose political culture and tradition is more resonant with the claims of movements, as they are more affected by their mobilization. More specifically, this might happen when: a) the party's political culture is mostly heterodox and orthodox communist components are weaker; b) cases of 'double membership' are more frequent; c) the sectors of the movement which are open to dialogue with institutions are stronger than 'autonomous' and anarchist areas and, more in general, the movement conceives institutional politics as one of its fields of action (see Section 1.4).

- The process of party renewal is expected to have consequences on the movements' perception of the party, setting in motion processes of interaction that will lead to cooperation, tension or indifference between the two actors. In particular, the degree to which these parties detach from their twentieth century structure and ideology and distance themselves from the moderate centre-left mainstream parties affects the willingness of movements to collaborate with them.

1.4 Theoretical explanatory propositions

In my first research expectation, the party change is set off by the combination of a crisis situation (electoral and organizational) and the 'external opportunity' represented by social movements. Referring to the literature, "given that parties are conservative organizations, a stimulus would presumably have to catch the attention of someone in the party who would see fit to argue that adaptive change would be needed in order for the party 'to do better' in some way it would otherwise do. In most instances, such an argument would have to contend with a wall of resistance to change, the result being delayed, limited change if any at all" (Harmel and Janda 1994, 267). The proposal for adaptive change to movements' challenges is thus expected to set off a process of organizational crisis, i.e. a competition between opposing groups within the party: an innovative group, wishing to build a relationship of close cooperation with movements, and a more conservative one, wishing to preserve the *status quo*. The outcome of

this internal competition conditions the outcome of the party change itself[7] (Panebianco 1988). The 'crisis' phase represents the moment at which strategic choices are made within the party, corresponding to the moment of 'dilemmas' within the movements. As suggested by the 'conflictualist perspective' (Crozier and Friedberg 1977), this will lead me to carefully consider the internal conflicts that occur within parties during a period of change.

The second expectation is that the vigour, duration and depth of party changes designed to meet the demands of movements are conditioned by factors pertinent to the individual identities of the political parties under examination. Moreover, factors that regard the social movements must also be taken into account. In fact, relational dynamics depend on inter-relating factors pertaining to the characteristics of both actors. Hereafter I will state three basic propositions about the specific factors that can condition both party responses to social movements and, according to the third expectation, the attitudes of movements towards parties following the process of renewal. These propositions are built on previous literature results and mainly on the above-mentioned work of Daniela Piccio (2011).

1.4.1 Presence of orthodox communist and/or moderate internal factions

Empirical research has shown that cultural affinity between the left-wing parties and the libertarian-left movements of the 1970s and 1980s contributed to shaping deeper party changes than those adopted by other parties (Piccio 2011). However, the orthodox communist culture was sometimes refractory to some of the issues raised by new social movements. As Piccio (2011) proved, the PCI avoided endorsing the core demands of the Italian ecology movement. Its industrialist, growth-oriented political tradition prevented the party from including the notion of eco-compatible economic development in its public discourse; nor did it choose to reject nuclear energy before the Chernobyl disaster. Moreover, their action towards the external environment is still guided by the vanguardist conception of the party as a 'modern prince' (Gramsci 2007 [1932-1934]) that has the historical task of educating and leading the masses. In their analysis of the RLPs' linkages with society, Tsakatika and Lisi (2013) found that while traditional communist parties are more closed and tend to relate especially with trades unions and their ancillary organizations, other, less orthodox RLPs attempt to establish informal links with a wider range of groups. Charalambous and Lamprianou's (2016) study on the societal mobilization strategies of six RLPs in Southern Europe and Ireland confirmed that non-communist RLPs have a greater capacity to interact with social movements.

These findings are also in line with party scholars' conviction that the cultural identity of parties as a filter that selects from all the possible actions only those that are politically appropriate (Raniolo 2006). Cultural identity is therefore considered a crucial explanatory factor for party behaviours, and also for party change. More specifically, parties are more responsive to social movements when both share a similar understanding of politics and social developments and, even more importantly, when the claims of movements do not contradict a party's traditional

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[7] This consideration overlaps with the theoretical proposition presented in Section 1.4.1 concerning the restraints on innovation. It is indeed likely that the 'conservative groups' have a traditional communist or moderate political culture.

political discourse (Piccio 2011). The maintenance of a party's political coherence is therefore fundamental.

Since I consider parties which belong to the radical left family and movements that have a fundamentally leftist stance, a certain degree of affinity is a given. While this allows us to predict that some party changes will occur, it is not enough to explain their possible depth. Considering that parties are not unitary actors, but are usually divided into internal factions (Panebianco 1988; Katz 2002) one might hypothesize that strong orthodox communist internal currents could act as a brake on the process of organizational, cultural and strategic 'contamination' of the party. The presence of social-democratic, pragmatic and office-seeking cultures might have a similar effect. On this basis, I formulate the following proposition:

The stronger the internal orthodox or moderate currents, the less the organizational, cultural and strategic innovation of the party.

1.4.2 Double membership

Another factor that has proved to affect parties' processes of adaptation to the emergence of social movements is the involvement of party members in those movements. This involvement can imply simply a party member's support for issues represented by a movement, or active participation in movement initiatives. Similarly, movement activists often enter existing political institutions, such as parties (Lange et al. 1990). Defined as 'double membership' or 'cumulative involvement' (Lange 1980), these processes can result in pressure for change from within the party. In the case of the PCI, for instance, "experience in a social movement had a significant impact on party recruitment and on [tolerant] attitudes of PCI activists" towards movement actions (Lange et al. 1990, 41). Similarly, the greater responsiveness of leftist parties compared with centre parties in the 1970s and 1980s was explained by the combination of greater ideological affinity and members' involvement in movements (Piccio 2011). Considering these results, I formulate the following proposition:

The more cases of double membership there are, the greater the organizational, cultural and strategic innovation of the party.

1.4.3 Attitudes of movements towards representative institutions

Previous research attempted to verify whether the attitude of social movements towards representative institutions affects the kind of contacts that occur between them and parties (Piccio 2011). It is indeed a shared belief that parties' strategies regarding external political demands also depend on a number of criteria pertaining to the realm of the demands themselves (Sjöblom 1968).[8] This means that the processes of party change under the influence of movements are also conditioned by the specific characteristics of the movements concerned. As

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[8] Sjöblom (1968) identified nine criteria relevant to explaining party reactions to demands brought forward by external groups: the group's attributes (size, relevancy in terms of support to the party, cohesiveness, resources), the direction of the political demand, its explicitness and precision, its intensity and saliency, the costs of its implementation, its relation to the party's other policies, its innovative or traditional character, the time aspect.

Kriesi et al. (1995) underlined, "when political allies want to support unconventional political action, they have different patterns of behaviour depending on the type of movement" (p. 93). In order to study interactive dynamics between the political opportunity structure (including allies) and the movements, the latter have been classified into three types according to their logic of action (instrumental or identity-based) and their general orientation (internal or external): subcultural movements are internally oriented and identity-based; instrumental movements are their antithesis; countercultural movements combine an identity basis with external orientation (Koopmans 1992; Kriesi et al. 1995). Different types of movements tend to adopt different repertoires of action: moderate for the subcultural movements; demonstrative and varying according to the external conditions in the case of instrumental movements; more contentious, and sometimes violent, for the countercultural movements.

The inherent characteristics of the movements have proved to affect the attitudes of allies towards them; countercultural movements enjoy low levels of party support due to their confrontational attitude and radicalism of both their goals and actions (Kriesi et al. 1995). Piccio (2011) finds instead a more nuanced result, as "it does not appear that political parties are more responsive to more moderate social movements than more radical ones" (p. 311). However, direct organizational contacts occurred mainly within sections of the movement open to establishing a dialogue with representative institutions, whereas only informal contacts took place with the more antagonistic branches (ibid). Finally March (2011), emphasizing the role of the 'autonomous' and 'neo-anarchist' components of the GJM, concludes that this movement "largely (quite deliberately) self-isolated from party politics (including much of the radical left)" (p. 179).

Both scholarly attention towards the specific characteristics of movements, and the partial (and sometimes contrasting) evidence referred to above suggest testing the validity of the following proposition:

The stronger are the movement areas open to dialogue with institutions in order to reach their goals, the greater the organizational, cultural and strategic innovation of the party.

1.4.4 Strategic choices within complex actors

I have underlined that, within both parties and movements, adoption of a strategy comes about through complex processes of internal decisions. In my empirical analysis I take into account these processes as they are expected to have major consequences on the interactions between parties and movements.

In the case of parties, this requires a close analysis of the conflicts over proposals for change that occur at the *élite level* (Crozier and Friedberg 1977). In the case of movements, I document the process by which protestors reduce the options they face regarding parties to just one. I present these options as dilemmas, because they entail considerable scrutiny, disagreement and sometimes conflict (Jasper 2004). I expect that some individuals, i.e. the movements' leaders, are more influential than others in making these decisions. When determining their strategic interactions with parties, movement activists may be confronted with the following dilemmas:

- *Extension Dilemma.* The further you expand your alliances, the less coherent your goals and actions may be. Part of this dilemma also arises from the benefits or costs of maintaining, or otherwise, a precise collective identity.
- *Naughty or Nice Dilemma.* Some goals may require a more dialogic tactic while others may depend on their capacity to disrupt normality. Interacting with parties may influence in favour of following the logic of persuasion rather than that of disruption.
- *Reaching Out or Reaching In.* The movements can develop different tactics according to their target: some are oriented toward those on their team, others to outsiders. Connection with parties requires the second type of tactic.
- *Direct or Indirect Moves?* A movement can opt for direct confrontation with opponents, or for indirect moves such as persuading third parties to side with them.
- *The Radical-Flank Dilemma.* Extreme words and actions get attention, but they usually play poorly with external sympathisers. Cooperating with parties may require movements to moderate their words and actions.
- *The Bridge-Builder's Dilemma.* Individuals who mediate between the movement and the party can lose the trust of their own group in fulfilling this task.
- *The Familiar and the New.* New tactics, such as cooperating with a party, may be useful to reach a certain goal and defeat opponents, but typically they are hard for the internal group to accept.

Different kinds of movements will respond to these dilemmas with different patterns of choices. Thus, the solutions, e.g. the final strategic choices, must be taken as the explananda for the overall movement strategy toward parties, leading to cooperation (success in party-movement interactions), tension or indifference (failure in such interactions).

The model presented below (Figure 1.1) summarises the processes described in Section 1.4, above.

Figure 1.1 Explaining Party-Movement Strategic Interactions
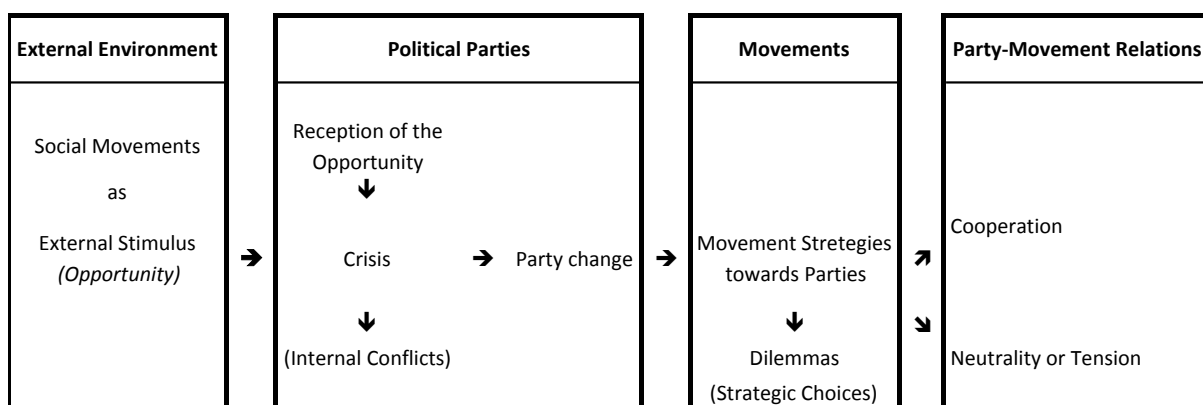
*This chart does not describe a linear evolution over time. Indeed, it is possible that contact with movements could produce a deep change in one dimension and a more superficial one in another, or that the transformations are different according to time and space.

1.5 Summary

Chapter One has presented the analytical framework of this research. In the first Section, I traced the history of relations between leftist political parties and social movements since the emergence of the latter. Two main considerations were made. First, in the 1960s, the emergence of new social movements represented a challenge to the absolute primacy of political parties in the sphere of democratic representation. However, the relationships that developed between the two political subjects were characterised by an imbalance of power and resources in favour of the mass parties of the left; this has often produced a tendency towards cooptation. Second, the relations between progressive social movements and leftist parties evolved through time, in line with the deep transformation of social-democratic parties into catch-all organizations. The movements that had emerged by the end of the 1990s considered the centre-left parties more as targets than as potential allies, and developed new forms of interactions with other less powerful party families. The interactions between the social movements of the third cycle (the GJM and the anti-austerity protests) and the renewed RLPs are at the centre of this work.

In the next Section, I presented how the literature on both social movements and political parties have dealt with the issue at hand. It emerged that political parties and social movements have mostly been treated as separated entities. While, with few exceptions, party scholars concentrated especially on electoral dynamics, social movement literature has more often crossed the boundaries between the two disciplines, stressing processes of party-movement interpenetration. Recently, enlightening insights have emerged from the analysis of political developments in Latin America and Southern Europe, focusing particularly on the influence of grassroots mobilizations on the organizational form and internal dynamics of new parties. However, processes of adaptation within existing political parties to the emergence of social movements remain largely unexplored.

In the third Section, I presented an overview of two theories: a) the dynamic approach to party change, which considers transformations within parties to be triggered by external stimuli and conditioned by multiple factors; b) the strategic approach to collective action, which sees it as resulting from a complex of continuous 'strategic interactions' between players. By hybridizing these theories, I formulated three main expectations that apply to relations between both the GJM and the anti-austerity movement and the RLPs in the twenty-first century: 1) the mobilization of social movements is an external stimulus that influences radical left-wing parties' organizational, strategic and value changes; 2) the depth of these changes depends on the affinity between the party's political culture and tradition and the movements' claims; 3) the degree of party renewal affects the willingness of movements to collaborate with them.

The Chapter ends with a further elaboration of these expectations. First, the proposal for adaptive change to movements' claims is expected to set off a process of organizational crisis, i.e. a competition between an innovative coalition and one (or more) conservative group(s) within the party. Second, the party change will be greater when: a) orthodox communist or moderate party factions are weak; b) cases of 'double membership' are frequent; c) the areas open to dialogue with institutions prevail in the movement. Third, movements will decide the type of strategy to be adopted towards the (more or less) renewed parties through complex decisional processes.

2. Methodological framework

This Chapter presents the research design and scientific methods adopted in this study to investigate the relations between RLPs and social movements. The first part illustrates the research design, how and why the empirical cases were selected and the levels of comparison that can be made based on this selection. The second part provides a conceptualization of the notion of 'strategic interactions' between parties and movements and illustrates the methods and data used here to measure them. The Chapter ends with a summary of the main arguments.

2.1 The research design: a case-based comparison

The research design of this thesis is a case-based cross-national comparison, involving a small number of cases (four political parties and two social movements). These have been selected through a purposeful choice (described in Section 2.2) and are analysed in-depth across a large number of dimensions, within a diachronic perspective. This research design requires rigorous justification. Despite being common in political and social sciences (della Porta 2008), the 'comparable-cases strategy' (Lijphart 1975) or 'case-oriented [comparative] research' (della Porta 2008) has been the object of much criticism by methodologists. Whether focusing on single or multiple cases, small-number (small-N) comparative case studies have generally been looked at with "extreme circumspection" (Gerring 2004, 1).[9] In what follows, I will first present the main criticisms addressed to this method. I will then clarify the epistemological reasons that led me to choose this research design, as well as the concrete advantages that the method offers for a work that is primarily exploratory.

Comparative politics flourished in the 1960s when evolving processes of global interdependence led scholars to extend their interest well beyond western economic and political systems and societies (della Porta 2008). Almond (1966) influentially emphasized the importance of comparative perspective, by affirming that "if it [political science] is a science, it goes without saying that it is comparative in its approach" (p. 3). Once the hope of developing a global theory had been abandoned, in the 1980s comparative studies proved fruitful to develop middle-range theories (valid for specific societies at a given historical moment, Bendix 1963; della Porta 2008). Nowadays, comparative analysis is generally considered "at the heart of all political [and social] science research" (Toshkov 2016, 258). Instead, disagreements regard the choice of the method applied within it: the experimental method, the statistical method, the comparative method and (according to scholars like Lijphart, 1971) the case study method. Unlike comparisons based on

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[9] The methods commonly used in comparative studies are: the comparative, the experimental, the statistical and, according to Lijphart (1971), the single case study methods. In scientific literature, the label 'comparative method' is often used to cover all the first three methods; in other cases it is restricted to one of them. To avoid this terminological confusion, scholars proposed the terms 'comparative analysis' (della Porta 2008) or 'comparative perspective' (Lijphart 1971; 1975) to refer to the comparative approach understood in a broad sense, and 'comparative method' to refer to one of the four basic scientific methods comprised within this approach.

experimental or statistical methods, the comparative method has often been considered inadequate to provide a basis for generating reliable causal explanations and for developing broad generalizations. Lijphart (1971) summarized the weaknesses associated with the comparative method in the famous formula "many variables, small number of cases" (p. 685). If "the former [problem] is common to virtually all social science research […], the latter is peculiar to the comparative method and renders the problem of handling many variables more difficult to solve" (ibid). Lijphart concluded that "if at all possible one should generally use the statistical (or perhaps even the experimental) method instead of the weaker comparative method" (ibid.). Suited for micro-level analysis, the experimental method has however only a limited application in political and social sciences. For macro-level research, therefore, the choice is essentially between the comparative and the statistical strategies. Comparative politics has tended to assign a greater reliance to the latter (Lijphart 1975) and the divide between scholars analysing a large number of cases on a few dimensions. and those studying a few cases in-depth, has been growing (della Porta 2008).

The widespread circumspection towards the comparative method, as well as the weaknesses highlighted by Lijphart, are rooted in an underlying, Durkheimian, vision of political and social sciences that not all scholars and researchers share (Ragin and Zaret 1983). As della Porta (2008) noted, for scholars like Smelser (1976), Lijphart (1971) and later on King, Keohane and Verba (1994), the same logic lies behind different analytical tools: both the statistical and the comparative methods should aim at developing generalizable explanations through the systematic manipulation of parameters and variables. The comparative method should thus be used only when the units of analysis are too few for statistical analysis. Moreover, the lower the number of cases in the comparison, the fewer the explanatory variables should be, in order to favour theoretical simplicity and avoid an indeterminate research design.

Despite agreeing on the need for shared scientific standards, several scholars challenged this unifying logic, emphasizing that different methodological tools are founded on different epistemological assumptions: the propensity for one method or the other is linked to the researcher's beliefs regarding the concepts of causation, truth and generalization (Ragin 2000; Brady and Collier 2004; Sil 2004; Mahoney and Goertz 2006; della Porta and Keating 2008; della Porta 2008). These scholars have stressed a Weberian logic of historical comparison (as opposed to the Durkheimian one referred to above; Ragin and Zaret 1983) aimed at the in-depth understanding of complex social and political processes, analysed within their context, rather than establishing a linear causal relation between two variables within static research designs. For researchers embracing this vision, the comparative method is not a mere second-best choice based on the lack of available data or the inability to use statistical techniques. The case-oriented strategy provides interpretative scopes, leaving space for plural causation and at the same time avoiding trans-historical and trans-contextual generalization. Conscious of this underlying Weberian vision, in this thesis I choose a small-N, case-oriented comparison intended to arrive at a profound knowledge of the evolution of strategic interactions between RLPs and social movements in Italy and in Greece from the late 1990s to the present. Understanding such interactions implies a thorough description of the context in which they developed and a detailed analysis of each case selected. The possibility that a plurality of explanatory factors shapes these interactions is largely foreseen and I consider the results of this work as time specific and limited

to the cases studied here. However, I believe that they might provide the basis for further research aimed at broader generalization.

Moving beyond the theoretical debate recalled above, this research strategy seems particularly appropriate in studying the strategic interactions between RLPs and social movements for two main reasons. First, case-oriented comparisons are especially suitable when little is known about the phenomenon under investigation and current perspectives conflict with each other (Eisenhardt 1989; Yin 2014). In Chapter One I have shown that, due to the division between party studies and movement research, no specific theoretical framework has been established to study party-movement interactions. The literature is instead fragmented into a number of approaches, often resulting in conflicting outcomes. The scope of my work is thus primarily exploratory, in an attempt to identify the processes that explain the cases of cooperation, tension or indifference between RLPs and social movements. Moreover, the applicability of the theoretical framework I obtained by hybridizing the strategic approach to collective action and the dynamic perspective on party change is tested.

Second, case-oriented comparisons are recognized as useful to discover causal links in real-world social phenomena that are too complex for surveys and the experimental method (Yin 2014). In particular, they contribute to achieving a detailed knowledge of social processes considered in their dynamic evolution (Rueschemeyer 2003). The subject of my thesis, i.e. the 'interactions' between two collective actors, is precisely one of these complex social processes: the statistical method would clearly not be capable of grasping the variety of actions and reactions between players.

2.2 Selection of the cases

My interest in this study is to analyse the interactions between political parties and social movements. We can suppose that such interactions occur both at the right-wing and at the left-wing of the political spectrum. However, as discussed in detail in Chapter One, movement scholars have highlighted the cultural proximity between parties of the left and the main social movements and have focused on their connections. In this thesis I follow this research tradition, but also introduce an innovation. Welcoming the proposal recently advanced by some party scholars (García Agustín and Bak Jørgensen 2016; March 2017), I do not look at the relation between the larger social-democratic or communist parties and social movements, but instead focus on the radical left party family. As illustrated in the literature review (see Section 1.2), while at the turn of the millennium most of the centre-left parties in Europe had transformed into catch-all machines, the RLPs were – to borrow an evocative image from Italian literature – 'characters in search of an author'.[10] At the same time, massive social movements were emerging in western countries. I propose to verify the processes through which, in their search for identity, the RLPs crossed paths with these new means of political participation. Among the various cases I could select, I consciously decided to analyse the relations between the 'renewed' RLPs and the social movements that have emerged since 1999, particularly the GJM and the anti-austerity

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[10] The reference is to Luigi Pirandello's drama *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* ('Six Characters in Search of an Author').

protests in two countries, Italy and Greece, where I expect the phenomenon under examination to be more intense. In methodological terms, I select on the dependent variable. Often criticised by methodologists (King, Keohane and Verba 1994), this is "a common and legitimized practice" in case-based research design, and in movement studies in particular (della Porta 2008, 212). In what follows I will provide a robust justification for my selection of the two countries, the four parties and the two movements.

2.2.1 The countries

Italy and Greece are chosen for their *comparability*, given their similarity in some significant dimensions (Gerring 2001); *relevance* (Smelser 1976), *representativeness* and intense *variation* (Gerring 2001) with respect to the phenomenon being studied.

These countries are comparable because they belong to a common geographical area, South-Western Europe, with cultural similarities and, during the period studied, similar experiences of political and social developments due to the implementation of austerity measures (see Baumeister and Sala 2015). The configuration of the left-wing area is also similar in: a) the presence of mainstream social-democratic parties (the Democratic Party, 'Partito Democratico'-PD, in Italy and the Panhellenic Socialist Movement, 'Panellinio Sosialistiko Kinima'-PASOK, in Greece); and b) the division within the radical left-wing family between traditional parties (respectively the Party of the Italian Communists, 'Partito dei Comunisti Italiani'-PdCI, and the Communist Party of Greece, 'Kommounistikó Kómma Elládas'-KKE) and 'renewed' RLPs (those taken into account in this work).

These cases are particularly relevant to interactions between the RLPs and social movements as, during the period under consideration, they experienced intense waves of social mobilization parallel to variations in the electoral performance of the RLPs (see Chapter Three).

Importantly, I consider the party-movement interactions taking place in Italy and Greece to be representative of a broader class of events (Ragin 2000; Gerring 2001) involving similar parties and the same movements in other countries. More notably, my analysis could provide insights for studying the relations between the German 'Die Linke', the Irish 'Sinn Féin', the Portuguese 'Bloco d'Esquerda', the Spanish 'Izquierda Unida' and recent social movements. The dynamics that have united or estranged the Italian 'renewed' RLPs and the GJM, as well as those linking SYRIZA and the anti-austerity movements, can be regarded as representative of a possible *fil rouge* linking the cycle of mobilization of the new millennium and the already existing, but innovative, RLPs in Europe.

Finally, Italy and Greece were selected because of the great variation in the patterns of interaction between the RLPs and social movements both between the countries and within the same country over time. In selecting the cases, both the existing literature and my evaluation as an attentive observer of political facts lead me to the conviction that there is a macro-difference between RLPs-movements' interactions in Italy and Greece. In Italy, the interactions between the PRC, SEL and the social movements have been essentially of tension, leading to a case of failure (see March 2017, 29-30), while in Greece the relations between the two subjects were built up more slowly and also with more solidity, leading to a case of (albeit partial) success (see Tsakatika and Eleftheriou 2013; Tsakatika and Lisi 2013; Spourdalakis 2014). The empirical

analysis brought forward in this thesis confirms the presence of this macro-difference and justifies the choice of these cases, documenting different relations which, however, developed out of similar conditions.

Moreover, in both countries we observe a variation over time in the interactions between RLPs and movements. In Italy, intense relationships have been observed between the PRC and the GJM (della Porta 2007c; Andretta and Reiter 2009; March 2011, 2017), but almost no connections were established between anti-austerity mobilizations and the Italian RLPs (see Part Three). On the other hand, in Greece first SYN and then SYRIZA started to interact with the broad social movement environment during the GJM season and continued their involvement in the protest arena when the anti-austerity movement appeared with an impact that was both strong and massive, in contrast to the mobilization Italy.

Tensions in the linkages between SYRIZA and the movements began when the former became a unified party in 2013 whose action was oriented to gain the government. The breaking point only occurred in July 2015, when, now in government, it accepted the third Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) imposed by international creditors, which mandated a new round of harsh austerity policies. In Italy, in the same period, while the PRC had become increasingly marginal, SEL was perceived as a moderate party mainly focused on parliamentary activities. Therefore, it is interesting to investigate the type of interactions between the fragmented Italian anti-austerity movements and the weak RLPs, which once again represent a case of failure. The adoption of a diachronic perspective allows for the multiplication of cases (Bartolini 1993; della Porta 2008), thus potentially helping to explain success and failure in relations between parties and movements. In brief, I considered the following timeline:

1999-2006: from the emergence of the GJM at the Seattle protest to the fourth ESF in Athens and the participation of the PRC in the Italian national government

Italy → Case of (partial) success (PRC-GJM); Greece → Case of success (SYN/SYRIZA-GJM)

2008-2015: from the development of the anti-austerity movements (starting from the student movement in Italy) to the rise in power of SYRIZA in Greece

Italy → Cases of failure (PRC/SEL-fragmented austerity movements); Greece → Case of (partial) success (SYRIZA-anti-austerity movements)

July 2013-onwards: (from the acceptance of the Third MoU-onwards)

Italy → Cases of failure (PRC/SI-fragmented austerity movements); Greece → Case of failure (SYRIZA-fragmented anti-austerity movements)

2.2.2 The political parties

The parties selected are the Communist Refoundation Party ('Partito della Rifondazione Comunista'-PRC) and Left, Ecology and Freedom ('Sinistra Ecologia e Libertà'-SEL) in Italy, and the Coalition of the Left, of Movements and Ecology ('Synaspismós tīs Aristerás tōn Kinīmátōn kai tīs Oikologías'-SYN) and the Radical Left Coalition ('Synaspismós Rizospastikís Aristerás'-SYRIZA) in Greece. The reasons for this choice are not only their comparability, but also variations in the three dimensions expected to influence their interactions with social

movements. They all fit March and Mudde's (2005) comprehensive definition of 'radical left' (see Chapter One, Section 1.2.3), although they present different political identities and organizational models: the PRC has maintained the adjective 'communist' in its name, whereas the other parties stress a more generic affinity with the 'left' (SEL and SYN) or the 'radical left' (SYRIZA). Moreover, they are all positioned to the left of the social-democratic parties (PD and PASOK), but differ as regards their strategy of alliances with them (see Chapter Three). At the international level, they all participate in the European United Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) group of the European parliament (Calossi 2016).

The cases chosen also offer the chance to investigate the changes in parties which had been (PRC, SYN) or have recently become (SEL, and especially SYRIZA) important actors in their respective national contexts. Following Sartori's criteria of 'counting' political parties (1976; 1982), all the RLPs considered here are 'relevant' within their party system. In 2006, the PRC proved decisive for the creation of the parliamentary majority supporting the centre-left government and several of its members had governing roles within it (from May 2006 to January 2008). During the period under consideration, this party participated in regional and municipal administrations within centre-left coalitions. By standing in the primary elections of the centre-left, SEL was able to impose its own candidates on the centre-left coalition thus generating an electoral competition with the PD. This strategy resulted in the party winning one regional government (Puglia). SEL entered the national parliament in 2013 and its candidate (Laura Boldrini) has been elected President of the Chamber of Deputies. A fringe party with limited but constant electoral appeal, SYN was the driving force behind the creation of the SYRIZA coalition. The electoral success of SYRIZA during the economic crisis strongly affected the competitive dynamics within the Greek party system.

Smelser (1976) pointed out that one of the criteria to be followed when selecting cases for study is relevance; I shall therefore emphasize the 'genetic' permeability of the parties chosen to the demands of the new social movements. In contrast to orthodox communist parties, these 'renewed' RLPs attempted to 'refound communism' by adapting their organizational structure and political culture to a transformed environment. Despite not having focused specifically on the interactions between the PRC and the GJM, as mentioned above, several scholars already noted the proximity between the two (Baccetti 2003; Bertolino 2004; della Porta 2007a/2007c; Andretta and Reiter 2009; March 2011; de Nardis 2009; Tsakatika and Lisi 2013). Moreover, in my master thesis on the foundation and development of this party I reached the same conclusion (Chironi 2011). SEL was included because it was founded by the movement-oriented current of the PRC which split from the party in 2009 (Chironi 2011). Therefore, I reasonably supposed, and the only available scientific work confirmed (Bordandini 2013), that the openness typical of the PRC transmigrated to the new party, at least in the early phases. The effort of SYN to connect with the leftist social groups active during the GJM season is reported by Kotronaki (2015) in her case study into contentious politics in Greece from 2000 to 2007. Both scholars (Kotronaki 2015) and party leaders (Petrou 2012) interpreted the foundation of the SYRIZA coalition in 2004 as an outcome of the involvement of the small Greek RLPs in the international Global Justice and peace movements. Petrou observed that "the pressures from the movement itself [...] generated SYRIZA" (2012, online).

Besides their common relevance to the phenomenon under investigation, the parties selected also differ on basic characteristics (their origin, their different stress on the communist legacy, their strategies towards the social-democratic left) allowing me to observe the factors that influence the interactions with social movements within the same party family.

2.2.3 The social movements

The GJM and the anti-austerity movements are the main actors in the third European cycle of protest (after that of the 1960s and the 1970s, and the more moderate wave of the 1980s), all of which share some general characteristics, despite the differences in their immediate goals. Taking these broad groups of movements (or 'families of social movements', della Porta 1996) into consideration, rather than focusing on a single mobilization or campaign, provides a better and broader historical analysis of their interactions with parties.

The assessment of the political and numerical relevance of these movements is based on secondary literature on social movements in the two national contexts (for the detailed review see Chapter Four). The Italian section of the GJM organized two of the most important events of this transnational movement: the three days of protest against the G8 summit that took place in Genoa in July 2001 and the first European Social Forum (ESF) that was held in Florence in November 2002 (Reiter 2007). The Greek section organized the counter-demonstrations against the EU summits in Thessaloniki and other major cities in June 2003 and the fourth ESF in Athens in May 2006 (Kotronaki 2015). During the last economic crisis, intense anti-austerity protests took place in both countries (Andretta 2016; Vogiatzoglou 2016). While an in-depth analysis of the two social movements is provided in Chapter Four, it is important to specify here that the two social movements showed different attitudes towards institutional politics: despite the ideological variety of its internal components, the GJM showed a greater propensity for dialogue with representative institutions and their agents (such as political parties) than the anti-austerity protests. Having emerged when the crisis of representative democracy was at its apex (della Porta 2013), the anti-austerity movements embodied instead a more conflictual attitude. No party symbols were allowed in demonstrations and the tactics of 'pressure from within' were rejected although they were largely used by GJM actors. Selecting two broad movements that differ on this fundamental dimension allows me to assess whether the characteristics of the movements themselves play a role in shaping the individual reactions of political parties to them and vice versa.

2.2.4 The levels of comparison

In sum, the selected cases combined with the diachronic research design chosen for the present thesis offer the possibility for multiple comparisons: across countries, across time within the same country, across the same party family, across different types of social movements. Table 2.1 depicts these levels of comparison and reports the expected outcomes of the interactions between RLPs and social movements both for each country over the relevant period and at different points in time.

Table 2.1 The Levels of Comparison

ITALY		Outcome	GREECE		Outcome
Case of Failure		**Outcome**	**Case of (partial) Success**		**Outcome**
SOCIAL MOVEMENT	RLPs		SOCIAL MOVEMENT	RLPs	
GJM 1999-2006 Dialogical Attitude	➜ PRC	**Case of (partial) Success**	GJM 1999-2006 Dialogical Attitude	SYNASPISMOS ↗ ↘ SYRIZA (from 2004)	**Case of Success**
Anti-austerity movements 2008-2013 Conflictual Attitude	PRC ↗ ↘ SEL (from 2010)	**Case of Failure**	Anti-austerity movements 2008-2013 Conflictual Attitude	➜ SYRIZA	**Case of (partial) Success**
Weak and local social movements From 2013	PRC ↗ ↘ SEL/SI	**Case of Failure**	Anti-austerity movements From 2013	➜ SYRIZA	**Case of Failure**

2.3 Conceptualizing party-movement strategic interactions

In her work on the relationship between political parties and interest groups in Norway, Allern (2010) noted that "the relationship of political parties with other organizations is a multidimensional phenomenon, and how to study it is an open debate" (p. 56). 'Alignment', 'linkages', 'ties' and 'connections' are some of the terms used in scholarly literature to define such relationships. Studies on this topic all point to three basic aspects: the 'ideological affinity', the 'organizational integration or contact' and the exchange of financial resources between political parties and other collective actors (ibid.). They usually consider interest groups or civil associations, all of which have formal structures, and therefore facilitate examining "the links providing contact between parties and interest groups *as organizations*" (ibid., 56). Scholars in this field set a narrow definition of their subject and then operationalize it through indicators that measure both the 'formal inter-organizational links' (for example, 'formal invitations to party meetings') and the 'informal links' (such as 'unofficial contacts between party leaders and groups' spokesmen') between the party and the interest group (ibid.; see also Poguntke 2006). Moreover, these studies focused on the power relations between the party and the interest groups (or civil associations), analysing, in particular, the contacts between their elites.

This approach is certainly stimulating for conceptualizing the relationships between political parties and social movements. However, the specific polymorphic nature of social movements prevents me from simply transposing pre-existing conceptualizations and strategies of operationalization to my research. Consisting of "networks of informal interaction between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organisations" (Diani 1992, 3), social movements have nothing of the stability or formality of an organization. For this reason, the distinction between 'formal' and 'informal' links cannot be adopted here and observations will not be confined to the

organizational aspects. Moreover, due to the grassroots orientation of social movements and their lack of official leaders, in this work I cannot restrict my view to contacts that take place at the elite level, but must also consider processes occurring at the lower party levels. A pioneering attempt to study why and how the RLPs relate to their social base, including social movements, is advanced by Tsakatika and Lisi (2013). These authors understand party ties in terms of 'participatory linkages' (namely the relations between the party leadership and the party members and sympathisers) and 'environmental linkages' (concerning the relation between the party and organized groups in civil society). To grasp these linkages they suggest recording the "public statements of parties' willingness to reconnect to their grassroots", which often are launched during party conferences or other important events (p. 5). Then, they proceed to analyse the "organizational reforms that parties undertake in order to be able to pursue linkage more effectively" (p. 5). Although this approach represents a clear step forward in the study of political parties' linkage strategies, the proposed conceptualization of 'linkage' and the methods for its analysis are not explicitly designed for studying relational processes between political parties and social movements specifically. The analysis is limited to party organizational aspects which, although they are important (see Section 2.4.1), do not exhaust the action and reactions linking political and social movements together. Rejecting any reductionist vision, in this thesis I understand the relations between political parties and social movements as a dynamic process of interaction between equal players and observe them from both sides.

In order to overcome the distinction between formal and informal links, to avoid focusing only on the elite level but to include also grassroots activism in the picture, I conceptualize the relationships between political parties and social movements by adopting the following broad and dynamic notion of 'strategic interactions':

Strategic interactions between political parties and social movements consist of both the transformative actions that parties undertake to strengthen their connection with the social movements and the reactions of social movements to the party transformations.

Such a broad conceptualization facilitates the identification of a wide range of behaviours enacted by both political parties and social movements in order to coordinate their political action.

2.4 Dimensions of party change

Political science no longer assumes that the primary goal of political parties is purely to win elections: scholars have stressed their complexity and their multidimensional nature (Raniolo 2006). More specifically, the literature on party change has highlighted how transformation can be observed across a variety of dimensions and how change may occur in different degrees (Wolinetz 1996). The dimensions of change to be taken into account and the specific indicators to focus upon, depend on which aspects of party change interest the researcher. The 'dynamic approach' to party change that I am following in this study explains the process of intraparty change by looking at three party dimensions: organization (party structure and internal methods);

political culture (value orientation and political issues); strategies (alliances and communication strategies within the political system). I concentrate on these three dimensions, examining their evolution as influenced over time by the social movements, which brought about innovations in all three.

Like political parties, the social movements can be studied qualitatively by considering three aspects: their organizational model, ideology and behaviours. While quantitative data are useful to analyse movements during phases of maximum mobilization, the qualitative dimensions are particularly well-suited to studying the evolution of 'families of social movements' over time (della Porta 1996) as it is the case in this thesis. First, they present a (loose) organizational structure, i.e. the networks formed by both informal and formal organizations as well as individuals linked to the movements. Second, they develop an ideology or better a collective identity, i.e. their image of the world, understood as a set of values and claims related to society and politics. Third, social movements adopt certain 'behaviours', typically understood as the complex of strategies and means that form their 'repertoire of action' (Tilly 1986). Within movements' behaviours I also include their different attitude towards institutional politics, which was presented in Section 1.4.3 as one of the possible factors influencing the party-movement interactions.

According to my first expectation, the process of interaction between RLPs and social movements starts with the need of weak parties to connect with left-wing social movements. In Southern Europe, these movements adopted: a) a flexible and decentralized organizational model based on (more or less) horizontal networks and (different) assembly-based participatory methods; b) specific claims linked to the rejection of neoliberalism and anti-austerity policies and a conception of radical participatory democracy; c) a range of tactics with varying degrees of disruptiveness (See Chapter Four). This implies that, in each of the three party dimensions (organizational structure, political culture and competitive strategies) considered here, social movements introduced innovations to which RLPs may have responded by setting in motion a process of change.

Following the models developed by the literature on party change – which has rarely looked specifically at 'social movements' as an independent variable of party transformation – I will highlight the effect of social movements' organizational structure and participatory methods; their values, claims and conception of democracy; and non-conventional forms of action on the three above-mentioned party dimensions. In the next Section, I will present the variables and specific indicators which I use to explore the changes that parties enact under the influence of social movements. Each of the three dimensions will be broken down into several variables and for each variable I will identify the indicators best suited to measure the type and degree of party transformation.

2.4.1 Organizational changes

Tsakatika and Lisi (2013) stated that the RLPs "have prioritised linkage and introduced significant organizational innovations *in order* to pursue the strengthening of ties to their social roots more effectively" (p. 2). Among the innovations they indicated, are the involvement of candidates from civil society organizations, the pursuit of links with Social Forums, the

promotion of the party youth organizations' engagement in social movements. Building on these observations, I will look in detail at the organizational changes that a party might design to incorporate some of the movements' horizontal and participatory proposals. Transformations in the organizational dimension might be beneficial to social movements if they increase the party's openness towards the external environment and facilitate its internal democratization, prompting processes of interaction. Among the 'organizational variables', receptiveness to movements can transform not only the conditions of **access** and **participation,** but also the **leadership**.

Access and participation concern the parties' need to recruit members and sympathisers and involve them in party life. Although political parties are under no formal obligation to extend their base membership, traditionally they have devoted considerable attention to their social roots. A change of direction was noted in the mid-1990s when Katz and Mair (1995) observed that political parties were increasingly orienting their actions towards occupying state institutions while disengaging from society. While a process of distancing themselves from their social constituency certainly took place, scholars also noted that parties cannot completely break the links with their social base because their electoral stability (Poguntke 2002, Scarrow and Gezgor 2010) and legitimacy (Allern 2010) continue to depend on it. For this reason, some parties have encouraged the involvement of members (and in some case sympathisers) in candidate and leadership selection (Hazan and Rahat 2010; Cross and Blais 2012) and have involved civil society groups in drawing up party manifestos and making decisions (Thomas 2001; Poguntke 2006; Allern 2010). If these can be considered sporadic and superficial modes of connection (della Porta 2015b), it should also be noted that not all the parties evolved in the same way. RLPs, in particular, not only remained committed to their social roots, but "they aim to be seen as the privileged political representative of social movements and trade unions" (Tsakatika and Lisi 2013, 16). With regard to internal participation, compared with other party-families they are said to be more interested in promoting grassroots' participation and intraparty democracy (ibid.). These findings can be further investigated by taking into account the following indicators:

Canvassing methods. Typically, these methods concern the mechanisms for recruiting members. Overall little investigated, the literature has mainly looked at the territorial level where enrolment takes place: parties adopting centralised enrolment are said to be more closed than those following peripheral enrolment because the greater proximity between the party and its adherents makes enrolment easier (D'Amore 2006). Moving beyond this formal differentiation, I will study instead the extent to which the party is ready to include non-members and encourage processes of double membership, both in the party and in social movements. When a social movement mobilizes, the party may indeed decide to adopt more fluid boundaries, a) allowing for a partial participation (e.g. limited to the development of a certain project or movement campaign), b) making its local headquarters available for sympathisers and movement organizations, c) promoting the participation of its youth organization in movement activities. In the cases under review, I shall also consider whether the transnational dimension of the GJM pushed the RLPs to transcend the national level and find new European connections.

Political participation. In most contemporary political parties, the participation of the members increases during electoral periods, both for the selection of the party's leading bodies in territorial congresses and during the electoral campaigns. Therefore, in order to measure internal participation, party studies have mainly focused on the percentage of members who vote in the

territorial congresses (D'Amore 2006). In my thesis, I shall instead verify whether movement mobilization contributes to activate party members beyond the electoral period and to modify their traditional modes of action. Party members could increasingly be involved in protests, also adopting non-conventional forms of action. The party could participate in initiatives or campaigns organized by the movements and actively encourage the participation of its younger cohorts.

Models of internal democracy. Political parties are usually hierarchical organizations, where the leadership controls a great share of decisional power. The social movements' stress on horizontality could represent pressure towards internal democratization of the party, pursued through the introduction of, for instance: a) internal referenda, b) deliberative spaces dedicated to women or young people, c) spaces of interaction and deliberation between members and non-members, such as thematic forums. Overall, these mechanisms, if introduced, should allow for a top-down redistribution of internal power.

An in-depth analysis of the party organization requires investigating also the configuration of internal power focusing on the political personnel at the top level, who form the party leadership. As regards the latter, party research has followed two main lines (D'Amore 2006). On the one hand, it has considered the vertical relations between the leadership and the members, which in this thesis will be examined through the models of internal democracy. On the other hand, it has observed the leadership's composition and the dialectics between its components (for instance between different currents or between the parliamentary group and the party secretariat). In the case of the RLPs reviewed here, the leadership has not been profoundly assessed, besides the macro-characteristics of their secretaries (Fausto Bertinotti and Nichi Vendola in Italy and Alexis Tsipras in Greece, see March 2011; Bordandini 2013; Moschonas 2013). More in general, we know that the most successful RLPs substituted the "dour personalities of the traditional communist parties" with "media-savvy performers who present a non-dogmatic but principled image, and are considered 'charismatic' even by political opponents" (March 2008, 137). Here I will focus on the leadership's composition and the interaction between its components, stressing how greater receptiveness to movements could influence:

Configuration of the dominant coalition, i.e. the coalition which rules the party, usually formed through an agreement among some internal currents and the marginalization of others. An important task of the empirical analysis will be to identify what actors (currents or factions) are part of the dominant coalition and if they change over time. Following the rise of movements, a new 'movement-oriented' dominant coalition can be formed at the party top level to sustain strategies of proximity and interaction.

Members of the national and European parliaments. Political parties recruit their MPs and EMPs in different ways. In general, two main models were noted: in the 'party-apparatus' model of recruitment, candidates were chosen on the basis of their work within the party organization; in the 'clientele party' model, parties recruited individual political entrepreneurs able to mobilize their own voters (Cotta 1979). While the communist parties have tended to adopt the first model, other, vote-seeking, parties have been more prone to nominate candidates external to the party (ibid.). In my empirical analysis I will verify whether the communist model continues to prevail in contemporary RLPs or, rather, intense social mobilization has resulted in the inclusion of individuals from the movements within the electoral lists.

Members of the party's top structures. The central bodies of the party are generally defined as deliberative (the congresses and the central committees), executive (national steering committees and the president/secretary), and supervisory (the organs that check correct application of internal rules). Many different indicators can be used to investigate this party level: their formal power as assigned by the party's constitution, their breadth (the number of members sitting within them), the mechanisms for selection of their members, and their personal characteristics. In line with the observations for national and European MPs, I will focus only on the last indicators, estimating whether the 'movement-oriented' RLPs are inclined to include movement figures at the higher levels of the party or involve them as external consultants.

2.4.2 Cultural changes

The political culture of a party is the complex of cognitive, affective and normative attitudes that, together, form its corpus of ideas on human life and, consequently, orientate its political line. This nexus strongly characterises the external image of the party, influences the beliefs of members and sympathisers, guides the preparation of electoral manifestos as well as the party's stance on emerging political issues. Given its breadth, the political culture of a party can be empirically observed from different angles and using different techniques, such as analysing official party documents or surveying its cadres. As regards this thesis, I will try to understand how and to what extent social movements influenced the RLPs' political culture. The cases most closely investigated to date are the new left parties that emerged in the 1970s in the Nordic countries, espousing environmentalism, pacifism and feminism (Gilberg 1979; Kitschelt 1989). More in general, Piccio (2011) showed that in the 1970s and 1980s social movements imposed new issues on the public agenda, forcing also mainstream political parties to take a stance on some of them. Although not investigating the social movement-RLPs nexus directly, March (2011; 2017) highlighted that while the orthodox communist parties opted for ideological immobilism, the other RLPs have renewed their identity and included new issues in their agenda. They also "emphasize non-statist and participatory democratic solutions" (ibid., 201), addressing a typical claim of both the GJM and anti-austerity movements.

Among the 'political cultural variables' I choose to analyse the impact of the social movements' general themes of mobilization on the **policy orientation** and the **ideology** of the RLPs. As indicators for these variables I consider respectively:

The *stance taken on key issues* advanced by movements. Political parties compete with each other by adopting different stances on the issues that from time to time enter the agenda. They also emphasize the specific themes that constitute and formulate their identity. These latter can both be traditional (such as labour rights for leftist parties or diminishing taxation for the right-wing) or new issues that contribute to renovate the party discourse and policy orientation. Therefore, I will analyse which of the new issues promoted by social movements will be absorbed by the RLPs, thus broadening their political identity.

The *internal values' profile.* The party's official values are usually reported in the preambles of their constitution. I will check their evolution over time to verify the inclusion of values that are typical of movements (for example, environmental justice).

2.4.3 Strategic changes

The strategic dimension is linked to the action and positioning of political parties within their party systems. Since the 1990s, the European RLPs, including those in the Eastern Europe, have abandoned any rhetorical reference to revolution and have instead fully embraced the concept of "transformative change through 'bourgeois' liberal democratic institutions" (March 2011, 202). Once their international constraints dissolved, they often formed electoral coalitions with other left-wing parties, bridging different traditions (ibid.). Moreover, they have started to participate in national governments, or to support them in parliament (Olsen et al. 2010; Bale and Dunphy 2011; Katsourides 2016; Chiocchietti 2017). The types of alliances they have built have differed according to contextual factors (such as the type of electoral system), resulting in varying electoral performances and political weight of the RLPs (March and Rommerskirchen 2015). The influence of social movements on the strategies of RLPs has not yet been carefully investigated. Considerations were made on the involvement of the PRC in the 2006-2008 centre-left government led by the economist Romano Prodi, emphasizing the difficulty the party had in remaining rooted to street politics while being a loyal member of a moderate government (Newell 2010). In his analysis of the Cyprus' Progressive Party of Working People ('Anorthotikó Kómma Ergazómenou Laoú'-AKEL) and SYRIZA's trajectories as governing parties, Katsourides (2016) underlined how both have been reluctant to launch radical proposals or solutions consistent with their ideology and their past, leading to intraparty tensions.

While literature has noted the effects of RLPs' involvement in the national government on their relationship with social movements and intraparty dialectic, I will focus also on the influence, if any, that party-movement interactions have on the RLPs' political line. Indeed, the presence of social movements might not only lead to changes in the organizational and cultural dimensions of RLPs, but also affect their strategy of alliances with other parties of the left both in the elections and in parliament. More specifically, RLPs' closer ties with the social movements may increase their 'relational anti-systemness' (Capoccia 2002), sparking internal conflicts on political lines and leading to a distancing from social-democratic parties. In my empirical analysis, I shall consider the positioning of the RLPs both before and after movement mobilization to document how it changed over time. In particular, I will examine their **connections with the centre-left or other moderate parties**, measured through two indicators: *the RLPs' coalitional strategy* in the national and local elections taking place in important municipalities and/or regions; and *their role in the national government*.

Table 2.2 depicts and summarises the methodological approach I have outlined in this Section.

Table 2.2 Dimensions of Party Change: Variables and Indicators

Movement Dimensions		Party Dimensions		Variables		Indicators		
Organizational Model Network Form Assembly-Based	➔	**Organizational Structure**	➔	Access	➔	Recruitment (Fluid Participation; Open Local Headquarters; Young Organizations; Trasnational Connections)		
				Participation	➔	Models of Internal Democracy (Internal Referenda; Deliberative Spaces) Political Participation (Protest and Unconventional Forms of Action)		
				Leadership	➔	Configuration of the Dominant Coalition (Movement-Oriented Coalition?) Movement Figures in Parliament Movement Figures in the Party's Top Level	➔	**Movements' Choices and Attitudes**
Collective Identity Values and Claims Participatory Democracy	➔	**Political Culture**	➔	Policy Orientation Ideology	➔ ➔	Stance on Movement Issues Incorporation of Movement Values		
Behaviours Non-Conventional Actions Attitude towards Institutional Politics	➔	**Competitive Strategies**	➔	RLPs' Connections with Social-Democratic Parties	➔	RLPs' Coalitional Strategy RLPs' Role in Government		

2.5 Movements' choices and attitudes

Previous research has proved that alliances with parties tend to influence especially the levels of movement mobilization (Kriesi and van Praag 1987; Hutter 2012) and the strategies adopted (della Porta 1995; della Porta and Rucht 1995). Following these insights, I focus on the second point singling out how party transformations retroact on movements' **strategies towards parties**. Changes in one or more of the party dimensions identified above are expected to influence the attitude of social movements towards the political party. If a party is perceived as more open than before, the movement will be more likely to engage in a process of collaboration. Otherwise, a greater separation between the two actors will be observed resulting in more conflictual interactions.

Parties demonstrate a conservative attitude in particular towards their organizational structure (Harmel and Janda 1994) as recalled in Chapter One. Classic studies in the field have underlined that after its 'institutionalization', i.e. the phase in which a party stabilizes and develops firm interests and loyalties, it then strives above all for its own survival (Michels 1911; Panebianco 1988). This ultimate goal conditions the freedom of choice of its leaders and strongly limits the possibilities for changes, especially those affecting the organizational structure. Empirical studies have described cases of important ideological transformations in response to historical developments (e.g., Crewe and Searing 1988; Tarchi 1997; Bosco 2000) and shifts in public opinion (Adams et al. 2004). However, party organizational structure has proved to be less flexible (see also Piccio 2011). The need of the internal bureaucracy to self-reproduce, as well as the 'legacy' of the genetic model (i.e. the basic political-administrative characteristics imprinted on the party by its founders) prevent adventurous changes in this sphere (Panebianco 1988).

This evidence has implications for the issue at hand. Given that changes in the organizational dimension are the least likely to occur, movements can identify them as a crucial sign of a party's responsiveness. At the grassroots level, both the availability of local party headquarters and the organization of joint events can facilitate processes of positive interaction. At the top of the party, the introduction of thematic forums open to movement spokespersons, or the effort to include prominent movement figures within the party administration, or appoint them as external consultants on specific issues, can be interpreted as an opportunity for the movement to directly influence the party agenda. Moreover, given the prominence that movements assign to democratic procedures, each attempt at democratization of the party might encourage the involvement of movement activists in party activities. Therefore, organizational changes are expected to facilitate a deep-rooted collaboration with movements. In contrast, small changes in this dimension could imply separation between the two actors and more conflictual interactions.

As far as the cultural affinity between social movements and political parties is concerned, movement scholars have stressed that divergence on key issues has prompted a dynamic of hostility. For instance, in Britain, movements were critical of New Labour's support for the Iraq war, whilst in Germany they collaborated with the social-democrats to oppose it (della Porta and Diani 2006, 214). Similarly, the positive vision that the institutional centre-left has maintained towards free market globalization has hindered good relations with the GJM. After the protests in Genoa in July 2001 more nuanced stances on this issue emerged within the Italian Left Democrats ('Democratici di Sinistra-DS) and the French Socialist Party ('Partie Socialiste'-PS),

leaving room for some sort of dialogue (Andretta et al. 2002). Building on this evidence, I expect that changes in the cultural dimension of the RLPs will retroact on the social movements' attitude towards them, either in the sense of a rapprochement or of estrangement. In particular, it will be interesting to verify whether the experience of government (in 2006 in Italy and in 2015 in Greece) pushes the RLPs to distance themselves from the issues raised by social movements thus affecting the processes of interaction.

The latter point is also linked with changes in the parties' coalitional strategies and their role in national government. As previously mentioned, social movements of the third cycle have tended to criticise mainstream political parties for their involvement in what they consider to be a post-democratic system of governance (della Porta 2013). Unlike previous movement waves, they have targeted social-democratic parties as part of the problem rather than regarding them as possible allies. This trend exacerbated after the economic and financial crisis, when the social-democrats supported anti-austerity measures. Consequently, changes in the positioning of the RLPs within the system of party alliances are expected to retroact strongly on the attitudes of social movements towards them. In general, we can suppose that movements prefer to collaborate with parties that are mostly independent from those of the centre-left. With respect to government, they are more likely to collaborate with RLPs in a position of leadership (as in the SYRIZA case) rather than with those involved in a broad governing coalition oriented to implement moderate policies (as in the PRC case). However, constraints and opportunities deriving from the political context might also be taken into account in discussions within movements. This is true especially for Italy, where a fundamentally bipolar party system has forced parties to forge electoral alliances to maximise their votes. In this case, in their choice regarding whether or not to support an RLP in its decision to join a centre-left electoral, and even governing coalition, social movements would surely consider the advantages offered by the party's good electoral results to better channel their claims within institutions. After the last economic crisis, however, it is more likely that the absolute distance of the RLPs from the mainstream parties is a crucial presupposition for any kind of cooperation.

2.5.1 Measuring the outcome

In this Chapter, I have pointed out the factors that might lie behind cases of success and failure in building synergies. Cooperation, tension and indifference will be assessed primarily qualitatively, through the accounts of movement activists and party members.

2.6 Methodology and data collection

As discussed above, the case-oriented research strategy requires an in-depth investigation of the cases chosen, highlighting similarities and dissimilarities, and empirically testing the theoretical propositions presented in Chapter One. To this end, I adopt multiple methods of analysis and data collection.

Since political parties and social movements both act in a broader political environment, an analysis of the institutional context is presented in Chapter Three. Here, I focus in particular on the conformation and evolution of the party systems in Italy and in Greece in order to identify the opportunities and constraints for both the RLPs and the social movements. This analysis of the political context is based on institutional sources, in particular electoral data provided by the Ministry of the Interior of each country and on the available secondary literature. In this study, I do not engage with a systematic analysis of the economic crisis that has shaken both countries. However, I refer to the recent economic evolutions where these have had a strong impact on the political and social context, prompting movement protests as well as altering the competitive dynamics between the political parties. Again, I rely on secondary literature and, when necessary, on socio-demographic data provided by national and European institutions.

As regards the social movements, I follow two strategies of analysis. In Chapter Four, I provide an in-depth description of the general characteristics of the GJM and the anti-austerity protests, stressing the differences between the two. I then focus more specifically on the Italian and Greek social movements. I highlight the innovations that each movement introduced at the organizational, cultural and strategic levels to assess what transformations (if any) the RLPs set in motion under their impulse. This qualitative study of the social movements is based on secondary literature and has the effect of producing a systematisation of our current knowledge of the movements involved in the third cycle mobilization in Italy and Greece. In the empirical part of the thesis, I provide a more personal contribution to the understanding of these movements by analysing their strategies at different points in time, with particular attention to the linkage tactics used with RLPs, and the process through which these strategies are decided and implemented.

This second part of the analysis is based on the qualitative 'semi-structured' interviews which I conducted at the national level in both countries with spokespersons and significant figures of SMOs as well as rank-and-file activists.[11] Qualitative interviews are an important data source in social movement studies, because they offer an understanding of social movement mobilization from the perspective of the activists (della Porta 2014; Blee and Taylor 2002). This type of interview has nothing of the rigidity of the 'structured' interviews typically associated with survey research, which adhere to a rigid schedule of questions (referred to as a 'questionnaire'), which each respondent is asked in the same way (Blee and Taylor 2002). In semi-structured interviews, the researcher "relies on an 'interview guide' that includes a consistent set of questions or topics" but leaves the interviewee the possibility to digress, while interactions during the conversation provide more extensive and frank information (ibid., 92). This method of inquiry is "especially useful in studies where the goals are exploration, discovery, and interpretation of complex social events and processes" (ibid., 93) as is the case here. Following a common methodological practice in movement research (ibid.), I will combine it with documentary methods. As regards the interviewees, I aimed to select individuals from among the Italian and Greek GJM activists and anti-austerity protesters who "have different levels of activism and participation in different factions of a movement" (ibid., 100). In line with the focus on national dynamics, the interviews

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[11] The list of the movement activists I interviewed is reported in Appendix One.

were collected in important cities experiencing high levels of movement mobilization: Rome, Florence and Naples in Italy, Athens and Thessaloniki in Greece.

In Italy, I made contact with the first set of activists through direct connections, that is, the relationships I had established in the course of my own participation in social movements. I was then helped by those initial interviewees to contact other activists. I finally interviewed ten people who can be considered representative of the internal forces of the Italian movements: two belonged to local Social Forums, one to the peace movement, one to the rank-and-file trades unions, one to the national cultural association ARCI, two to the student organizations, one to the European Social Forum (ESF) and the water movement, two to the Marxist-Leninist area.[12]

In Greece, I selected activists with the help of three key informants working as political sociologists and close to the national movement context, and was then helped by the interviewees themselves to expand my sample. I interviewed nine people with varied political leanings: one belonged to the Greek Social Forum, one to the network for social and political rights 'Diktyo', one to the water movements, one to the cultural association Red Notebook, two to the social solidarity networks, two to the anarchist area, one to the immigrants' movement. As often happens in qualitative social research (Payne and Payne 2004), the key informants were fundamental sources of information as they assisted me in the development of the systematic comparison between the two countries, clarifying various important aspects of Greek politics.

Other qualitative data come from documents published on- and off-line by movements.[13] Movement documents are used first as historical sources (Clemens and Hughes 2002), useful for understanding their strategies, singling out their goals, means, type of actions and external alliances, as well as sources for critical 'discourse analysis' (Wodak et al. 2008), from which we can extract how movements judged the behaviour of political parties and their MPs.

To complement this qualitative research and measure the cases of 'double membership' (see Chapter One, Section 1.4.2), I use the survey data collected by researchers for two cross-national comparative projects: Democracy in Europe and the Mobilization of Society (Demos 2004-2008; http://demos.iue.it), which focuses on the GJM in Europe and provides data collected among participants in the first and fourth European Social Forums (Florence and Athens respectively), both of which are relevant for the purposes of this study; and Protest Survey (2009-2013; www.protestsurvey.eu), which focuses on protest demonstrations during the economic and financial crisis, providing important data about the relations between movement activists and political parties. Unfortunately, this latter database does not include data about Greece. For this reason, the cases of 'double membership' in both anti-austerity movements and SYRIZA are assessed only qualitatively through the account of the interviewees.

The primary source of evidence for the analysis of party transformations are party texts.[14] To map transformations in the organizational dimension I examined the constitutions of each party through time. Changes in the preambles of the constitutions, where the values that inspire the action of the party are stated, also indicate innovations in the party's political culture. Other information about organizational innovations is comprised in the written statements approved

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[12] The internal components of the Italian and the Greek movements are presented in Chapter Four.
[13] For the detailed list of the movement documents consulted see Appendix Two.
[14] For the detailed list of the party documents consulted see Appendix Two.

by party executive organs. The parties' stance on movement themes, as well as the evolutions in strategic alliances, were inferred from the official documents discussed during party congresses. Congress proceedings, which include both documents brought forward by the party majority and those proposed by the minority, are particularly useful to reconstruct the debates between different internal factions. All the aforementioned party documents are subjected to critical 'discourse analysis'. This technique allows me to isolate the parts regarding social movements or their mobilization themes from the texts, and also highlight the struggle within the party on issues regarding connections with social movements.

In order to account for the opinions of party leaders on movement-related issues, as well as congress proceedings, I analysed articles in party and non-party newspapers ('Liberazione' in Italy and 'Avgi' in Greece), books, official speeches and statements by party leaders mainly published on party web sites. For the analysis of both party and social movement documents, I decided not to use the structured 'content analysis' methodology, based on coding techniques, but to carry out a thorough qualitative examination of the texts in their entirety. I used my qualitative judgment as a researcher to identify the transformative actions undertaken by the RLPs under the influence of social movements.

Moreover, I carried out semi-structured interviews with representative figures and grassroots members of the parties being studied.[15] Although rarely used by political scientists, qualitative interviews are particularly useful to complement the analysis of official documents, thus providing a more realistic account of the actual party transformations and of the dynamic interactions with social movements at the grassroots level. While official documents are a good source for examining formal party structure, they reveal little about members' agency, in particular their perceptions and the meaning they attach to their experiences. Qualitative interviews bring to the study of political parties the same advantages recognized by movement scholars: they "allow scrutiny of meaning, both how activists regard their participation and how they understand their social world […], bring human agency to the centre of [party] analysis […], generate representations that embody the subjects' voices, minimizing, at least as much as possible, the voice of the researcher" (Blee and Taylor 2002, 95-96).

The national samples were formed using the same method adopted for the sample of social movement activists: through personal contacts in Italy and a snowball technique in Greece. In Italy, I interviewed ten party members: three pure rank-and-file members, four can be considered party meso-level officials, one had been an elected representative, two had covered an executive role. In Greece, I interviewed fifteen people: two rank-and-file members, four national MPs and one regional representative, six party meso-level officials, one former member of the SYRIZA Secretariat and one member of the Secretariat of the SYRIZA Youth.

Some quantitative data were also collected. For the analysis of the political culture and transformations in the forms of action used by members of the Italian parties, I rely on the survey data collected by the Italian Observatory on the Transformation of Political Parties, for which I have worked as a researcher. This Observatory owns survey data collected at the national congresses of all the Italian parties. In the cases of PRC and SEL, the questionnaire distributed to congress participants respectively in 2005 and 2010 explicitly addresses questions

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[15] The list of the party representatives and the party grassroots members I interviewed is reported in Appendix One.

about the interactions between party members and social movements. For the PRC, I also have at my disposal further data provided by the periodical internal surveys carried out by the party's national Enquiry Department. Finally, for SYRIZA, I made contact with the Department for Political Planning, responsible for the polls among party members and electorate, which allowed me to access the internal survey data collected in 2013 during the first congress of SYRIZA as a unitary party.

2.7 Summary

Chapter Two presented the research design and cases selected for this study. I emphasized how case-oriented comparison is particularly suited for exploratory research in a little studied area and the formulation of a preliminary set of propositions that might explain the processes of strategic interaction between established RLPs and social movements in recent times. Because of the limited attention that this phenomenon has received so far, a case-oriented strategy implying an in-depth analysis of the cases under consideration seemed the most appropriate research strategy. The political parties whose changes under the influence of social movements are observed here are the Communist Refoundation Party (PRC) and Left Ecology and Freedom (SEL) in Italy; the Coalition of the Left, of Movements and Ecology (SYN) and the Radical Left Coalition (SYRIZA) in Greece. The movements considered are the GJM and the anti-austerity movements. I highlight how, despite all belonging to the same party family, the political parties chosen differ from each other on some basic characteristics, providing an insight into which factors influence the interactions with the social movements within the same party family.

The social movements differ in their attitude towards institutional politics, not only among themselves but also within the same movement and at different moments. This variation helps in assessing whether the movements' characteristics play a role in shaping the individual political parties' reactions to them. In sum, the selected cases combined with a diachronic research design offer the possibility of multiple comparisons: across countries, across time, within the same country, across the same party family, across different types of social movements.

The conceptualization and operationalization of the party-movement strategic interactions were presented. In order to observe a broad range of processes of interaction taking place both at the grassroots and the top level of the party structure, I adopted a wide definition of strategic interactions between RLPs and social movements. These interactions are conceptualized as consisting of both the transformative actions that parties undertake to strengthen their connection with the social movements, and the reactions of social movements to the party transformations. I then described the data, methods and sources used in this thesis, emphasizing that the methodological framework is basically qualitative as it allows an in-depth analysis of the processes that produce these interactions.

Part two

The context

3. The institutional context

Chapter Three explores the main characteristics of the Italian and Greek institutional contexts from the 1990s to 2015. An in-depth analysis of the environment in which the phenomenon under examination developed is common in case-oriented comparisons. Indeed, this type of research design "usually points at similarities and differences through dense *narratives*, with a large number of characteristics being taken into account, often together with their interaction within long-lasting processes" (della Porta 2008, 204). Following this research tradition, in this Chapter I locate the Italian and Greek manifestations of the GJM and the anti-austerity protests, as well as the birth and evolution of the national RLPs, within their respective institutional environments. Three contextual dimensions are of particular importance here: the type of relations between political parties and civil society, the format and functioning of the party system, the patterns of government formation.

In Chapter One, I indicated that the third cycle of protest emerged in a context of widespread mistrust towards representative institutions (see also della Porta 2013). Moreover, party literature had understood social movements as a symptom of the crisis affecting big political parties (Pasquino 1980; Lawson and Merkel 1988; Mair 1998; Katz 1990; Schmitter 2001). More recent contributions have highlighted the growing distancing of social movements and social democratic parties (della Porta 2007a; Roberts 2014, 2017). I consider these processes of disaffection towards political institutions and of partisan de-alignment to have consequences for the issue at hand, as they appear to have influenced the emergence of social movements as well as their perception of political parties. Based on the studies mentioned above therefore, in Section 3.1 I will analyse the relations between political parties and civil society in both Italy and Greece from the 1990s onwards.

The Chapter continues with a comparative analysis of the Italian and Greek party systems, paying special attention to the birth and electoral history of the RLPs in order to stress the systemic opportunities and constraints that might have affected their relations with social movements. The literature clearly states that systemic factors are important to explain the strategic choices made by parties of the left and, in turn, the presence of institutional allies increases opportunities for the movements to develop and consolidate. First, the social-democratic left has appeared more supportive of social movements where the left/right divide did not narrow (Tarrow 1990). Therefore, I shall investigate the state of left/right competition to understand the attitude of PASOK towards social movements in Greece, and the heirs of the PCI (PdS/DS/PD) in Italy and the political space available to RLPs. Second, electoral competition has influenced the reaction of potential allies towards social movements. Not only does political instability favour the rise of social movements, but it also pushes leftist parties or new challengers to support social movements in order to expand their electoral pool (Piven and Cloward 1977; Tilly 1978; Jenkins 1985). In Section 3.2, I reconstruct the dynamics of electoral competition in Italy and Greece and the electoral trend of the political parties, focusing on the radical left.

In Section 3.3, I examine the formation, composition and duration of the national governments in both countries and also highlight the phases in which the RLPs supported or even participated

in the cabinets. Movement literature has suggested that the position of political parties towards social movements is influenced by whether they are in government or not. According to Kriesi (1991; 1989b), social-democrats were more supportive of social movements when they were in opposition, while, when in power, their openness to emerging demands was limited by budgetary or other constraints. Similarly, March (2011; 2017) highlighted the negative consequences of Rifondazione's membership of a centre-left government between 2006-2008, while today there is an on-going debate concerning the effects that the SYRIZA-led government policies are having on the relationship between the party and its social base (Souvlis and Fischer 2017). Considering that other studies have not confirmed the assumption that 'proximity to government' plays a role in this relationship (della Porta and Rucht 1995, van Dyke 2003), it seems important here to illustrate when and under what conditions the Italian and Greek RLPs undertook the responsibility of governing. Meanwhile the assessment of the effects of RLPs' participation in government on their relationships with the social movements will be given in the empirical part of the thesis.

3.1 The relation between parties and society in Italy and Greece since the 1990s

In this Section, I trace the evolution of the relations between political parties and civil society in Italy and Greece. For this purpose, I apply the quantitative (election turnout, electoral volatility, party membership, birth of new parties) and qualitative (presence of social movements) indicators that are currently taken as evidence of political parties' declining ability to connect with civil society. The focus is on the 1990s and the 2000s, but references are also made to the countries' respective traditions. The analysis highlights a commonality between the two countries, as they both exhibit high levels of distrust of political parties and dissatisfaction with politics, but also important differences in the timing and the modes of expression of political dissatisfaction which are also linked to the economic situation of the two countries.

In Italy, the political system was already struck by a profound crisis of legitimacy in the early 1990s. This crisis was related to the discovery of an entrenched mechanism of corruption which involved the main political parties (with the exception of the Italian Communist Party) and emerged in a context of economic decline. Although it was not involved in the corruption scandals, the Italian Communist Party ('Partito Comunista Italiano'-PCI) was facing its own identity crisis, derived from the failure of the communist experience in the Soviet countries, which was dealt with the transformation into a catch-all party. The corruption scandals accelerated the process of dealignment between political parties and their followers, as testified by a fall in the membership, growing electoral volatility as well as a continued detachment from the electoral system in the form of abstention. Within this context, the Italian expression of the GJM was particularly massive and active.

In Greece, instead, the 1990s were characterised by prolonged economic growth and, despite high levels of clientelism, a moment of reckoning, with the public exposure of corrupt politicians, never occurred. For all these reasons, political parties were able to retain high membership, volatility remained low, and electoral participation was high until 2008. Dissatisfaction with the

political system, although present, was not clearly expressed but remained latent until the country's economy performance began to worsen by the mid-2000s, affecting especially young people.

Another difference between the two countries regards the ways in which political dissatisfaction was expressed. In Italy, citizens' detachment from institutional politics had already begun in the 1960s and continued in the following decades. It finally reached its apex in 1992, when the judicial system, supported by critical public opinion, took action and the traditional party system was swept away. In Greece, instead, the relations between political parties and civil society remained stable until a deep economic crisis hit the country in 2008. Combined with the worsening of the national economy, latent frustration with the functioning of the political system exploded into a violent outburst. Anti-austerity social movements mobilized intensively and, as happened in Italy at the beginning of the 1990s, an acute process of party dealignment rapidly took place.

Finally, it is worth noting that differences in the economic context exist. When the GJM emerged, the Greek economy was still growing, while Italy was facing a period of stagnation following a decade of low growth. Yet when the great global economic crisis struck the two countries, provoking social reaction in the form of anti-austerity movements, the crisis and its effects were stronger in Greece than in Italy. These different economic and social conditions clearly facilitated the emergence of a GJM stronger in Italy than in Greece and, vice versa, an anti-austerity movement that was better organized and more enduring in Greece than in Italy.

3.1.1 Italy: a history of interrupted relations

Italian political scientists consider 1992, when the judicial enquiry on political corruption known as 'Mani pulite' (Clean hands) began, to be the turning point in the history of relations between civil society and institutional politics. It represented the apex of the processes of citizens' detachment from political parties and disenchantment towards politics which had started three decades before. Italian political parties lost their 'monopoly' on both political participation and representation in late 1960s, when new social movements appeared (Tarrow 1989; Pizzorno 1980; Sivini 1969). Independent social mobilizations were a novelty in a country where, since the end of the Second World War, strong mass parties had deeply permeated civil society through their ideologies and capillary presence on the ground (Pizzorno 1993; Morlino 1998). Party identification started to decline under the impulse of social, economic and cultural transformations. A more independent, opinion-oriented and often critical attitude towards political institutions progressively emerged. Used to acting in a structured, controlled and organized civil society, the bureaucratic machines of the old parties proved incapable of adapting to the needs of a more fluid and secular population. At beginning of the 1980s, Pasquino (1980) concluded that "parties no longer adequately perform their fundamental functions" (p. 143).

Unlike other European countries, however, the Italian parties were so strong and so deeply rooted that their structures and electoral results were affected only slowly. Moreover, their traditional power within public institutions did not weaken. Their crisis of representation evolved gradually until it exploded in the 1990s, when the party system itself collapsed under the pressure of the judicial system and public opinion (see Section 3.2.1). As regards the economic situation,

between 1991 and 2001 the average rate of growth in Italy was inferior to the rest of Europe. The economy continued to worsen in the years after 2000 due to stagnation and falling investments (Pianta 2012, 37), yet the effects of the 2008 global economic crisis, although serious, were far less violent than in Greece.

Compared with other Western European countries, election turnout remained high for fifty years: from 1948 to 1979, the participation rate in the national elections was above 90 per cent. Abstention started growing in the early 1980s, became more visible in the 1990s, and since then is seen as a constant trend declining even further during the recent economic crisis: in 2013, only 75.2 per cent of citizens exercised their right to vote. Two interpretations seek to explain this phenomenon. First, the generational turnover resulted in a physiological fading of the ideological tension typical of Italian politics. Older age cohorts were naturally replaced by younger age cohorts, which were less ideologically characterized and less involved in party activism. Second, the corruption scandals of the 1990s generated a sense of politics' inefficiency and widespread disillusion (De Lucia and Cataldi 2013). In the wake of the economic and financial crisis, political disillusion transformed into a "total delegitimisation" (ibid., 48) of the political system due to the inability of the main parties to solve the country's problems and their acceptance of austerity policies.

Electoral volatility measures confirm that a significant process of party dealignment has taken place in Italian society in the last twenty years. No major shifts were noted until total volatility suddenly jumped first to 19 per cent in 1992 and then to 36.7 per cent in 1994, reaching the critical value of 39.1 per cent in 2013 (Chiaramonte and Emanuele 2013).[16]

Party membership decreased over time. Total party membership expressed as a percentage of the electorate (M/E) has dropped from 12.7 per cent in the 1960s to 9.7 per cent in the 1980s, reaching only 4 per cent at the turn of the millennium (van Biezen et al. 2012, 45). In absolute numbers, from the 1980s to the 2000s Italian parties have lost about two million members (ibid.). Moreover, most of them face a frequent turnover of members signalling dissatisfaction and low loyalty (della Porta 2015b, 65-75).

To complete the analysis of quantitative indicators, the birth of new parties must be considered. From the foundation of the Republic in 1948 until the end of the 1980s "the picture has been of substantial continuity" (Chiaramonte and Emanuele 2013, 237).[17] In the 1990s new parties proliferated, though many of them were never institutionalized and they rapidly dissolved: only four of the sixty parties that ran for the six national elections held from 1994 to 2013 were present in every round (the Communist Refoundation Party, the Greens, the Südtiroler Volkspartei and the Northen League). The effect of reorganizing the old parties under different labels was instability which signalled turbulence in the party system rather than the presence of new parties. High rates of 'effective party innovation' were instead recorded in the elections held in 1994 (21) and 2013 (34.8) (ibid.).[18] In 1994 the novelty was 'Forza Italia'-FI, the right-wing

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[16] A score of more than 20 is considered 'highly volatile' (Mair 2011).

[17] During the 1970s and 1980s, four small new parties (the Radicals, Proletarian Democracy, the Party of Proletarian Unity, the Greens) appeared. However, their electoral impact was modest (Chiaramonte and Emanuele 2014).

[18] Two measures have been developed to count 'new parties': the rate of 'standard innovation' considers those parties whose symbols and names were never used in previous elections to be 'new'; the rate of 'effective party innovation' considers only those parties whose organizational model, identity and leadership are completely original to be 'new'. The rate of 'standard innovation' also scores very high in the elections of 1994 (51.4), 2001 (32.9), 2008

party founded by Silvio Berlusconi, which immediately gained the majority of votes (21 per cent). In 2013, the new parties were instead three – the Five Star Movement (25.1 per cent), Civic Choice (8.6 per cent) and the small Act to Stop the Decline (1.1 per cent). When anti-austerity movements mobilized, the disaffection with traditional political parties was therefore even higher than that registered in 1994: more than one third of valid votes went to parties that had never been present in political elections before, and had not originated from past political experiences. The chosen qualitative indicator, represented by the presence of social movements, also confirms that the crisis of representation of the Italian political parties was acute in the decades under consideration. The tense relationship between political parties and civil society has had an influence on the forms of citizens' political participation. First, the decline in party identification has left space for a more issue-oriented and secular political commitment and voting behaviour (Bellucci 2013). Second, as in the 1960s and 1970s (Scoppola 2001, 357-84), the inability of political parties to interpret new social needs and demands has contributed to the appearance of social movements both at the end of the 1990s and again during the economic crisis. The protests against neoliberal globalization arrived at a time when mainstream parties were facing a severe crisis of legitimacy, the economy was in crisis and relations between citizens and institutional politics were close to breaking point. Therefore, the GJM encountered a fertile ground which helped it to flourish. When anti-austerity movements mobilized none of these problems had been resolved.

3.1.2 Greece: from utilitarian quiescence to conflictual relations

During the 1990s, the Greek political system enjoyed greater legitimacy than the Italian system due to the economic growth that took place under the guidance of the social-democratic Panhellenic Socialist Movement ('Panellinio Sosialistiko Kinima'-PASOK). Relations between political parties and citizens mostly rested on clientelistic channels, which had been a constant element in Greek politics since the foundation of the party system in the 1920s (Diamandouros 1984; Lyrintzis 1984). Until 1967, when a military coup d'état established a seven-year dictatorship, membership in political parties was rare. It increased when democracy was restored in 1974, following the attempt of the main political parties – the right wing New Democracy ('Nea Dimokratia'-ND) and PASOK – to become modern mass parties able to interpret the societal transformations that had followed the belated industrialisation of the country. The attempt was only partially successful. The older ND continued to rely on its clientelistic networks to communicate with the electorate and rally mass support (Lyrintzis 1984), while PASOK was able to build similar connections during the nineteen years it was in government. Instability began in 2008, when a combination of economic and political factors produced a deep crisis of political legitimacy. A real 'youth revolt' flared up throughout the country that year, representing a point of rupture in the relationship between party politics and civil society. This timing and the extraordinary intensity of the financial, economic and democratic crisis significantly affected the movements' characteristics in Greece.

(73.1), and 2013 (40.9), but these results still reflect processes of party decomposition and re-composition (Chiaramonte and Emanuele 2014). Therefore, the rate of 'effective party innovation' is the most reliable measure.

The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative indicators allows the identification of two distinct periods: the first from the end of the military dictatorship in 1974 to the beginning of the debt crisis in 2008, and the second from 2008 onwards. In the first period, the relationships between Greek political parties and their constituencies were essentially stable, as confirmed by the values of all quantitative indicators. Despite declining in the mid-1990s, election turnout was generally above 80 per cent (source: International Idea).[19] Electoral volatility was overall contained, and lower than in other European countries (9.3 per cent on average from 1980 to 2005; Bischoff 2013, 547). The parties in parliament were constantly five (Verney 2014).[20] Finally, as an effect of late democratisation in the 1970s, since the 1980s, party membership has increased constantly in both absolute and relative levels and started to decline slightly only in the late 1990s (Van Biezen at al. 2012). Total party membership expressed as a percentage of the electorate (M/E) rose from 3.3 per cent in the 1980s to 6.3 per cent in the 1990s. In the second half of that decade, parties were still growing and the M/E ratio reached 6.8 per cent in 1998. It decreased by just 0.18 per cent between 1998-2008 so that in 2008 it was still 6.6 per cent (ibid., 32). In absolute numbers, from the 1980s to the early 2000s Greek parties gained about 375,000 members (ibid., 44).

Optimism was due to the economic advantages deriving from the country's entrance into the Eurozone: easy access to credit was financing rising living standards, higher rates of consumption and major infrastructure projects (Verney 2014). Unlike the Italian case, the Greek GJM therefore emerged in a climate of political stability and economic euphoria which constrained the movement's opportunity to expand beyond the radical leftists. Despite being an important phenomenon, the GJM in Greece did not represent a genuine wave of popular mobilization but rather an attempt by the political left to restructure itself (Kotronaki 2015).

An interruption of the links between the political system and society became visible in 2008. As Verney (2014) noted, "a political crisis was developing even before the shock announcement of impending national bankruptcy in October 2009" (p. 4). In December 2008, the police murder of a 15-year old boy acted as a catalyst for a massive outpouring of political discontent. Demonstrations took place in all Greek cities, degenerating into violent clashes between young people and the police and extensive damage to property and symbolic targets. The explanation for this youth revolt lies in the economic insecurity of the '700-euro generation' which, despite being highly educated, found its prospects blocked by both the financial crisis and the traditional clientelistic distribution of public resources. Overall, the state appeared more focused on serving particularistic interests than broader societal goals, including economic development. The riots came three months after the collapse of Lehman Brothers, which triggered a crisis throughout the international financial system. In 2008, the Greek economy entered recession, mistrust in public institutions began to grow and intensified during the sovereign debt crisis (Verney 2014).

In 2009, Greece was close to default and was rescued by the European partners through a succession of 'Memoranda' committing the country to drastic fiscal consolidation and extensive structural reform. The Memoranda mandated harsh austerity policies and increasing supervision of policy-making by the Troika formed by the European Commission, the European Bank and

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[19] http://www.idea.int/data-tools/country-view/139/40.

[20] Flash parties proliferated in the electoral contests of 1989 and 1990 due to contingent political factors and the introduction of proportional elections. They were all eclipsed as soon as politics returned to normality and the old electoral law was re-established.

the International Monetary Fund. The new economic measures precipitated the real economy into deeper recession, bankrupting businesses, boosting unemployment and aggravating social inequality. When the government – first PASOK, then ND – accepted administering the austerity measures and the related loss of national sovereignty (Clements et al. 2014), the seeds of political discontent planted in previous years produced results as citizens could now establish a solid link between present economic impoverishment and past corrupt political practices (Altiparmakis forthcoming). This caused widespread indignation towards mainstream parties and provided the background for the transformation of the party system that took place from 2012 onwards (see Section 3.2.2).

The trends of all quantitative indicators point at the intensity of the process of party de-alignment that has taken place in Greek society in the last ten years (see also Verney 2014; Dinas and Rori 2013; Dimitrakopoulos 2012; Gerodimos 2012; Teperoglou and Tsatsanis 2014).[21] Election turnout constantly decreased: from 74.1 per cent in 2007 it fell to 56.6 per cent in the January 2015 elections. Total electoral volatility, never particularly high, reached an impressive 45.9 per cent in the May 2012 elections (Altiparmakis forthcoming; Teperoglou and Tsatsanis 2014). The number of parties in parliament increased to seven and among the new entrants was the anti-system, neo-Nazi Golden Dawn ('Chrysí Avgí'). Once marginal, the radical SYRIZA emerged as the main party of the left while PASOK collapsed, confirming that previous developments were the epiphany of a deeper malaise. The crisis reinforced the anti-party sentiments which had grown especially among the 'post-authoritarian generation'. Indifference was turned into hostility towards the political class, particularly the two major parties, seen as inefficient and corrupt. The validity of this reading of the legitimacy crisis experienced by Greek mainstream parties is supported by the consideration of the qualitative indicator: a massive anti-austerity movement mobilized throughout the country during the entire period. The climate in which this movement developed influenced its magnitude and affected its relationships with political parties. Animated by a sense of outrage, the protesters denounced both the social consequences of austerity policies and the endemic corruption.

3.2 The evolution of the two party systems and the emergence of the RLPs

In this Section, I consider the birth and electoral histories of the Italian and Greek RLPs within the continuing evolution of their respective national party systems. Again, the focus is on the transformations that occurred since the 1990s, though previous configurations are also relevant. It emerges that the main commonality between the two countries is the presence of bipolar competition articulated around a basic left/right divide with different nuances over time. However, while in Greece the competing actors were the two major political parties (PASOK and ND until 2012, and later SYRIZA and ND), in Italy they were the centre-left and centre-right coalitions.

In Italy, the left/right divide was more acute in the 1990s, when the media tycoon and entrepreneur, Silvio Berlusconi, entered politics, giving new vigour to a belated anti-communism.

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[21] Data about the membership in political parties after 2008 are missing for the Greek case.

In response, the left adopted an anti-berlusconian discourse, stressing the dangers for democracy deriving from Berlusconi's conflict of interests. The fear that media, political and (a good share of) economic power would be concentrated in Berlusconi's hands acted as an incentive for the unity of the moderate left and the RLPs. The differentiation between the political left and right favoured consolidation of the Italian GJM, as leftist allies were available to support it (see Chapter Four). The left/right divide progressively narrowed in the second half of the 2000s, when the major parties decided to compete for the centrist electorate and the PRC was expelled by the centre-left coalition, leaving it isolated and irrelevant. Formed in 2010, SEL adopted a moderate profile, which facilitated collaboration with the social-democrats, but complicated its relationship with anti-austerity movements which consequently remained isolated and fragmented.

In Greece we observe a reversed dynamic: the left/right divide, although present, narrowed during the 1990s, with the main parties converging on the need for modernisation of the country and the type of (market-oriented) policies believed necessary to reach this goal. In this context, while the KKE pursued a line of 'purity' and isolation, SYN, the main radical left party, attempted to moderate its discourse to strengthen its relationship with PASOK. As we will see in Chapter Four, while this situation did not favour the development of the GJM, its rise represented an occasion for SYN to reinvent its identity. Since the outbreak of the economic crisis, the conflict between the Greek political parties once more exacerbated and became articulated around the pro-/anti-bailout cleavage which anti-austerity movements had contributed to generating. With PASOK standing in support of the bailout and the consequent austerity measure, its previous political space on the left was occupied by SYRIZA.

Another significant difference regards the political relevance of the RLPs and their connections with the major parties. In Italy, it was the progressive party, born in 1991 out of the dissolution of the PCI, the PDS (DS from 1998 to 2007) that assumed a pivotal role on the left for sixteen years.[22] This party became one of the two pillars of the bipolar system, organizing a large centre-left coalition which also comprised the radical leftist PRC. In Greece, instead, PASOK has been the main leftist actor, while the RLPs (the KKE, SYN and SYRIZA) were niche parties with no connections with each other or with PASOK.

In both cases, this picture changed following the transformation of the two party systems which occurred in the 2010s under the pressure of worsening economic conditions and, as illustrated above, of the legitimacy crisis of mainstream parties and representative democracy itself. Both systems moved away from bipolarism, but the point of the arrival was different: tripolarism in Italy and 'soft bipartism' in Greece.[23]

The role of the RLPs evolved in opposite directions. In Italy, the new centre-left party founded in 2007 – the Democratic Party ('Partito Democratico'-PD) – pursued independence from minor parties, particularly those of the radical left. Never perceived as a real novelty, the PD was not able to perform the leap forward expected by its founders, despite maintaining its leading role in the left. Now excluded from participating in a coalition, the PRC rapidly became marginal. The

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[22] 'Progressive' is the adjective that the heirs of the PCI used to describe their new party (PDS/DS), while the 'socialist' or 'social-democratic' labels were considered controversial and never openly embraced.

[23] Bipartisan competition was restored in 2015. However, we cannot speak of a full return to the two-party system as the winner could not form a single-party government, but was forced to create a coalition cabinet.

protracted political crisis affected the ability of existing political parties, which had participated in previous governing administrations, to interpret popular discontent. Opportunities opened instead for the challenger party Five Star Movement ('Movimento Cinque Stelle'-M5S), which experienced sudden growth.

In Greece, instead, disaffection with political parties was a more recent phenomenon which rapidly flared up when combined with the social consequences of a violent economic crisis. In this case, popular discontent was voiced by the leftist and anti-bailout party, SYRIZA, which had no responsibility for the current democratic and economic crisis. While PASOK imploded, it was replaced by a party which was perceived as truly 'leftist' and opposed to austerity measures.

3.2.1 The Italian party system: from 'polarised pluralism' to 'tripolarism'

The Italian political system entered a phase of turbulence, dating from the judicial enquiry that swept away mainstream parties in 1992 and still on-going. Commonly referred to as the 'Second Republic', this period is characterized by profound changes: the emergence and growth of new political parties, an increase in the levels of party fragmentation, evolution from bipolar to tripolar competition. Founded in 1991, the Communist Refoundation Party (PRC) is a part of this process, although its roots are in the 'First Republic'. Indeed, it first emerged as a reaction to the dissolution of the biggest communist party of the western world, the PCI, which had dominated the Italian left for fifty years.

From the foundation of the Republic in 1948 to 1991, the party system assumed a bipolar form along a communist/anti-communist divide rather than along left/right lines. On the left the large PCI acquired overall hegemony, while on the centre-right, the main actor was the Christian Democratic party ('Democrazia Cristiana'-DC). The number of "relevant parties" (Sartori 1966, 141) – eight and then seven, when the monarchists disappeared in late 1950s – remained fundamentally stable until the mid-1980s. In his well-known interpretation of the First Republic's party system, Sartori (1966; 1976) described it as a 'polarized multipartism' because of the presence of a plurality of parties, two of which were considered anti-systemic (the PCI and the right-wing Italian Social Movement, 'Movimento Sociale Italiano'-MSI), and a high degree of ideological polarization. The presence of two extremist parties left the entire centre to a third force, the DC, which was essential for the formation of government coalitions. The competitive dynamic of the system was centrifugal and, due to their exclusion from the government, the opposition parties were irresponsible. The impossibility of any serious political challenge made the government poorly accountable.

This interpretation was challenged by several scholars. Galli (1966) talked of an 'imperfect two-party system' to stress both the dominant role of the PCI and the DC and the impossibility of any alternation in government due to the exclusion of the PCI from the governmental arena (see Section 3.3.1). Pizzorno (1993) rejected the description of the PCI as an 'anti-system party', because of both its great loyalty to the Republican regime and the full acceptance of democratic rules. Others (Farneti 1985; LaPalombara 1987) noted how the model outlined by Sartori transformed over time: the PCI progressively moderated and increased parliamentary cooperation with the parties in government, while the Socialist Party ('Partito Socialista Italiano'-PSI) started performing a more dynamic role. Considering the lower level of political

competition, Farneti (1985) classified the Italian party system since the 1960s as a 'centripetal pluralism'. The PCI remained however excluded from the governmental game and alternation in power did not take place.

As recalled above, the Italian party system has experienced highly significant changes over the past twenty years. The implosion of the traditional party system in the 1990s was due to a combination of international and domestic factors. The fall of the Berlin Wall led the PCI to abandon its communist identity and change its name to Democratic Party of the Left ('Partito Democratico della Sinistra'-PDS), provoking the split of its left-wing branch to form the PRC. This international event also affected the DC: as its role of bulwark against communism was now less justified, the party started to lose votes in northern Italy in favour of territorial parties. In a short time-span, these smaller local parties unified in the Northern League ('Lega Nord'-LN), a right-wing party that introduced new issues (territorial identity, secession, federalism and anti-fiscal protest) and a new style of communication based on a simple, often crude, language. With the rise of the LN in the north and the DC increasingly becoming a 'southern' party, the territorial cleavage once more came to play a crucial role as it had done in the 1920s (Cotta and Verzichelli 2015).

Another factor pressing for political change was the attitude of the business establishment and the media towards the incumbent political élites, criticized for corruption and indecisiveness in the face of serious national problems. Moreover, the proposal for incisive institutional reforms, involving both the Constitution and the electoral system, gained wider acceptance. Considered respectively as sources of government instability and intra-party fragmentation, both proportional representation and preferential voting were abandoned in 1994 and substituted with a quasi-majority system and blocked electoral lists in accordance with two consecutive consultative referenda.

The judicial campaign against corruption begun in 1992 was however the crucial factor for change. Supported by mass media and public opinion, the action of the judiciary rapidly struck at the national and local leadership of the governing parties. Substantially incapable of renewing their identity and leaderships, the old political parties suffered internal splits and the exodus of top and middle-ranking leaders. The DC transformed into the Italian Popular Party ('Partito Popolare Italiano'-PPI) in 1994 and its right-wing split to form the Christian Democratic Centre ('Centro Cristiano Democratico'-CCD) (Baccetti 2007). Once its Secretary was convicted for political corruption, the PSI became a marginal force. A new centre-left party, the Democratic Alliance ('Alleanza Democratica'-AD), was formed to promote the issue of institutional reforms. The far right MSI, although it remained unaffected by judicial problems, refurbished its image into that of a modern right-wing party, the National Alliance ('Alleanza Nazionale'-AN) (Tarchi 1997). In this fragmented scenario, the real novelty was Forza Italia (FI), the political party launched by the media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi. FI represented a leader-centred and light organization, run by communications experts from the private sector (Poli 2001). At the centre of its political discourse was an appeal to centrist and right-wing voters against the possible rise in power of the post-communists, thus revitalizing the left-right cleavage in the form of an atypical division between anti-communism and anti-berlusconism. On the left, this discursive frame allowed for the creation of large centre-left coalitions, which typically also included the PRC, to impede the rise in power of the berlusconian right.

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Given the high degree of fragmentation and the constraints innate to the electoral system, on the eve of the 1994 national elections the party system came to be articulated around three poles: a left pole dominated by the post-communist party (PDS) and including the PRC, the Greens, AD, other minor groups; a centre pole, made up of the main post-Christian Democratic party (PPI) plus a smaller centrist formation; a right pole with FI, LN, AN and CCD. The competition was however dominated by the duel between Berlusconi and his alliance on the one side and the left on the other. The electoral results gave a new shape to the party system: the centre was seriously defeated and for the first time was no longer dominant, the left failed in its attempt to access government after fifty years of 'conventio ad excludendum', the right scored a victory and FI imposed itself as the strongest party in terms of popular votes. Included in the centre-left coalition, the PRC improved its electoral performance. If in 1992, at its first electoral test, it had obtained 5.6 per cent, in 1994 it won 6 per cent and in 1996 8.6, when it reached its best result in the context of a general affirmation of the left. This dropped significantly in the next elections, in 2001, when the PRC fell to 5 per cent. The reason for this decline is to be found in the presence at the time of a direct competitor on the radical left, the Party of the Italian Communists ('Partito dei Comunisti Italiani'-PdCI), born in 1998 precisely as a splinter of the PRC (see Section 3.3.1). The PRC recovered in the 2006 national elections, the last it contested within the centre-left coalition, gaining 5.8 per cent[24] (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Electoral Results of the PRC and SEL (1993-2015)

Chamber of Deputies

Political Party	Election	Votes	%	±	Seats	±	Rank	Government
PRC	1992	2,204,641	5.6	New	35/630	+35	Fifth	Opposition
	1994	2,343,946	6	+0.4	39/630	+4	Sixth	Opposition
	1996	3,213,748	8.6	+2.6	35/630	-4	Fifth	Support to the Centre-Left Government
	2001	1,868,659	5	-3.6	13/630	-22	Fifth	Opposition
	2006	2,229,464	5.8	+0.8	41/630	+28	Fifth	Membership in the Centre-Left Government
(The Rainbow)	2008	1,124,298	3	-2.8	0/630	-28	Sixth	No Seats
(Civil Revolution)	2013	765,189	2.2	-0.8	0/630	Stable	Seventh	No Seats
SEL	2013	1,089,231	3.2	New	37/630	New	Sixth	Opposition

Senate of the Republic

Political Party	Election	Votes	%	±	Seats	±	Rank	Government
PRC	1992	2,171,950	6.5	New	20/315	+20	Fifth	Opposition
(in the Progressives)	1994	-	-	-	18/315	-2	-	Opposition
(in the Progressives)	1996	934,974	2,9	-	11/315	-7	Fourth	Support to the Centre-Left Government
	2001	1,708,707	5	+2.1	4/315	-7	Third	Opposition
	2006	2,518,361	7.4	+2.4	27/315	+23	Fifth	Membership in the Centre-Left Government
(The Rainbow)	2008	1,053,228	3.2	-4.2	0/315	-27	Sixth	No Seats
(Civil Revolution)	2013	551,064	1.8	-1.4	0/315	Stable	Seventh	No Seats
SEL	2013	911,486	3	New	7/315	New	Sixth	Opposition

Source of Data: Italian Ministry of the Interior

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[24] It should be noted that on two occasions, in 1996 and in 2001, the PRC was not organically a member of the centre-left coalition. In 1996 it had instead agreed to 'opt out' in some electoral districts and in 2001 made a 'non-aggression pact', another soft form of electoral alliance with the centre-left.

Contrary to expectations, the quasi-majoritarian electoral law did not reduce the traditional fragmentation of the party system; however, it contributed to shape a clearer bipolar competition between a centre-left and a centre-right coalition. The centre pole progressively declined in the subsequent elections until it disappeared in 2006. Challenged by the success of FI in conquering the centre-right votes, the small centrist parties were indeed attracted to join either the left or the right pole.

The presence of two opposing coalitions simplified the political landscape and favoured alternation of government (see Section 3.3.1). The period of bipolar competition, from 1994 to 2013, was however marked by a lack of structuring, as proven by the continuous emergence of new political parties and the increased levels of party fragmentation and volatility. Within such a fragmented bipolar system, the many small parties could exert considerable power over the two political coalitions (Chiaramonte 2010) which were both subjected to constant internal tensions (both for the leadership and the definition of programmatic platforms).

It was precisely to overcome these divisions that the project of creating a political formation able to aggregate the stronger forces took shape within the centre-left coalition. In 2007 the PD was founded in a merger between the Democrats of the Left ('Democratici di Sinistra'-DS) and the Democracy Is Freedom-The Daisy party ('Democrazia è Libertà-La Margherita'-DL), heirs respectively of the post-communist and Christian Democratic traditions (Bordandini et al. 2008). Faced with the new majoritarian environment, the PD was conceived as a 'light' party, centered on its leader and able to absorb the centre-left votes (Bordignon 2014). It was founded as a tactical tool to avoid coalitions that would include culturally dissimilar parties, in particular those of the radical left, and was intended to simplify the political system, pushing it towards the two-party competition that existed in most European countries.

Mirroring what happened on the left of the political spectrum, before the 2008 national elections the centre-right forces (FI, AN and minor parties) also coalesced into a federation – the People of Freedom ('Popolo della Libertà'-PDL) – which became a unified party in 2009. At its head, in 2008, Berlusconi returned to government after only two years in opposition, forming his third administration. The PD was defeated and the coalition of the RLPs, 'the Rainbow Left' ('La Sinistra Arcobaleno'), in which the PRC had a pivotal role, proved unable to pass the electoral threshold of 4 per cent, remaining outside the national parliament. In the following years, the PRC did not recover from this disastrous defeat: while it continued to play a (minor) role in municipal and regional administrations, it did not manage to re-gain national representation.

This significant restructuring of the party system led observers to speak of the emergence of an 'almost two-party format', or at least a 'limited bipolarism', where PD and PDL collectively gained more than 70 per cent of the votes (Chiaramonte 2010). This scenario did not stabilize however, as the mainstream parties had to face a new legitimacy crisis linked to the social consequences of the global economic crisis. It was in this context that, in 2009, the majority wing within the PRC split from the party in order to found SEL, a new force aimed at deeply renewing the Italian radical left and broadening its appeal, while at the same time building an electoral deal with the PD both at the local and national level. After disappointing results in the 2009 European elections, when it did not pass the threshold, SEL distinguished itself in 2010 and 2011 when its candidates were elected as mayors in important cities (Milan, Cagliari and Genoa) and President of the Puglia Region. In all these cases, the SEL candidates were selected

in the centre-left 'coalition primaries', at the expense of the PD representatives. Although they gained such positive outcomes at the local level, in the 2013 national elections the party, once more included in the centre-left coalition, scored a modest 3 per cent (Table 3.1).

The general election of 2013 once again changed the nature of the Italian party system, due to the extraordinary rise of the new-born Five Star Movement ('Movimento 5 Stelle'-M5S) – and the sharp electoral decline of the PdL and the PD. Undergoing its first national test, the M5S reached 25.6 per cent, an event that recalled the impressive electoral affirmation of Berlusconi's FI in 1994. The electoral performance of the M5S has been interpreted as the voters' reaction to austerity measures implemented by mainstream political parties, as its electoral manifesto focused on strong criticism of the European institutions and their 'diktats' (Alonso 2014; Franzosi et al. 2015). The M5S also included typical social movement issues in its discourse and programme, such as the re-municipalisation of water provision which had been the issue of a victorious 'referendum from below' held in 2011 (see della Porta 2017), thus strategically supplanting both the PRC and SEL. Moreover, for the first time in the history of the Italian republic, three parties received more than 20 per cent of votes each, thus transforming the previous bipolar system into a tripolar one (Chiaramonte and Emanuele 2014).

3.2.2 The Greek party system: from a typical 'two-party system' to instability

In the three post-war decades from 1951 to 1981, Greek politics was characterised by significant party fragmentation. Three political camps – the right, the left and the centre – were divided into a large number of parties giving rise to a multiple-party system. While some scholars stressed its continuity and stability over the period (Mavrogordatos 1984; Hamann and Sgouraki-Kinsey 1999), Pappas (2003) divided it into two distinct types. A predominant-party system was in place from 1952 to 1963 when only the major right-wing party – initially the Greek Rally ('Ellīnikòs Synagermós'-ES) then its successor National Radical Union ('Ethnikī́ Rizospastikī́ Énōsis'-ERE) – was able to win the majority of seats in parliament and produce single-party governments. A polarised pluralism existed instead from 1963 to 1981, when the political centre was occupied by the Centre Union ('Enosis Kentrou'-EK) and its successors, and politics became immoderate due to the centrifugal drive.

After the dictatorship ended in 1974, the legalization of all political parties and the establishment of the Republic were preconditions for both the democratisation of politics and the modernisation of the party system, as they implied that the anti-communist cleavage that had characterised the post-civil war period had been surmounted (Diamandouros 1894). A left-right divide emerged around the transformation of the ERE into New Democracy (ND) and the foundation of PASOK. ND was conceived as a liberal, right-of-centre formation, in the image of modern Western conservative parties. PASOK was a 'radical socialist party' (Lyrintzis 1984) defined also as 'populist' (Mouzelis 1978; Elephantis 1981) for its catch-all strategy combined with an anti-imperialist and developmental discourse. Its broad base of support included inchoate social forces, radicalised by earlier anti-dictatorship mobilization and galvanised by the party's claim for 'Change' ('Allaghi'). The communist left had reorganised in 1968, when the Communist Party of Greece-Interior ('Kommounistikó Kómma Elládas-Esoterikou'-KKE-Interior), of Eurocommunist inspiration, split away from the Communist Party of Greece

('Kommounistikó Kómma Elládas'-KKE). From this point onwards, the Greek radical left remained divided between an orthodox communist party, the KKE, and a more innovative and open formation, which transformed over time and also changed its name.

The gradual stabilisation of ND and PASOK as, respectively, the main right-wing and left-wing actors, modified the party system. By moderating its discourse, PASOK succeed in supplanting the liberal centre as the main alternative to the conservative right. At the same time, it challenged the communist monopoly over the left (Lyrintzis 1984), confining the communists to a secondary role in new democratic politics. Considered a turning point (Pappas 2003), the 1981 national elections photographed the passage from the segmented politics of the early post-war decades to the concentration of political forces. The reduction in the number of relevant parties coincided with the emergence of a two-party system. From 1981 to the 2012 electoral earthquake, PASOK and ND were the only parties able to conquer the majority of votes and, consequently, of parliamentary seats. Considering all eleven national elections held from 1981 to 2009, their cumulative support amounted on average to 83.8 per cent of the votes.[25] Following each election held during this period, the winner could always count on an ample parliamentary majority, which allowed the formation of a single-party government. The lengthy period of PASOK rule (from 1981 to 1989 and again from 1993 to 2004) was not enough to classify the Greek case as a predominant-party system. The alternation in power of the two major parties typical of two-party system was indeed not only plausible, but actually occurred in 1990 and again in 2004, when ND surpassed PASOK.

In the 1990s the two mainstream parties converged on policy and both became catch-all parties whose main narrative was the country's modernisation (Lyrintzis 2005; Gunther 2005). The content of this modernisation entailed a vision of Europeanisation, pro-market reforms and macroeconomic stability (Kazakos 2004; Featherstone 2005). Rather than on policies, political conflict focused on issues of competence and corruption. In this context, the radical left attempted to renew with the aim of occupying the portion of political space liberated by the shift of PASOK towards the centre. In 1987, the KKE-Interior dropped the communist name and changed it into the Greek Left ('Elliniki Aristera'-EAR) and, in 1989, it allied with the KKE to form the Coalition of the Left and Progress ('Synaspismos tis Aristeras kai tis Proodou'-SYN). This experiment of unification did not last: the KKE reacted to the fall of the Berlin Wall by embracing a nostalgic path and breaking the coalition, thus provoking the more innovative side of the party to split away and continue under the banner of SYN (Kalyvas and Marantzidis 2002; Eleftheriou 2009). In June 1992, the coalition was transformed into a single party, which retained the name Synaspismos.

The competition within the radical left in a period of widespread crisis of the communist movement led to modest electoral results for both the KKE and SYN throughout the whole decade (Kalyvas and Marantzidis 2002) (Table 3.2). In the 1993 national elections, the two parties obtained their worst combined electoral score. However, the KKE (4.5 per cent) emerged well ahead of SYN (2.9 per cent), which even failed to reach the 3 per cent threshold requisite to win parliamentary representation. In the 1996 national elections, both parties improved their score: the KKE gained 5.6 per cent and SYN 5.1, thus re-entering parliament. The 2000

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[25] The combined vote share of the two major parties decreased in 2007 (80 per cent) and 2009 (77.4 per cent) in line with the process of party de-alignment described in this Chapter.

elections confirmed the KKE's stability (5.5 per cent) as opposed to SYN's inability to perform consistently (3.2 per cent). The two parties' electoral results also declined at the municipal level, traditionally an area of communist strength. Confined to the intellectual and urban electorate, SYN exploited the rise of the GJM to overcome its marginality (see Chapter Four) and connect with the other radical left groupings. This process of convergence resulted in the foundation of SYRIZA in 2004 as a coalition of small RLPs. Since its formation, SYRIZA contested all European, national, regional and municipal elections and became perceived as a single party. However, it formally transformed into a unitary political party only in July 2013. Its electoral results remained modest (3.3 per cent in 2004, 5 per cent in 2007, 4.6 per cent in 2009) until the sudden rise in the elections held in May 2012, when the two-party system as a whole began to face a deep crisis.

Table 3.2 Electoral Results of SYN and SYRIZA (1993-2015)

Political Party	Election	Votes	%	±	Seats	±	Rank	Government
SYN	1993	202,887	2.9	New	0/300	0	Fifth	No Seats
	1996	347,236	5.1	+2.2	10/300	+10	Fourth	Opposition
	2000	219,88	3.2	-1.9	6/300	-4	Fourth	Opposition
SYRIZA	2004	241,539	3.3	+0.1	6/300	Stable	Fourth	Opposition
	2007	361,211	5	+1.7	14/300	+8	Fourth	Opposition
	2009	315,627	4.6	-0.4	13/300	-1	Fifth	Opposition
	May 2012	1,061,265	16.8	+12.2	52/300	+39	Second	Opposition
	June 2012	1,655,022	26.9	+10.1	71/300	+19	Second	Opposition
	Jan. 2015	2,245,978	36.3	+8.5	149/300	+78	First	Coalition Government SYRIZA-ANEL
	Sept. 2015	1,925,904	35.5	-0.8	145/300	-4	First	Coalition Government SYRIZA-ANEL

Source of Data: Greek Ministry of the Interior; N.B. Unicameral Parliament

As Teperoglou and Tsatsanis (2014) highlighted, "The economic crisis in Greece has acted as a catalyst for the acceleration of longer-term processes in much the same way as the 'Tangentopoli'[26] affair triggered the transformation of the Italian party system after 1992" (p. 99). The PASOK government's acceptance of the first Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Greek government and its creditors in Spring 2010 ended the period of consensus politics. As public debate started to focus on the MoU terms, a new divide between the pro- and anti-bailout factions emerged affecting political competition (Dinas and Rori 2013). Initially, the ND, in particular, had furiously contested the agreement (ibid.), but when the PASOK government signed the second bailout in October 2011, it was coldly received by PASOK MPs themselves and again firmly opposed by the ND. When Prime Minister George Papandreou resigned under popular pressure, ND relented and accepted to participate in a government with

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[26] 'Tangentopoli' (bribesville) is the name used to describe the corrupt political system that was brought to surface by the 'Mani Pulite' ('Clean Hands') investigation in 1992.

PASOK and the Popular Orthodox Rally ('Laikós Orthódoxos Synagermós'-LAOS) aimed specifically at approving the second bailout and calling new elections.[27]

Acceptance of the second bailout by the two major parties profoundly changed political competition: the political conflict polarised around the issue and parties opposed to the terms of the agreement emerged on both the left and right of the spectrum. Polarisation on economic matters was coupled with polarisation on a new cleavage between 'old', corrupt parties and 'new', untainted ones (Altiparmakis forthcoming). The scale and duration of the austerity programme led to wide protest and disillusionment with mainstream parties, as the same political parties that had built a clientelistic and corrupted system based on uncontrolled misspending of funds were now asking sacrifices from the Greek people to atone for their past sins. In this setting, challengers could attack the major parties both on the austerity measures and on the need to renew the political personnel. The anti-bailout parties did not only emphasise their anti-austerity credentials, but also made a virtue out of their governmental inexperience. This type of discourse especially favoured SYRIZA. First, it could answer to the quest for political renewal, presenting itself as a 'new' party, external to the past clientelistic system and opposed to the 'old' establishment. Second, it gained credit as the only true leftist party in contrast to PASOK which was now closely associated with the bailouts and austerity measures.

The two-party system collapsed in the national elections of May 2012, which stand out for the high degree of fragmentation (the number of effective parties rose to 9), astonishing volatility (45.9 per cent) and acute polarisation (especially on economic issues) compared with previous elections (Voulgaris and Nikolakopoulos 2014; Vasilopoulou and Halikiopoulou 2013; Teperoglou and Tsatsanis 2014; Verney 2014; Katsanidou and Otjes 2015). The three governing parties were severely punished. ND fell from 33.5 per cent of the vote in 2009 to 18.9 per cent, PASOK dropped from 44 per cent to 13.2 per cent and LAOS evaporated. As the protest vote was dispersed in multiple directions, the KKE saw only a minor increase (from 7.5 per cent to 8.5). The smallest party in the previous parliament, SYRIZA obtained 16.8 per cent, tripling its share and emerging as the second political force.

The repeat national elections of June 2012 saw the further decline of PASOK and the parallel rise of SYRIZA as respectively they obtained 12.3 and 27 per cent. The party system re-equilibrated in the January 2015 elections, when PASOK collapsed and a new bipartisan competition between SYRIZA and ND replaced the old one. SYRIZA imposed itself as the main anti-austerity and anti-establishment party and voters flocked to it as a counter to the neoliberal, 'old' ND. During the electoral campaign, PASOK and ND were again situated on the pro-bailout pole. This time, the discord between its centre-left profile and its actual policies precipitated PASOK to just 4.7 per cent of the vote. SYRIZA benefited most from the decline of PASOK with its share increasing dramatically throughout this period, reaching 36.3 per cent. It became the governing party in a coalition with the right-wing anti-bailout Independent Greeks ('Anexartitoi Ellines'-ANEL).

The new government engaged in six months of negotiation with the country's creditors, but could not avoid the imposition of a third bailout accompanied by a new MoU. Having signed

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[27] This choice triggered an exodus of anti-bailout ND MPs, showing that the new 'bailout cleavage' also divided the parties internally. On the vote of the second bailout, an unprecedented 43 MPs ignored party whips and voted against.

another deal with the European creditors and the IMF, SYRIZA abandoned the anti-bailout rhetoric and instead emphasized its 'newness' and will to safeguard the welfare state. As a result, in the second elections of 2015, held in September, political conflict was again structured around two parties (one leftist, the other rightist) competing over the issues of competence and bailout management. The pro- /anti-bailout conflict that had dominated the political discourse between 2010 and 2015 was almost neutralised and a more traditional left-right confrontation emerged. While SYRIZA stressed democratic renewal and the welfare theme, ND re-embraced economic liberalism, proposing a 'less tax, more spending cuts' version of the bailout. The bailout issue was therefore moulded into a more familiar left-right format over the appropriate balance between welfare, fiscal prudence and taxation. The anti-bailout rhetoric was only maintained by the SYRIZA splinter, Popular Unity ('Laïkí Enótita'-LAE), and partially by the KKE and Golden Dawn.

In sum, throughout the debt crisis, the Greek party system transformed under economic duress and political discontent. A period of high instability favoured the rise of anti-austerity movements in the social arena and of SYRIZA in the institutional sphere. Bipartisan competition was restored in January 2015 when SYRIZA clearly replaced PASOK as the major centre-left party. The political conflict, extremely heated through the entire period, was more moderate in the September 2015 elections, with consequences on social movements, as their previous main party ally, SYRIZA, now appears to be 'normalised'.

3.3 Government composition in Italy and Greece and the role of RLPs

As regards the formation, composition and duration of governments, the present analysis highlights similarities and differences between Italy and Greece. From the 1990s to the outbreak of the economic crisis, governments in both countries were the result of the popular vote which ensured alternation in power between the right and the left. In Greece, however, the two major political parties alternated in governing the country, while in Italy, alternation took place belatedly and involved a centre-left and a centre-right coalition. This difference has influenced the duration of the cabinets which coincided with the duration of the legislature in Greece, while in Italy they have been traditionally short-lived. Moreover, in Italy the presence of opposing coalitions had the effect of including the PRC in the parliamentary majority that supported the first centre-left government (1996-1998) and even in the government itself (in the biennium 2006-2008). In Greece, instead, the RLPs remained outside the governing majorities until SYRIZA became the first national party in 2015 and formed a government with ANEL as junior partner, thus enjoying greater autonomy than the Italian cousins.

An important similarity between the two countries regards the effects of the economic and financial crisis on the executives. In Greece, the tradition of single-party governments was sharply interrupted leading to the formation of three coalition governments. Moreover, two of them collapsed before the end of the legislature and the third (SYRIZA-ANEL) is still in office (2018). In Italy, the crisis has produced majorities fabricated in parliament and grand coalition

governments which did not obtain the support of the sole radical left-wing party present in parliament at this time, SEL (now renamed Italian Left, 'Sinistra Italiana'-SI).

In the empirical part of the thesis and more specifically in Chapter Seven, I will consider whether the participation of the PRC in the centre-left government and the establishment of SYRIZA in power had consequences on their relationship with the social movements.

3.3.1 The government composition in Italy: from the 'blocked democracy' to alternation

Until the watershed of the 1992 elections, the Italian political system took the form of a 'blocked democracy' (Galli 1996). The DC solidly held the relative majority of votes and ran the country uninterruptedly for 44 years. The PCI, constantly the second party, was tacitly excluded from the governmental arena due to its communist identity. Not only did alternation of power never take place, but the Communists were also considered as a force that could never join a governing coalition. When the DC did not reach an absolute majority of seats in parliament, their only possible governing partners were the minor parties located on its left or right (Farneti 1985). Hence, the many (often unstable) minority governments that formed throughout this period always included the DC and those parties closest to it on the left or right.

In the political system that emerged after 1992, both the composition of governments and the praxis for their formation changed. As regards the government composition, the dissolution of the PCI was the precondition for alternation in power between centre-left and centre-right governing coalitions. Second, the renewal of the party system and the introduction of a quasi-majoritarian electoral system stimulated a new praxis of government formation. Political parties were induced to aggregate in electoral coalitions that proposed a programme and selected a leader who, in the case of victory, would become the prime minister. Therefore, while in the 'first Republic', the governing coalitions were assembled in parliament, after the elections, in the new system, the formation of the government was determined more directly by the electoral results.

Designed to simplify the party system, the electoral law provided incentives for minor parties to become incorporated within the coalitions. Due to their heterogeneity, governing coalitions were divided and conflictual resulting in frequent political crises and the early dissolution of parliament. From this point of view, the 'Second Republic' was not very different from the 'first' as Italian governments continued to be short-lived.[28] After 1992, however, given that both the coalition and the prime minister received a direct – albeit informal – mandate, government crises were more open to criticism, yet were still frequent. Another, more positive, consequence of coalition heterogeneity is that over the last fifteen years, all political parties had access to government.

Electorally stronger and more united, the right-wing coalition predominated in this period, winning the elections three times (in 1994, 2001 and 2008) and holding power for some twelve years under the leadership of Silvio Berlusconi. The centre-left coalition, headed by the economist Romano Prodi, was successful twice, in 1996 and 2006. Characterised by greater

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[28] None of the governments in the history of the Republic was able to rule for the entire legislature. Only two Prime Ministers (Alcide De Gasperi and Silvio Berlusconi) succeeded in surviving an entire legislature but in both cases at the head of different governments.

internal conflict than the centre-right, it produced unstable governments and was only able to rule for a total of eight years.

In 1996, the PRC did not directly participate in the centre-left cabinet, but guaranteed to support it in parliament. However, the collaboration lasted only for two years, as in 1998 the PRC withdrew its support due to contrasts over the economic and financial policy, causing the first Prodi government to fall. The legislation continued with the formation of three further centre-left governments, while the PRC remained in opposition. In 2006, instead, the PRC accepted the assumption of governing positions in the second Prodi government, obtaining a minister, deputy minister and six undersecretaries. The experience was short-lived and, as we will see in Chapter Seven, somewhat traumatic. The parliamentary majority consisted of numerous smaller parties and, with nine of these represented in the government, its continuity was constantly at risk. Again, it fell after only two years, when a small centrist party withdrew its support.[29] On this occasion, in contrast to the events in 1998, new national elections were called and this time the centre-right won.

The foundation of the PD in 2007 responded to the need to overcome the problems deriving from coalitional politics. This reorganization of the centre-left led to different, more restricted coalitions, which were however unable to gain power. In 2008, the coalition formed by the PD and the centrist Italy of Values ('Italia dei Valori'-IdV) was defeated. In 2013, a larger coalition – comprising the PD, SEL, the PSI and the Democratic Centre ('Centro Democratico', CD) – formally won the national elections, but with only half a percentage point more than the centre-right. This result could clearly not secure a net parliamentary majority and led to the creation of the first 'grand coalition' government in the history of the Italian Republic. Led by the leader of the PD, Enrico Letta, it included both centre-left and centre-right politicians and excluded, by their own decision, the 'radical wings' of both coalitions (the Northern League and other small rightist parties, and SEL on the left), which even choose not to support the government in parliament and moved to opposition.[30]

The financial and economic crisis had consequences for the government formation. Discredited because of repeated sexual scandals and under pressure due to the increase in spreads of Italian bonds vis-à-vis the German Bunds in 2011, the right-wing Berlusconi government was forced to resign by the President of the Republic and EU institutions. The centre-left refused to take over government responsibility and new elections were not called. The economist Mario Monti was invited to lead a technical cabinet composed of non-political ministers who were considered more appropriate to handle the country's economic difficulties. It could count on the support of all the major parties. Defined a "controversial and opaque case" of government formation (Cotta and Verzichelli 2015, 132), the Monti government was the first of a series fabricated in parliament and based on coalitions that were different from those that had stood for election, which were unable to guarantee a solid parliamentary majority. From this point of view, the cabinets of Monti as well as those of the PD leaders Enrico Letta and, later, Matteo Renzi

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[29] The party responsible for the fall was the Democratic Union for Europe ('Unione Democratica per l'Europa'-UDEUR).

[30] The government majority narrowed when Forza Italia withdrew its support. Berlusconi's party also denied its support to the second government of the legislature, led by the PD's Secretary, Matteo Renzi.

recalled the experience of the 'first Republic' and were criticised for having transgressed the recent development of electorally legitimised governments.[31]

3.3.2 Government composition in Greece: from single-party governments to coalitions

The tradition of single party governments in Greece began just after the Second World War. The Greek Rally, a conservative and anti-communist political party founded in 1951, was established in power in 1952. Renamed the National Radical Union (ERE) in 1955, it went on to win three consecutive elections (in 1956, 1958 and 1961) on each occasion producing a single-party cabinet. The post-war conservative supremacy was interrupted by the victory of the new unitary party of the centre (EK) in the elections of 1963. The country entered a phase of political instability, which concluded with the institution of the 1967-1974 military dictatorship. In 1974, parties on the right once more played a crucial role: the right-wing leader Konstantinos Karamanlis guided the transition to democracy (Diamandouros 1984) and his newly founded conservative party, ND, won two consecutive elections (in 1974 and 1977). For the entire three-decade period (1951-1981), successive right-wing parties enjoyed power for a total of eighteen years (1952-1963 and 1974-1981) and governing coalitions were unnecessary.

From 1981 until 2009, the situation was substantially reversed, with PASOK ruling alone for nineteen years (1981-1989 and 1993-March 2004) after having succeeded in five general elections (in 1981, 1985, 1993, 1996 and 2000). 1989 represented the only turbulent moment of the whole period: ND won two subsequent elections but, due to the effects of the pure proportional representation system which had just come into force, was unable to form a single-party government. After one year of national unity administration, which included ND, PASOK and both communist parties, unified in the Coalition of the Left and Progress (SYN), ND obtained a clear majority in 1990, restored the 'reinforced proportionality' and ruled for three years until it was again supplanted by PASOK in 1993. Alternation in power occurred again in 2004 and 2007 so that, overall, ND ruled for eight years (in 1990-1993 and again from 2004 to 2009). Apart from the short-lived coalition of 1989, the radical left remained firmly in opposition until SYRIZA came to power in 2015.

Political stability and alternation of the two major parties in the executive were recently interrupted. In Greece, not only did the economic crisis affect the formation and composition of governments as in the case of Italy, but it also affected their duration. In brief, short-term coalition governments substituted durable single-party ones. Over the past six years, the life of each Greek administration has coincided almost exactly with each bailout, and coalitions have been necessary to support unpopular austerity measures in parliament. The single-party PASOK cabinet (September 2009-November 2011) coincided with the period of the first bailout and expired when a second bailout was negotiated in October 2011. The first grand coalition government, which included ND, PASOK and LAOS, was created at this point for the purpose of approving the second bailout and then calling new elections. The meltdown of the party system that followed the election of May 2012 left the country without any guidance until a

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[31] In 2013 it was not Pierluigi Bersani, the leader of the winning centre-left coalition, who formed the cabinet, but another PD representative, Enrico Letta.

repeat election was held in June (see Verney 2014; Dinas and Rori 2013; Vasilopoulou and Halkidiopoulou 2013; Gerodimos 2012). On this occasion, the victorious ND formed a second governing alliance with PASOK and the Democratic Left ('Dimocratiki Aristera'-DIMAR), a small social-democratic party which had split from SYRIZA. This three-party cabinet implemented the measures prescribed by the second bailout until it expired in mid-2015. In the same year, the SYRIZA-ANEL coalition came to power. After heated negotiations and repeat elections in September, the new coalition settled into implementing a third bailout, voted by the Greek parliament in the summer of 2015.

3.4 Summary

This Chapter has sought to provide an accurate overview of the Italian and Greek institutional contexts within which the relationships between RLPs and social movements developed after the 1990s.

The analysis of the connections between political parties and civil society highlighted that in both countries disaffection from institutional politics is widespread. However, this situation emerged in Italy earlier and took different forms than the Greek case. The crisis of political representation in Italy had already begun in the late 1960s and evolved progressively until it reached its apex in the 1990s due to the judicial inquiry of 'Tangentopoli' and the worsening of the economy. In Greece instead, dissatisfaction with politics remained latent until 2008. In the 1990s and most of the period 2000-10 political parties could retain their social linkages thanks to economic growth and clientelistic practices. It is only when the frustration of those excluded by the clientelistic redistribution of state resources, young people in particular, combined with the extraordinary magnitude of the economic and financial crisis that an abrupt interruption of the connections between mainstream political parties and citizens took place.

As far as the party system is concerned, bipolar competition is common to both cases. However, while in Italy competition has involved a centre-left and a centre-right coalition, in Greece the main actors have been a social-democratic and conservative party, namely PASOK and ND. Moreover, the breadth of the left/right divide is reversed. In Italy it was more acute between 1994 and 2006, in the form of a pro- or anti- Berlusconi divide, and then narrowed when the newly formed centre-left and centre-right unitary parties, the PD and the PdL, promoted centripetal competition. In Greece instead, through the 1990s up until 2010 the main parties converged on the policies necessary to 'modernize' the country. Political conflict grew when the sovereign debt crisis exploded and became articulated around a pro-/anti-bailout discourse.

Another similarity regards political instability, which occurred in both cases, but again at different points in time. In Italy the first notable moment of political instability was at the beginning of the 1990s, in coincidence with the 'Tangentopoli' inquiry. It led to a transformation of the party system due to the collapse of old parties and the rise of new ones, and the emergence of bipolar competition between opposing coalitions. The new political system, also known as 'Second Republic', never stabilized and changed again when the economic crisis hit the country. It is in this phase that a new competitor, the M5S, emerged and rapidly increased its

share of votes, transforming the 'limited bipolar system' into a tripolarism. Greece was instead characterized by political stability until the traditional two-party system was shaken by the severity of the economic crisis. Both major parties were severely punished by voters for having accepted the bailouts and austerity measures. It was, however, the social-democratic PASOK that paid a higher price, leaving room for the rise of SYRIZA. Perceived as the only truly leftist party for its anti-bailout position, in 2015 SYRIZA replaced PASOK in the bipartisan competition against ND.

The systemic differences between the two countries are at the roots of the different strategies and strengths of the RLPs. In Italy, the anti-Berlusconian rhetoric, the quasi-majoritarian electoral system and the presence of a centre-left and a centre-right coalition limited the chances for minor parties to enjoy independence at the electoral level. The PRC, traditionally part of the centre-left coalition (or linked to it by electoral deals), was marginalised in 2008, when the centre-left pole unified into a single party, the PD, and decided to end alliances with the 'extreme' wings. When SEL came into being in 2010, it reproduced the electoral strategy which had been typical of the PRC and ran within the centre-left coalition at both local and national level. On the contrary, in Greece the RLPs maintained greater independence from PASOK, so that SYRIZA appeared as a credible 'challenger' when the mainstream parties were in crisis.

In Greece the RLPs' electoral autonomy translated into a solid and durable positioning in opposition and were completely estranged from governing responsibility until SYRIZA won the national elections in 2015. Alternation in government involved the two major parties which were able to form stable single-party cabinets. In Italy, instead, coalitions, rather than single parties, formed the governments and alternated in power, pressurizing their radical members to join the parliamentary majorities or even to enter the executives. The PRC was not an exception: it supported the centre-left Prodi government in 1996-1998 and participated in the second Prodi government in 2006-2008. In both countries the economic and financial crisis had consequences for the executives. In Greece, durable single-party governments were replaced by short-lived coalition governments, as is the case of the current SYRIZA-ANEL cabinet. In Italy, governing majorities were produced in parliament to support grand coalition governments. The sole radical leftist party present in parliament currently stands in opposition.

Overall, the analysis of the political context demonstrates that the GJM and anti-austerity protests encountered different political conditions in the two countries which might have affected their development as well as their relationships with the RLPs.

The Italian branch of the GJM emerged at a time when representative politics was facing a severe crisis of legitimacy, leaving space for alternative forms of political participation to emerge. There was a marked divide between left and right, and political competition was acute, a situation that, according to much movement literature, should increase the propensity of leftist parties to support the movement and consequently its opportunity for expansion. Moreover, the centre-right returned to government precisely at the time of greatest social mobilization (between 2001 and 2003), again possibly freeing up leftist parties to become allies. In Greece, the GJM emerged in a context of greater legitimacy of the political system due to economic growth under the guidance of the social-democratic party, PASOK. The space for protest was therefore constrained and the movement developed as an opportunity for the marginal RLPs to unite and expand.

The situation was substantially reversed in the anti-austerity period. When anti-austerity protests began in Italy, the political system was still delegitimised and unstable, yet no party ally was available: the PD was a centrist party and the PRC was weak and excluded from the national parliament. The centre-right was in government again but on this occasion the leftist parties had just experienced a difficult period of governing, which had also directly involved the PRC in making unpopular decisions. Moreover, at the height of the economic crisis, a technical pro-austerity government was formed with the support of both the PD and PdL, again blocking political opportunities for the movements. At the same time, the main radical leftist party of the period, SEL, did not chose a line of independence from the centre-left.

In contrast to the development of the GJM, the Greek anti-austerity movement emerged in a context of unprecedented mistrust in representative politics and its agents. The two-party system was facing a deep crisis and political conflict was at its apex. While the main social-democratic party was by now discredited, a growing party such as SYRIZA, firmly opposed to austerity measures and devoid of any responsibility for the country's economic situation, could stand as the ally of social movements. In the next chapters we shall analyse how, departing from these contextual factors, interactions between movements and parties were built through the conscious choices of the actors.

4. The movement arena

If in the 1960s, the 'new social movements' appeared as a 'participatory revolution' (Barnes et al. 1979), thirty years later scholars saw them as a permanent presence in politics. In 1998, Meyer and Tarrow talked of 'social movement societies' to indicate an increase in the issues and constituencies represented by movements and the diffusion of their actions across the political and social spectrum. They also considered routinized movements to be less disruptive, due to: the acceptance of protest as a political tactic and the state's adoption of 'negotiation' to manage it; the presence of formalized social movement organizations (SMOs) within the movement networks; the propensity of movements for non-violent and legal actions. The presence of social movements as 'normal' political actors within representative democracies implied that movement participation, more free and fluid than that typical of parties, has determined a formidable pressure on political parties.

Mayer and Tarrow's impression that social movements had, substantially, acquiesced was soon disproved. In 1999, a massive mobilization against the World Trade Organization (WTO) summit in Seattle sparked a new cycle of contention that raised specific issues and adopted innovative actions. The Global Justice Movement (GJM) mobilized intensively between 1999 and 2006 and when its propulsive thrust faded away, it left in existence several SMOs, practices and networks which served as a basis for subsequent activities. In 2008 a new protest wave emerged to contest the austerity policies implemented in the context of the severe global economic crisis. While the GJM was well coordinated at the international level and its general features were similar in different countries, the anti-austerity protests developed mainly at the national level and assumed different configurations, varying with the intensity of the crisis (della Porta 2017). However, in this case too shared claims, organizational innovations and original forms of action can be identified that might have represented a stimulus for political parties.

In this Chapter, I look at these two movements in detail and describe their development in Italy and in Greece. As anticipated in Chapter One, I will not focus on specific campaigns; rather, I will consider each movement as a whole, highlighting its more general characteristics. This narration, based on secondary literature, is preliminary to the empirical analysis presented in Chapters Five, Six and Seven, where I examine the changes that the selected radical left parties (RLPs) set in motion in order to respond to the social movements. It is worth remembering that I define the strategic interactions between political parties and social movements as bidirectional, consisting of both the transformative actions that parties undertake to strengthen their connection with the social movements, and the reactions of social movements to the party transformations. Therefore, before investigating empirically the adaptive strategies of the RLPs to the new participatory environment created by the GJM and the anti-austerity protests, an in-depth description of the movements' main features is necessary.

Following della Porta's (1996) suggestion for the qualitative study of 'families of social movements', I take into account three aspects of each social movement: the organizational models, particularly focusing on their network composition; the 'ideology' (or collective identity), stressing the main discourse and values; the behaviours, understood in terms of tactics and action repertoires. This tripartite analysis is based on the evidence that, for each of these aspects,

both the GJM and the anti-austerity movements introduced innovations that – as Rohrshneider (1993) highlighted for previous cases – posed organizational, programmatic and strategic challenges to political parties, particularly those on the left. Party transformations will be analysed in the next chapters, while the reactions of social movements to party change are reported in the Conclusion.

In this Chapter I also introduce two of the three factors that are expected to condition the depth and duration of changes in RLPs, i.e. those that more directly concern the composition and characteristics of the social movements (see Section 1.3.3 and 1.4): a) the 'double membership' of activists in both social movements and RLPs and b) the attitudes of the two movements towards representative institutions, whether open to dialogue or more confrontational. The third factor, i.e. the presence and weight within the RLPs of orthodox communist and/or moderate factions, is assessed in Chapter Five. From the methodological point of view, I use survey data drawn from two cross-national research projects, 'Demos' and 'Protest Survey', to measure the involvement of party members in movement activities in both Italy and Greece, and complement them with secondary literature as well as qualitative interviews.

Overall I intend to apply the typology originally designed by Koopmans (1992) and then updated and enriched by Kriesi and his co-authors (1995) to classify social movements on the basis of their different attitudes towards the external environment. These scholars divided movements into subcultural, instrumental and countercultural, and maintained that especially instrumental movements look for strategic interactions with political parties in order to strengthen their impact on public policies. Movements of this type follow a designed strategy, their action is oriented outwards and their repertoire of action tends to be demonstrative, but non-violent. Due to their openness, they enjoy a higher level of party support than subcultural and countercultural movements, for both of which collective identity becomes an end in itself. They differ however in their general orientation: subcultural movements are internally oriented and adopt legal and non-violent methods, compared with countercultural movements which are externally oriented and engage in highly confrontational actions, which also include violence. Therefore, subcultural movements are essentially closed and unaffected by the presence or absence of institutional allies, while countercultural movements "are so radical that hardly any established actors will be ready to facilitate them. Furthermore, even if any were ready to do so, countercultural movements would be unlikely to accept such support" (Kriesi et al. 1995, 85-86).

Classifying the GJM and the anti-austerity protests as instrumental, subcultural or countercultural will allow me to assess the validity of previous theories on the connection existing between the specific characteristics of a movement and its interactive dynamics with political parties, as well as to test the first expectation presented in Section 1.4.3: "The stronger are the movement areas open to dialogue with institutions in order to reach their goals, the greater the organizational, cultural and strategic innovation of the party".

The first Section of this Chapter (4.1) describes the organization, identity and action repertoires of the GJM. Section 4.2 explores the Italian and Greek waves of mobilization for global justice, stressing similarities and differences between the two cases (4.2.1) and considering the processes of overlapping membership in both RLPs and the movement as well as the national movements' strategic orientation (4.2.2). The Chapter continues with the analysis of characteristics of the anti-austerity movement (4.3) and the examination of its Italian and Greek expressions (4.4;

4.4.1), again taking into account the overlapping memberships and the strategies (4.4.2). Section 4.5 summarises the innovations that the two movements introduced and their location in the above-mentioned typology.

4.1 The Global Justice Movement: organization, identity and action repertoires

The GJM has been defined as the "network of organizations […] and other actors engaged in collective actions of various kinds, on the basis of the shared goal of advancing the cause of justice (economic, social, political and environmental) among and between peoples across the globe" (della Porta 2007a, 6). Officially begun in 1999, it was the result of extensive cross-national networking, rooted in campaigns against privatisations and exploitation by big corporations of both the environment and workers. In Europe, it was preceded by transnational protests addressing the European Union (EU) summits (in Amsterdam and Cologne, respectively in 1997 and 1999) where the continental network was shaped (della Porta 2009).

Organization. The GJM is also referred to as the 'movement of movements' for its capacity to network heterogeneous groups addressing a broad range of topics both at the national and international level and from different political perspectives (della Porta 2007a). Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on fair trade and human rights, cultural and religious associations, student, feminist and other rank-and-file groups increasingly collaborated with each other, within nations and transnationally. The result was a pluriform, diverse and decentralized network, which coordinated through the Internet and the 'Social Forums'. The latter were the most distinctive organizational feature of the GJM.

Originally set up as a response to the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos, the first World Social Forum (WSF) took place in Porto Alegre (Brazil) in 2001 and attracted 12,000 participants. Since then, WSFs have been held once a year and Social Forums have flourished at the local, national and continental levels. From the global South they spread to Europe, where European Social Forums (ESFs) took place almost annually from 2002 to 2008. These events assembled the many movement strands to share information, promote alternatives to neoliberal policies and decide future initiatives. Conceived as "open meeting places" (WSF 2001), within them "forms of popular deliberation" (Wennerhag 2010, 29) developed that were contrasted to the centralized, vertical and opaque decision-making of global institutions.

At the base of the GJM stratified organizational model lay 'the assembly' where issues were discussed and then decisions were taken according to the consensus rule, configuring the Forums as laboratories of direct and participatory democracy. Stressing this commitment to horizontality, the GJM was also described as 'the movement for democratisation from below' (della Porta 2009). However, it never rejected the mechanism of delegation (IT.Int.6): it was tacitly accepted that the SMOs selected their delegates to international movement events; the WSF had a Council with organizational and leading functions; and the local SFs usually designated spokespersons.

Ideology. The GJM movement was characterized by ideological eclecticism and a variety of claims and proposals, all aimed at denouncing and/or solving the evils of neoliberal globalization.

Neoliberalism was identified as the source of alarming macro-problems: increasing inequality both within national states and between the global North and the global South; international instability and wars; environmental degradation; denial of human and workers' rights in the global South as well as their erosion in the global North; privatisation of public services; cultural homogenization due to the imposition of Western models. In the movement view, expansion of neoliberal globalization was facilitated thanks to rules imposed by international intergovernmental and financial institutions (such as the WTO, the World Bank-WB, the International Monetary Fund-IMF) and implemented by national governments and the EU.

This vision resulted from the encounter between different strands of thoughts: socialist, social-democratic and labour components were conjoined with social-Catholicism, environmentalism, anarchism and the Italian 'Autonomia'.[32] Their convergence imposed a shared left-wing identity on the movement as it was primarily concerned with social justice (see Bobbio 1994). In particular, it stigmatised inequality produced by market-oriented policies and pushed for mechanisms of wealth redistribution, such as the taxation of financial transactions, a basic income for all citizens, greater social protections for workers among other measures.

Shared values of the GJM were democratic participation, pluralism and diversity. First, it drew attention to the democratic deficit within global institutions and the weakening of representative democracy at the domestic level, while also stressing the need for new forms of democracy (della Porta 2007a). The quest for democratisation of both supranational and national institutions was accompanied by demands for greater political participation. Second, the emphasis on diversity allowed the cohabitation of the various groups and progressive contamination among them. More specifically, the political cultures that converged within the movement, alongside the general leftist concern for social justice, were feminism, environmentalism, pacifism and anti-imperialism, each of which however was declined in different ways by different movement sectors.[33]

Finally, the GJM was inspired by the internationalist principle. Designed against an 'enemy' perceived as global and causing global problems, the movements' cross-national network became a platform where the South met the North so that also its identity developed around the global dimension (della Porta 2007a). The construction of the EU was countered by the creation of supranational connections and activities (Imig and Tarrow 2001; della Porta 2009; della Porta and Caiani 2009) aimed at denouncing the democratic deficit of the European institutional architecture due to the minor role attributed to the Parliament compared with the powerful non-elected executive and financial bodies. Both European integration and enlargement were

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[32] 'Autonomia Operaia' (Workers' Autonomy) was an extra-parliamentary, revolutionary organization of communist inspiration that developed during the 1970s in connection with the theories of Toni Negri and other thinkers. This theory is commonly known as 'Operaismo' (Workerism). Characterized by distinct, typically violent, practices, in Italy this grouping was distinguished by both traditional communism and anarchism. After the Italian social movements were heavily repressed in 1977, 'Autonomia' set up 'social centres' throughout the country. Conceived as spaces where capitalism and the State are absent, the self-organized and horizontally run social centres have assisted the elaboration of a youth counter-culture. In the 1990s, many of them went through a process of change, opening to collaboration with State institutions (see Chapter Five, Section 5.2).

[33] All the movement strands condemned war initiatives against countries of the global South. For instance, the global day of action against the Iraq War on 15 February 2003 was launched at the first ESF in 2002 and reiterated in the 2003 WSF. Therefore, pacifism was a widespread value, despite the fact that theoretically some areas (mostly of anarchist, communist and autonomous origins) still considered violence an essential element of politics and deemed some conflicts (particularly that between Palestinians and Israel) as unavoidable.

understood as market-driven processes and on the migration issue the EU was accused of having built an exclusionary 'fortress'. Despite these criticisms, the GJM proposed to change the communitarian institutions from the inside rather than to dissolve them. Its most popular slogan, 'Another Europe is possible!', pointed to the transformation of the 'Europe of markets' into a 'Europe of the peoples' in which social and environmental justice comes first.

Repertoire of action. The heterogeneity of the GJM was reflected in the vastness of its action repertoire which had developed from a process of cross-fertilization among different groups (della Porta 2007a). This ranged from the direct and sometimes illegal, occasionally violent, actions of some movement areas to the consultative tactics of NGOs. The movement has been considered innovative (Graeber 2002) as, after the period of institutionalization of social movements in the 1980s and 1990s, it returned to street politics.

The large GJM demonstrations took on the appearance of spectacular carnivals and encouraged individual and collective creativity (della Porta 2007a). They generally took place during counter-summits and Social Forums, which indeed represented the major novelty of this movement also from the tactical point of view (Smith et al. 2008). 'Counter-summits' were international arenas of political initiatives held in the same city as the official international summit and they dealt with the same issue from a critical standpoint (Pianta 2001). Both here and in the Forums, thematic debates alternated with moments of contention which combined colourful demonstrations, street theatre, live music and actions of civil disobedience. Counterdemonstrations against elite meetings, such as those in Seattle (1999), Prague (2000), Gothenburg and Genoa (2001), were often characterised by attempts to penetrate the no-go areas for protesters (or 'red zones') and constituted moments of high visibility for the movement.[34]

The Forums often launched international campaigns on specific issues, such as those against the Iraq war and for the rights of indigenous peoples, which would then be continued using a range of tools (international days of action,[35] petitions, sit-ins, referenda and even violent resistance). Other actions included local protests against the construction of 'useless' grand infrastructures (highways, high speed trains, tunnels and dams); Internet activism; and the building of alternative media (e.g. Indymedia) (Kiely 2005).

Graber (2002) has highlighted the innovations introduced by the anarchist and autonomous strands of the movement.[36] Referring to grassroots organizations like the Direct Action Network, Reclaim the Streets or the Italian 'Tute Bianche' (White Overalls), this author talked of a "new language of civil disobedience" (ibid., 66). These groups occupied public spaces (whether streets or empty buildings) and also staged confrontational, but non-violent marches, similar to symbolic warfare. Similar tactics spread to other movement sectors (Lagman and Halnon 2005) as they both attracted media attention and testified to the commitment of activists. For instance, precarious workers and students undertook actions of free consumption and price reductions.

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[34] Although some of these demonstrations were recorded in the news media as violent, mainly because of the presence of the so-called 'Black Bloc', the majority of the movement criticized the use of violence on both ethical and instrumental grounds (della Porta 2009).

[35] Millions of people all over the world joined the international day of protest against the Iraq war on February 15, 2003.

[36] These two areas are often presented together, despite their differences. In Italy the Autonomia Operaia was (and still is) distinguished by both traditional communism and anarchism. However, when its thought and political realization spread abroad, it was linked with anarchism. This is because, especially in Spain and Germany, the foreign groups inspired by Italian 'Autonomia' were close to anarchism (IT.Int.17).

Only in a few cases, civil disobedience escalated into attacks against fields of transgenetic crops, fast foods, banks and break-ins to offices of big corporations and public agencies (ibid.).

Other movement sectors were no less innovative. NGOs working on fair trade and international cooperation, as well as environmentalist organizations and networks of small producers, promoted critical consumption and alternative ways of living (Micheletti 2003). Slogans such as 'be the change you want to see in the world' or 'think global, act local' were indicative of a range of practices – grassroots production and exchange of food and other goods, recycling, forms of the sharing economy, boycotts of big corporations' products and *buy*cotts of fair ones, saving money in ethical banks – that emphasised self-responsibility in the process of social change. Some transnational campaigns targeted specific multinational corporations (such as De Beers and Monsanto) denouncing their neglect of human and workers' rights or environmental standards.

The GJM also employed institutional pressure (or lobbying). [37] Large NGOs, national or international associations (such as the Italian 'Recreational and Cultural Italian Association'-ARCI, or the 'Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions and Aid to Citizens'-ATTAC) and movement networks (such as the 'Alternative World Water Forum') combined mass activism with internal pressure at summit meetings and on national governments. They also addressed the European institutions, through interactions with political and administrative personnel, and even opened European offices (Ruzza 2004; Balme and Chabanet 2008).

In conclusion, this overview suggests that within the GJM different attitudes towards representative institutions coexisted, but the dialogical approach predominated. The anarchist and autonomous strands, influenced by the Zapatista experience of self-organization in Chiapas, tended to reject electoral politics, focusing on symbolic and cultural forms of resistance, grassroots organization and local self-management (Morland 2004). Other movement sectors, instead, conceived both national and supranational representative arenas as legitimate terrains of struggle. [38] Despite internal differences, the Forums not only served to discuss, but also to generate concrete proposals to be forwarded to governments and parties. Activists, even those belonging to organizations devoted to institutional pressure, perceived the movement as radically independent from institutional politics, but sought interaction with it (IT.Int.3). Although the WSF was unanimously considered a civil society initiative and participation by political parties was officially forbidden by its Charter, government leaders and members of legislatures could be invited to participate in the Forums in a personal capacity. Leftist governments and organizations provided material resources for the preparation of the ESFs, personalities from political parties appeared in their programmes, and party youth organizations (to whom the ban did not apply) promoted seminars and workshops (Andretta and Reiter 2009). Overall, the

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[37] I prefer the term 'institutional pressure' because it includes a broader set of behaviours and is more neutral. Indeed, the term 'lobbying' is currently associated with the opaque activity of exchanging favours between big stake holders and mainstream parties (see Culpepper 2010).

[38] Here I do not adopt the distinction between 'radical' and 'reformist' movements often present in literature. Both the GJM and the anti-austerity movements were reformist as they excluded any plan of a revolution. Therefore, to attribute adjectives such as 'radical', 'extreme', 'reformist' to specific movement strands would imply a value judgment by the author. The same reasoning applies to violent tactics, which I do not qualify as 'radical', as different activists may evaluate the radicalism of an action on the basis of the effects that it produces for advancing movement goals. From this point of view, a supposed 'radical' action might induce police repression or negative media coverage, hindering rather than promoting the intended social change.

movement can thus be described as instrumental: its goals and means were well-defined, its action was externally oriented and its repertoire was demonstrative, but mostly non-violent. It was critical of representative democracy and independent from political parties, but at the same time engaged in dialogue, confrontation and negotiation with international, national and local governmental actors (Anheier, Glasius and Kaldor 2001).

4.2 The Italian and Greek mobilizations for global justice

Comparative research stressed that the national strands of the GJM showed commonalities and specificities, arising from a mix between innovations and national traditions, and the characteristics of the political and economic contexts (della Porta 2007c). In both Italy and Greece, the tradition of direct action influenced the movements' tactics, which relied mainly on protest and mass-oriented repertoires. Moreover, the strength of classical leftist groups conditioned their political culture, resulting in an emphasis on social justice. The main differences regard the composition of the network and its capacity for expansion, understanding of internal democracy, and tolerance for violent actions.

In Italy, the GJM appeared in a moment of widespread mistrust of political parties and worsening economic conditions, a situation which favoured its growth. The recent disintegration of the party system encouraged national voluntary associations and trades unions once close to mass parties to build new alliances thus stretching the movement network beyond its typical confines (Reiter 2007). Although the movement was critical of the major centre-left party, the Democrats of the Left ('Democratici di Sinistra'-DS),[39] forms of collaboration developed with its youth organization and other critical internal sectors. Moreover, the DS moved to the opposition in 2001 precisely when the major events – the counter-G8 summit in Genoa that same year, the first ESF in Florence in 2002, the pacifist demonstrations in 2003 – took place, allowing the Italian GJM to obtain some support. Moreover, the well-rooted PRC was fully incorporated in the movement.

Conversely, contextual factors in Greece limited the movement' chances for expansion: the economy was growing, major parties were in good shape and the social-democratic PASOK was in government and estranged from protest activities. Its youth organization participated only in the initial phase abroad, but withdrew at the domestic level, and trades unions never endorsed the movement explicitly. For its part, the movement stigmatised PASOK governments' policies of liberalisation and privatisation. Nevertheless, the international protest wave represented an opportunity for the Greek radical left, especially small parties, to re-mobilize and unite. Compared with Italy, the civil society groupings were fewer and less organized and the RLPs constituted the initial nucleus of the network through their involvement in foreign events (Kotronaki 2015). A national movement process developed only in 2003, when Greece held the EU presidency and several counter-events contested the official meetings. The protest cycle reached its peak in coincidence with the growth of the peace movement, which was instrumental

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[39] In 1998 the PDS (i.e. the party born in 1991 out of the 'social-democratic' shift of the PCI) had changed its name into DS.

in exposing new categories of the population to the alter-globalization vocabulary, and closed with the Fourth ESF in Athens in 2006.

Due to political discontent, emphasis on horizontality and democratic participation was stronger in Italy, while in Greece the adoption of the consensus rule was instrumental in containing the power of SYN within the movement. For the same reason, the Greek movement emphasised more the value of diversity, was tolerant of violent tactics and less open to introducing innovation to the traditional action repertoire.

4.2.1 Organization, identity and action repertoires

Organization. The national GJM networks in Europe assumed different formats (in cliques or polarized) and internal dynamics (horizontal or tendentially vertical) (della Porta 2007c). Both the Italian and the Greek networks took the form of cliques and were horizontal; however, in Italy the movement was more heterogeneous than in Greece (see Reiter 2007). Heterogeneity was the result of a process of convergence which began with the G7 counter-summit in Naples in 1994 (Pianta 2001) and developed through the presence of a national delegation in Seattle, the construction of international campaigns (such as 'Jubilee 2000') and pacifist demonstrations. In 2000, youth social centres, solidarity and voluntary associations (both Catholic and secular), leftist groups (PRC included) and rank-and-file trades unions joined forces to protest against the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) meetings. These experiences served as a basis for the preparation of the two main GJM national events: the mobilization against the G8 meeting in Genoa (19-21 July 2001) and the first ESF in Florence (6-10 November 2002).

In Genoa, a local social forum was established to organize the three days of protest. Enrolment in it only implied subscribing to a 'working agreement' which bound members to adopt non-violent tactics. Thanks to its light structure, the Genoa Social Forum rapidly expanded until it included more than 800 national SMOs and groups. The member groups then aggregated in three informal sub-networks. The eco-pacifist sector was formed by: the Lilliput Network ('Rete Lilliput'), seventeen small Catholic organizations engaged in solidarity campaigns, voluntary activities and fair trade; the much larger Environment League ('Legambiente'); and the Italian section of the World March of Women. The 'post-Autonomia' sector, composed of the grassroots Base Unions ('Sindacati di Base'-COBAS) and around one hundred squat-based social centres and student collectives, joined the 'Network for Global Rights'. The leftist sector encompassed: 'ATTAC-Italia', the national section of the international association ATTAC; the 'ARCI', the historic recreational and cultural association of the PCI, independent since 1994; the PRC; the powerful Italian Federation of Metalworkers ('Federazione Italiana Operai Metallurgici'-FIOM), linked to the CGIL trades union; two national student organizations, the Students' Union ('Unione degli Studenti'-UDS) and the Union of University Students ('Unione degli Universitari'-UDU).[40]

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[40] The distinction into three sub-networks became explicit in Genoa with the organization of three main separated marches (20 July). This distinction is slightly different to that proposed by Reiter (2007), which was instead based on the ideological differences among the various 'souls' of the movement (p. 56): 'anti-neoliberals', represented by the traditional left; 'eco-pacifists', represented by the Catholic groups and environmentalist associations; the 'anti-

Only a few groups refused to converge within the umbrella organization. The anarchists and some collectives of Marxist-Leninist and anti-imperialist inspiration, both small in terms of adherents, criticized the Genoa Social Forum for its intention to dictate acceptable forms of action and deemed the WSF's 'Charter of Principles' too moderate. Some religious groups instead considered the Genoa Social Forum ineffective in excluding violent methods.

At the beginning of the mobilization, interactions between the movement and the major trades union, the CGIL, were tense as activists accused the union of not having opposed the centre-left governments' labour policies (Bernocchi 2008). In 2001, none of the three confederated unions took part in the counter-summit in Genoa.[41] The absence of the CGIL was partially compensated by the participation of its internal left-wing faction ('Lavoro e società-Cambiare rotta'/Labour and Society-Change Course), the FIOM and rank-and-file members who carried their union's flag. Later on, the CGIL changed its strategy and joined the Florence ESF and the marches for peace. In the same period, the movement participated in the general strikes against the reform of the Workers' Statute proposed by the right.

In the period between the protests in Genoa and the ESF in Florence, around 170 social forums flourished at the local level, providing the space for interactions between activists of SMOs, individuals with no affiliation and members of the institutional left (Reiter 2007). Frequent inter-organizational exchanges facilitated horizontal relations among different groups (della Porta 2007a) and resulted in a diffused concern for internal democracy (Ceri 2003).

In Greece we can distinguish two phases of the GJM mobilization. From 1999 to 2003, activists and party militants, especially Synaspismos' (SYN) youth, travelled around Europe to participate in protests. More specifically, the Genoa and Florence events were where the initial steps to form a Greek network were taken. A movement was fully developed at the national level in 2003, when Greece held the presidency of the Council of the EU and the role of guiding the European semester. Five of the meetings of EU member states' ministers that took place in the country – the summits of labour ministers (Nafplio 24-25 January), education ministers (Athens, 1 March), defence ministers (Chania, 16 March), interior and justice ministers (Veria, 29 March) and prime ministers (Thessaloniki, 19-22 June) – were accompanied by counter-events involving pre-existing SMOs, RLPs and grassroots organizations.

The mobilization in 2003 forced previously unconnected organizations to interact while preparing protests, and the counter-summits offered the opportunity to build a common identity. The network was formalised through the creation of the Greek Social Forum (GSF) which would act as an umbrella organization, and local forums were founded in various cities. The GSF included SYN; other small RLPs of Socialist and Communist orientation such as the Innovative Communist Ecological Left ('Ananeotiki Kommounistiki Ikologiki Aristera'-AKOA), the Trotskyist Internationalist Workers' Left ('Diethnistikí Ergatikí Aristerá'-DEA), Start-Socialist Internationalist Organization ('Xekinima'), and the Organization of Communist Internationalists of Greece–Spartacus ('Organosi Kommouniston Diethniston Kommouniston Elladas', OKDE-SPARTAKOS'); a few SMOs including the Network for political and social sights ('Diktyo'),

Virus and the Feminist Centre of Athens; and the local forums. The largest and pivotal organization of the network was SYN, so that the Greek GJM assumed the singular form of a coalition between small RLPs and a few movement groups, whose main pillar was SYN. The 'forums' were a space for dialogue between extra-parliamentary activists and SYN's members, lacking the complexity that characterised the GJM in Italy. The GSF was perceived as a means of unifying the fragmented Greek left and attracting previously inactive individuals belonging to the left. It therefore filled the organizational gap that the shrinking leftist parties had left behind.

Despite being an important organizational novelty, in Greece the 'forum' form remained weaker than in other European countries, and Italy in particular. First, it was primarily controlled by Athens, from where most of the material was sent out to peripheral branches. Second, it deployed a limited expansive capacity: it incorporated few NGOs, while large trades unions limited themselves to joining some of the protests and never officially adhered to counter-summits and the GSF. Largely run by PASOK officials, both the General Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE), representing workers in the private sectors, and the Civil Servants' Confederation (ADEDY), representing public officials, preferred not to explicitly antagonise the government, and even local unions linked to the Confederation never joined the Forum openly. However, unions contributed to increase the number of protesters through their informal commitment and in 2006, they provided the money and the infrastructures necessary for the realization of the Athens ESF (Andretta and Reiter 2009).

The KKE and the large 'anarchist space'[42] pursued an isolationist strategy. The KKE created its fronts for the alter-globalizsation, anti-war and, later, anti-austerity issues that its members and its affiliated unions and student organizations could participate in. In relationship to the ESFs and the GSF, it kept its distance, as it perceived them as social-democratic Trojan horses that were advancing only cautious demands. As such, when protesting, it always kept a physical and/or temporal distance from the other groups. The same applied to some extra-parliamentary left organizations, like the United Independent Left Movement (EAAK), and the anarchist and anti-authoritarian collectives, which participated in protests through separate blocks and formed separate umbrella organizations that only included ideologically homogeneous groups.

The movement cycle came to an end with the organization of the 2006 ESF in Athens, where the main protagonist was the recently formed SYRIZA. Contrary to the Italian case, where the ESF organizational effort played a key role in the construction of the movement and the involvement of actors, in Greece, the main actors had already been constituted between 2001 and 2004 and had taken their final form as SYRIZA by the time Athens hosted the ESF. Therefore, this event was not so much an opportunity for bringing actors together, but for strengthening the recently created structure.

Ideology. In both Italy and Greece, the GJM was not a mere coalition of groups, but rather a social movement process through which a new collective identity was built (see Reiter 2007). In line with the general 'ideology' of the global movement, a common master frame condensed the different targets of the Italian and Greek member groups into one meta-target: neoliberal globalization and the organizations supporting it, including the European institutions. Shared proposed solutions were the enhancement of democracy from below and the defence and

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[42] This is how the anarchist sector of the movement is referred to in Greece.

strengthening of social justice, solidarity, environmental protection and peace (ibid.; Kotronaki 2015).

Compared with the experience of other countries, the particular composition of the Italian and the Greek movements resulted in their strong emphasis on social justice. In Greece, the presence of small RLPs and extra-parliamentary organizations gave the movement a clear radical leftist identity. In Italy, the convergence of trades unions, the PRC and the groups descended from the struggles of students and workers' in the late 1960s and the 1970s increased the concern for social equality and workers' rights. The eco-pacifist actors understood social justice also in terms of respectful relationships between the global North and the global South and emphasized environmental issues and the need for a moral change in politics.

Although the claims brought forward by the two national movements were similar, some differences also existed. In Greece, the 'Diktyo' group, which focused on immigrants' and prisoners' rights (GR.Int.11), contributed to the inclusion of anti-racist demands which were less pronounced in the Italian case. Conversely, the themes of participatory and deliberative democracy were more strongly felt in Italy than in Greece. The Italian network wholeheartedly embraced the principles of participation and horizontality, infrequent recourse to voting, time-limited delegation on specific questions, control of delegates and the consensus method both at the national and local level (Fruci 2003). In the Greek case, instead, adoption of the general consensus rule to take decisions was due not to a resolute adhesion to the principles of radical democracy, but simply to the overwhelming numbers of SYN members in the Forums (Kotronaki 2015; GR.Int.2). As such, an effort to establish consensus between groups rather than individuals and respect their (slight) ideological differences was the primary form of democracy adopted by the Greek movement. Accordingly, there was a greater focus on diversity in the GSF than in Italy, as the members identified with both the forum and their immediate organization. Later this was reflected in the foundation of SYRIZA as a party of 'tendencies', where every member could retain his original group allegiance. Moreover, commitment to horizontality and unity allowed the Greek RLPs to differentiate themselves from their main competitor, the rigidly vertical KKE.

Strategies. The national expressions of the GJM differed also in their action repertoires, with direct and mass-oriented action dominating in some countries and institutional pressure and communication-oriented tactics in others (della Porta 2007c). In both Italy and Greece, direct action became more central, in the form of mass demonstrations and big events. However, in Italy the movement also employed institutional pressure, which was substantially absent in Greece due to the limited involvement of NGOs and trades unions, and isolation of the RLPs in the political system. Moreover, in Italy, innovative modes of demonstrating and actions of civil disobedience became particularly widespread, but did not flourish in Greece. Finally, while the Italian activists privileged a non-violent repertoire, there was greater tolerance of violence against property and police in Greece.

In Genoa, public forums, symbolic performances, sit-ins, actions of civil disobedience and marches alternated. Despite police repression, the death of an activist and the criminalisation of the movement by the right-wing government, around 300,000 people joined the final march (della Porta 2009). Only a minority of demonstrators, part of the Black Bloc (BB), adopted violence against symbolic targets (such as banks, offices, ATM machines, chain-stores' windows,

the prison and institutional buildings). Most of these demonstrators belonged to anarchist or autonomous collectives from abroad. According to police estimates, 500 Italians and 2,000 foreigners were involved in the BB's actions (della Porta 2009). Overall, the Italian movement took a clear stance of non-violence that, as mentioned, was formalised in the Genoa Social Forum's 'working agreement'. The incidents in Genoa triggered within the movement an intense debate on effectiveness. Reflection on the personal risks and political consequences of violence further decreased the number of activists disposed to embrace violence, which fell from 10.6 per cent in Genoa to 6.4 per cent five months later in Florence (della Porta 2007b). In 2003, with the peace mobilization, strategic concerns were coupled with ethical concerns regarding a form of action considered to be typical of the very 'system' activists were fighting.

Between Genoa and Florence, many efforts were directed at reducing the chances of violent escalation. The movement spokespersons engaged in negotiations with police and institutional actors, particularly local and regional administrations. As a result, the first ESF obtained the political and material support of the regional and municipal governments, both led by the centre-left in Tuscany and Florence (Andretta and Reiter 2009). The Forum was designed as a mass event that could transform the movement into a credible political actor by exhibiting its numerical strength: it involved 60,000 participants and about one million people took part in the peaceful march that closed the Forum (della Porta 2007c; 2009). On 15 February 2003, on the occasion of the global day of mobilization for peace, an unspecified number of people, though between 650,000 (according to Ministry of the Interior data) and three million (according to the organizers), took to the streets in Rome (Corriere.it, 16 Feb. 2003).

In Italy, the movement experimented with actions of non-violent civil disobedience which involved personal risks or costs, such as attempts to penetrate the 'red zones' during counter-summits or symbolic provocations of police during demonstrations. Introduced by the 'Tute Bianche' (activists from social centres based in the north-east of the country), due to their high media impact, these methods transmigrated to other movement sectors and also abroad. Other forms of civil disobedience were road and rail blocks, and long-distance marches borrowed from the Catholic tradition. As violence was substantially rejected, the logic of inflicting material damage mainly took the form of boycotting the products of big corporations.

In Greece too, protesters aimed at showing massive commitment. The effort to expand the umbrella organization and attract new adherents led to an extraordinary activism. From 2000 to 2005, around thirty protest events occurred every year and in 2003, when the mobilization was at its peak, they amounted to 197, 56 of which were organized by the GSF (Kotronaki 2015). Moreover, after the registered participants had declined in the two previous ESFs (about 40,000 in Paris in 2003 and 20,000 in London the succeeding year), in the fourth ESF in Athens they almost doubled again (35,000) and up to 80,000 protesters took to the streets for the final march (Andretta and Reiter 2009).

Unlike in Italy, civil disobedience weighed less, while violence against property and clashes with the police were more common and tolerated. Activists who had participated in major GJM events in Europe attempted to introduce the new tactics they had learned abroad (GR.Int.14). However, the Greek context proved somewhat refractory to innovations: among the 56 protests organized by GSF in 2003, 47 were standard format demonstrations, six were confrontational events (blockades or occupations) and three were symbolic performances including music and

theatre (Kotronaki 2015). The more creative repertoire was adopted for anti-war protests: the six confrontational events mainly consisted of attempts to block the transportation of arms departing from the US military base in Crete. In one case, protesters occupied the US 'Voice of America' radio station and during the counter-summits they also tried to enter the 'red zone'. Despite efforts towards innovation, the traditional practices of Greek movements prevailed as all the actions developed into political violence.

Violence was employed especially by student collectives and the 'anarchist space' which, compared with Italy, was (and still is) much larger and more rooted. Contrary to the Italian context, the GSF tolerated anarchists' violent actions and some of its activists also adopted a confrontational attitude in demonstrations. As a result, of the 47 protest events organized by the Forum in 2003 about one quarter developed into riots (ibid.). Unlike the GFS, the KKE firmly opposed political street violence and the large trades unions were critical of such action.

4.2.2 Overlapping membership and attitude towards institutions

The configuration of the GJM network in both Italy and Greece suggests that contacts between the movement and more institutionalized actors were frequent. In Italy, the PRC and its youth branch, the Young Communists ('Giovani Comunisti'-GC), and the Greens were all subscribers to the Genoa Social Forum. The small Party of the Italian Communists ('Partito dei comunisti italiani'-PdCI) and the centre-left DS instead kept a distance from the movement and participated only through their youth organizations (Chironi 2011) and moreover only after Genoa.[43] Given these connections, multiple affiliations were not uncommon in the Italian GJM, but mainly regarded the PRC: 19 per cent of the activists interviewed in Genoa and 21 per cent in Florence were indeed members of the party (Table 4.1). Moreover, around 82 per cent of the protesters in Genoa and 78 per cent in Florence declared proximity to a party, but the PRC clearly emerged as the primary ally of the movement: 57 per cent and 45 per cent of the interviewees in Genoa and Florence respectively felt they were close to the party, while the larger DS party registered support from only 9 per cent and 15 per cent of the activists (Table 4.2).

Also in Greece, double membership both in the movement and in SYN/SYRIZA was a widespread phenomenon (Table 4.1): 19 per cent of the interviewees in the ESF in Athens were SYRIZA members, and 48 per cent declared they were SYRIZA voters (Table 4.3). In this case too, the two leftist parties which were organizationally and electorally stronger than SYRIZA at the time – KKE and PASOK – were absent from the event and respectively only 5 per cent and 6 per of the activists had voted for them (Table 4.3).

The official involvement of political parties in both the Genoa Social Forum and the two ESFs in Florence and Athens, signals a dialogical attitude towards representative institutions and their agents, such as political parties and local administrations. Overall, both the Italian and Greek GJM networks can be described as instrumental, although they embody a different approach towards modes of action. After Genoa, the Italian movement's stigmatization of violent tactics, its reliance on the logic of numbers and negotiation with local authorities, all served to gain

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[43] The full list of subscribers to the Genoa Social Forum can be found here:
http://web.archive.org/web/20011021054121/www.genoa-g8.org/adesioni1.htm.

public support and to increase its legitimacy as a political interlocutor. Only few groups of anarchist and Marxist-Leninist inspiration, which represented a small minority of protesters, assumed a stance of radical separation from representative politics.

The Greek GJM was also open to dialogue with public institutions and confederations of unions, as testified by the increase of established leftist organizations in the Athens ESF: 25 per cent of the seminars listed in the programme were organized by trades unions, local administrations led by the left and major party foundations, and 11 per cent by the radical left (Andretta and Reiter 2009). Moreover, due to the dense presence of institutionalized actors, political representation was considered a normal strategy: for instance, 69 per cent of the interviewees in Athens had used their right to vote. However, the Greek GJM presents some differences with respect to the Italian movement. While in Italy the Catholic components, the NGOs and large national associations were a strong presence, in Greece they were almost non-existent and small extra-parliamentary organizations played a crucial role. This composition resulted in a greater tolerance of violence and a less variegated action repertoire: nevertheless, these characteristics are not enough to locate the Greek GJM in the countercultural category.

Table 4.1 Organizational Belongings of the Italian and Greek Activists in the GJM

Name of the Organization	Genoa 2001 (Italian Activists)		Florence 2002 (Italian Activists)		Organization	Athens 2006 (Greek Activists)	
	N.	%	N.	%		N.	%
PRC	56	18	101	18	SYRIZA (SYN, AKOA, Others)°	67	19
PRC and Other SMOs (ARCI; ATTAC; Unions; Local SFs; Social Centers)	2	1	19	3	SEK	14	4
Greens	2	1	-	-	KOE	7	2
Sinistra Giovanile (and DS)	4	1	32	6	KKE	1	0
PdCI	-	-	4	1	PASOK	1	0
Religious Peace and Solidarity Associations*	71	23	72	13		2	1
Local Social Forums and Urban Committees	12	4	41	7	(Greek Social Forum)	14	4
Confederal Trades Unions	4	1	40	7		8	2
NGOs and International Cooperation Networks	9	3	40	7		5	1
ARCI and Other Secular Cultural Associations	12	4	35	6		-	-
Social Centers and Other Antagonist Collectives	44	14	33	6		3	1
Fair Trade and Critical Consumption	6	2	24	4		-	-
Grassroots Trades Unions	7	2	22	4		3	1
ATTAC	22	7	21	4		-	-
Students' Organizations	41	13	21	4		13	4
Environmentalist Organizations	6	2	17	3		14	4
Secular Peace and Solidarity Organizations	6	2	13	2		21	6
Socialist, Internationalist and Communist Small Organizations	2	1	13	2		8	2
Indymedia, Alternative Media, Hacktivism	4	1	12	2		3	1
Feminist and LGBTQ Groups	3	1	2	0		7	2
-					None	146	42
Others	1	0	5	1		7	2
Tot. Interviewees	314	100	567	100		344	100

Source of Data: Demos Project

*The majority of these associations were Catholic, but the category includes also Buddhist, Evangelical and Waldesian organizations.

°40 Interviewees were members of SYN.

Table 4.2 Italian GJM Activists' Closeness to a Political Party

Closest Political Party		Genoa 2001		Florence 2002	
		N.	%	N.	%
Left	**Communist Refoundation Party (PRC)**	**400**	**57**	**740**	**45**
	Party of the Italian Communists (PdCI)	**20**	**3**	**46**	**3**
	The Greens	**30**	**4**	**96**	**6**
	Democrats of the Left (DS)	**61**	**9**	**250**	**15**
	Democracy is Freedom-The Daisy (DL)	19	3	37	2
	Italy of Values (IdV)	9	1	14	1
	European Democracy (DE)	-	-	3	0
	Radical Party	7	1	12	1
	Christian Democrats (CDU/CCD)	1	0	7	0
	Forza Italy (FI)	2	0	5	0
Right	National Alliance (AN)	2	0	1	0
	Others	27	4	62	4
	None	126	18	357	22
	Tot.	704	100	1630	100

Source of Data: Demos Project

Table 4.3 Greek GJM Activists' Electoral Choices

Political Party You Voted For		Athens 2006	
		N.	%
Left	**Anti-Capitalist Alliance**	**20**	**6**
	Radical Left Front (MERA)	**6**	**2**
	KKE	**16**	**5**
	SYRIZA	**161**	**48**
	PASOK	**20**	**6**
	Union of Centrists	2	1
Right	ND	5	1
	Others	2	1
	None	102	31
	Tot.	334	100

Source of Data: Demos Project

4.3 The anti-austerity movement: organization, identity and action repertoires

In this Section, I deal with the protests that developed within the context of financial, economic and democratic crisis that struck in 2008 and is on-going. Originating in the US from the bankruptcy of large financial institutes, and their bailout with huge amounts of public money, this crisis sparked a chain reaction also involving Europe, particularly the Mediterranean countries (Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain) and Ireland. Under the pressure of supranational

institutions, these countries' governments addressed the crisis with two key measures: labour market reforms, which introduced deregulation and wage moderation, and austerity programmes (i.e. policies of public spending cuts), which brought about a contraction of the welfare state. Against these policies and their effects, such as increasingly precarious labour, unemployment, general impoverishment of the population and increase of social inequalities (see Varoufakis 2016; Franzini and Pianta 2016), anti-austerity movements spread around the European periphery (della Porta 2015a).

Inspired by the occupation of Tahrir Square in Cairo during the 'Arab Spring', the European protests began on 15 May 2011 with the 'Indignados' (Outraged) encampment in Puerta del Sol in Madrid, rapidly followed by the occupation of Syntagma Square in Athens. In September, the 'Occupy Wall Street' movement mobilized in New York and was emulated in similar protests in Europe on 15 October. This series of events testified to a new international wave of protest in the phase of late neoliberalism (della Porta et al. 2017) which, however, lacked the level of transnational cohesion that characterized the GJM: the anti-austerity protests developed mainly at the national level targeting domestic problems. Empirical comparison stressed similarities in the movement claims and forms of action (della Porta and Mattoni 2014; della Porta 2015a), but also highlighted differences of strength and breadth in the anti-austerity protests, linked to economic, political and cultural factors (della Porta 2016; della Porta et al. 2017). In what follows, I first summarize the main aggregated characteristics of the movement and then analyse the specificities of its Italian and Greek expressions.

Organization. The renewed attention to the economic context led movement scholars to focus on the social bases of the anti-austerity movements, rather than the organizations taking part in the protests. Anti-austerity movements were animated by a broad social coalition which involved students, the traditional working class, the contemporary 'subaltern classes' (i.e. the unemployed, precarious workers, immigrants, female care-workers) and large sectors of the middle classes, whose living conditions deteriorated due to job insecurity and the retrenchment of welfare services (Vaughan-Whitehead 2016).

The labour world mobilized massively: both public employees, particularly those in the educational and health sectors targeted by spending cuts, and blue-collar workers in factories that were shut down or reducing the workforce, took to the streets together with those in precarious work and the unemployed. Overwhelmingly present in the protests were young people, especially those who were well-educated and experiencing high levels of unemployment and precariousness (Andretta and della Porta 2015); small savers, whose material conditions deteriorated during the crisis, and immigrants claiming both political and social rights were also involved.

These social groups were often organized in grassroots organizations, associations and trades unions which formed loose (local and national) networks. Compared with the GJM, the movement emphasised the network form less, spent less energy in building unifying structures and individual participation was more frequent.

Ideology. While the GJM displayed an 'organizational inclusiveness', which consisted of stretching the movement boundaries to include as many SMOs as possible, the anti-austerity movements

promoted a 'social inclusiveness'.[44] Targeting both the economic and financial elites and the political establishment, the slogan 'We are the 99 per cent' set the majority of the population, the 'outraged citizens', against a restricted oligarchy, the '1 per cent', that would take advantage of the crisis to increase its profits.

Elected politicians were accused of defending their own interests and those of the banks and corporations rather than citizens' rights. Mainstream political parties were seen as subordinate to economic potentates, corrupt and incapable of proposing alternative solutions to the crisis. Therefore, a "morality framing grew to contrast the perceived amorality of neoliberalism" and neoliberal politics (della Porta 2016, 27). Solidarity with the weakest and protection of welfare services and the commons were in opposition to neoliberal emphasis on individual responsibility and commodification of public services.

The corruption of democracy was vehemently denounced. Slogans such as 'They don't represent us', 'They call it democracy but it isn't', 'We are not commodities in the hands of politicians and bankers' all pointed at a perceived collusion between politics and economy. Protesters stigmatized not only their governments and national political classes for their neoliberal policies and corruption scandals, but also electorally unaccountable international bodies (such as the IMF and the European Central Bank) and the EU for having imposed constraints on countries' social expenditure while instead favouring the banks.

Movement grievances toward representative institutions did not translate into an anti-democratic attitude. The rejection of a 'minimalist' conception of representative democracy, which sees it merely as the process of selection of the ruling elites, was complemented by a quest for forms of direct, participative and deliberative democracy. These ideas were further elaborated and participatory democracy put into practice during the occupations of public squares that distinguished the movement. Despite the low level of trust in existing representative institutions, the movement called for state intervention aimed at controlling the economy and reinstating welfare protections and previous rights.

Novel elements of the anti-austerity movements were the demands for intergenerational and interethnic justice. Young people led the Arab Spring and intensively mobilized in Southern Europe highlighting their condition of exploitation, precariousness and unemployment and reclaiming the same protections and opportunities as the previous generation. The proposal for a basic income, already advanced by the GJM, was revived by students' and other youth collectives and now became extremely popular. Immigrants claimed fair working conditions, houses and political rights and, due also to their contribution, the movement supported inclusive citizenship and cultural pluralism. Moreover, the feeling of transnational solidarity with other European peoples and with refugees fleeing from war and misery encouraged an internationalist vision.

Repertoire of action. Anti-austerity movements have combined old and new action repertoires. Protests often took the form of mass demonstrations and (both general and sectorial) strikes. Demonstrations were the most common form of action throughout Europe and although strike activities were generally less widespread, between 2008 and 2011 they became more frequent in Southern Europe (Hunger and Lorenzini forthcoming). Also defined as 'political strikes', as they

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[44] As della Porta (2016) explained: "Differently from the GJM, which had presented itself as an alliance of minorities in search of a broad constituency, the anti-austerity movements have constructed a broad definition of the self, as a large majority (contrasted with the network of minorities of the GJM) of the citizens" (p. 27).

are intended to apply political rather than economic pressure (Gall 2013; Lindvall 2013), general strikes increased in Greece, where phenomena such as the exclusion of trades unions from legislative procedures and the increasing alienation between them and social-democratic parties had been stronger (Hunger and Lorenzini forthcoming).

In some cases, activists resorted to symbolic performances, especially road and rail blocks, aimed at gaining media attention. The most innovative form of contention was however the occupation of squares by the Indignados in Spain, Greece and other European countries, the Occupy movement in North America, as well as social revolts in North Africa (Castells 2012; della Porta 2015a). In the squares, occupants established camps of tents, displayed their banners and promoted different types of activities (from concerts to public debates). The camps served to express grievances, to attract visibility, but also to express agreement with alternative modes of political participation that require time, sustained engagement and deliberation (Polletta 2014). Protests were often launched and sustained by online activism, particularly through social networks (Van Laer and Van Aelst 2010; della Porta and Mattoni 2014).

Anti-austerity movements in Europe have generally been peaceful. Only in some countries, including Italy and Greece, did episodes of clashes with the police and violence against property sometimes occur during massive demonstrations. Due to a mix of economic and political factors, the Greek movement emerged as most inclined to adopt violent tactics (see Section 4.4.2), but as had happened in Italy between the Forums in Genoa and Florence, here too the movement was self-induced to reconsider such forms of action.

Embedded in a deep legitimacy crisis that invested both public institutions and political parties, overall the anti-austerity movements had a more conflictual relationship with representative politics than the GJM. Their lack of confidence in representation weakened the use of internal pressure or formal collaboration as a means of accessing public decision-making mechanisms (della Porta 2015a). Full independence from political parties was actively pursued, for instance refusing party symbols in movement activities. While the GJM accepted delegation and the selection of spokespersons, the anti-austerity movements emphasised radical horizontality (Oikonomakis and Roos 2016). The network form was less developed and the 'working agreements' between SMOs were also rejected (though in Italy some unsuccessful attempts ware made) in favour of the direct commitment of citizens (della Porta 2015a). Relationships with the state were complex. The movement built alternative spaces of deliberation and self-organization, but also demanded greater state intervention in key sectors and regulation of the economy, these being the only possible openings where a new relationship with political parties could develop. This combination of characteristics defines the anti-austerity movement as basically instrumental: its scope was clear and demands were directly addressed to the state. However, its approach was highly conflictual and thus more similar to that of countercultural movements.

4.4 The Italian and Greek anti-austerity protests

The Italian and the Greek anti-austerity protests show significant differences in their breadth and strength. Despite being frequent and on a large scale, the Italian anti-austerity protests remained

segmented in different fields of action and mainly involved traditional actors while a new, broader and massive social coalition did not emerge (Zamponi 2012; Andretta 2016). Moreover, both the attempts to integrate sectorial mobilizations within the international 'Indignados'/Occupy framework and to renew their repertoire of action failed. Fragmentation and lack of innovation were linked to the characteristics of the political and economic context and the specific timing of the protest cycle.

In Italy, the structure of political opportunities available to social movements was closed. Austerity measures were first promoted by the centre-right (2008-2011), but their implementation escalated under the technocratic Monti government (2011-2013), supported in parliament by all major parties, and subsequently under the PD-led governments (2013-onwards). While the Berlusconi cabinet lacked authority and was constantly under attack, the governments that followed could count on broad political and media support. Many civil society organizations and the main trades unions, dependent on party alliances (particularly with the PD; Riley and Fernandez 2014), participated only partially in the protests. The PRC was instead weak and marginalized as it had failed to gain any representation in parliament in the elections of 2008. In this context, the legitimacy of the protests was questioned and movements were left without any party ally (Zamponi 2012; Andretta and della Porta 2015; Andretta 2016). The emergence of the Five Star Movement (M5S), which defined itself as a movement and absorbed some movement themes, further limited the possibility for mobilized actors to construct a broad collective identity able to transcend their previous borders (Wu Ming Foundation 2013).

The development of the anti-austerity movement was also influenced by the effects of the financial crisis, which were more gradual in Italy than in Greece (and Spain), and the timing of the protest cycle, which had begun here earlier (2008) than everywhere else in Europe. When the Spanish and the Greek 'Indignados' appeared in 2011, the Italian anti-austerity groups had already been active for three years and had built their own (segmented) identities and increased their level of militancy. As strategies that embrace both inclusiveness and non-violence tend to develop in the early stages of a protest cycle (Tarrow 1989), they now preferred their separate visibility and diversity and resisted embracing the broad collective identity and peaceful actions associated with the 'Indignados'/Occupy movements (Zamponi 2012). The project of a large coalition was finally abandoned on 15 October 2011, when the demonstration organized for the global day of action called by the Spanish movement ended in violent riots in Rome. Divided on the interpretation of the riots, the organizers interrupted their collaboration and divisions within the movement grew.

Compared with the Italian case, the Greek anti-austerity movement emerged in 2010, in a context of widespread economic and political discontent, which favoured its flourishing. The economic and financial crisis had hit the country hard and the application of harsh austerity policies immediately provoked wage restraint, unprecedented unemployment, especially among young people, and a growing population confronted by poverty due to the combined effects of worsening conditions of work and cuts in social spending. While traditional political parties were totally discredited, the movement groups could count on the support of the emerging challenger SYRIZA and protest became increasingly legitimate. Started by traditional organizations employing conventional means of action, with time the Greek anti-austerity movement became an experimental laboratory for organizational forms, inclusive identities and innovative tactics.

New actors also emerged, and thousands of citizens without prior movement experience participated in the protests. While in Italy the last anti-austerity demonstrations occurred in 2013, the Greek cycle closed in 2015, when the referendum on the third Memorandum, called by the SYRIZA-ANEL government, offered a further occasion for the anti-austerity coalition to mobilize.

As regards the political culture, the refusal of the Italian groups to adopt the unifying 'Indignados'/Occupy collective identity was not the only difference with the Greek movement. Although the two mobilizations expressed similar materialist claims, mostly with respect to labour issues and the welfare state, in Greece the need for radical democratisation and political renovation was more heavily emphasised. As to the forms of action, the two movements have in common the frequent adoption of confrontational tactics, such as mass demonstrations often accompanied by violent riots, and occupations. However, the Greek movement was more able to mix traditional activities, such as general strikes and marches, with more innovative tactics, in particular the occupation of squares and self-organized social solidarity initiatives.

4.4.1 Organization, identity and action repertoires

Organization. The Italian anti-austerity protests configured as a series of events proposed by different groups, often organized in temporary thematic national networks. In most cases, these groups joined forces for demonstrations or campaigns, but in general remained separated. The constellation of actors included both established and grassroots trades unions, student organizations, local committees, squat social centres, feminist collectives and other informal groups. Formal associations, such as ARCI, had a less important role than in the GJM, while large trades unions participated more but in separate events. The RLPs were a constant but marginal presence (Andretta 2016). Compared with the Italian experience, the Greek anti-austerity movement developed a greater level of unity and innovation. It took the form of a strictly horizontal and loose network which included trades unions, RLPs, all pre-existing SMOs, the 'anarchist space' and many activists with no previous affiliations.

In Italy, the anti-austerity discourse was already started in 2008 by the student movement called 'Onda Anomala' (Anomalous Wave) (Caruso et al. 2010). When contesting severe cuts in university funding, students chanted 'We won't pay for the crisis!', linking the budget reductions to the incipient explosion of the financial crisis. In the following years, austerity policies were implemented in education, healthcare, the labour market and pensions (Nastasi and Palmisano 2015) managing to stop decline of the GDP (in 2012), but also increasing inequality and unemployment (especially among young people and in the south; Sylos Labini 2009), thus triggering further mobilizations.

In 2010-2011 student initiatives coincided with those of the workers and of the water movement. Established trades unions mobilized more at the beginning of the cycle but less after the formation of the Monti cabinet due to their connections with the political parties which supported it. Among the three confederations, the CGIL and its affiliate FIOM were the most active but they tended towards isolation, preferring to organize their own events. As a consequence, 'old' and 'new' social movements co-organized only 7 per cent of the protests. Instead, grassroots trades unions were fully part of the movement environment, involving the

precarious workers of the logistics sector (often immigrants), subsidised workers and local transport workers (Mazzamauro 2014). Interactions between established and grassroots trades unions were also infrequent due to reciprocal hostility (Andretta 2016). In 2015, the FIOM promoted the Social Coalition ('Coalizione Sociale'), an alliance between both grassroots groups (the social centres, student and environmental collectives) and national formal associations.[45] Aimed at promoting social protest to pressure the government, but also at expanding the action of the CGIL, the project substantially failed.

In the biennium 2010-2011, the mobilization of the water movement also reached its apex. Structured as a large network of associations and grassroots groups, the 'Italian Forum of Water Movements' was the outcome of a process of coalition building started at the first ESF in Florence. It gained growing visibility from December 2009, when it launched a popular referendum against the privatisation of the water service. Tens of thousands of activists all over the country took part in the intense referendum campaign until, in June 2011, more than 90 per cent of voters rejected the privatisation of water marking the principle movement success of the entire period.

Two other national networks were built during the anti-austerity years. The first, Women in the Crisis ('Donne nella Crisi'), unified feminist collectives of different ideological orientations. In 2014, it promoted a solidarity campaign to finance the self-managed social clinics in Greece[46] and increase awareness about the retrenchment of the public health service. The second, Living in the Crisis ('Abitare nella Crisi'), unified the housing action collectives and stressed the housing emergency affecting low-income families and immigrants (Mazzamauro 2014). Particularly active in 2013, it occupied centre stage in the General Uprising ('Sollevazione Generale') against austerity, a large national demonstration held in Rome on 19 October. Both the 'Living in the Crisis' and the grassroots trades unions also mobilized immigrants who were previously underrepresented in the Italian social movements.

Pre-existing environmental coalitions were also involved in anti-austerity mobilizations. Among them, the thirty-year-old No-TAV movement, which opposes the construction of the high-speed train line between Turin and Lyon (see della Porta and Piazza 2008), promoted a series of national assemblies in the Susa Valley, most affected by the train route (Mazzamauro 2014).

In Greece, the first phase of the mobilization saw the predominance of both confederal and grassroots trades unions, while a larger and truly bottom-up network emerged in the second phase, with the occupation of public squares. In 2010, the strike demonstrations called by the GSEE and the ADEDY also involved SMOs, rank-and-file groups and unorganized individuals, transcending the traditional trade union constituencies. Effective in rallying the workers, the union confederations were never fully incorporated in the movement. As in the Italian case, the grassroots unions, mainly representing precarious workers, could instead build solid relationships with the other movement sectors and participate in non-labour-related actions. On the occasion of the first general strike, they launched the proposal for a large movement assembly which

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[45] The Social Coalition included: ARCI; the anti-mafia network 'Libera' (Free); the large NGO Emergency, which provides free medical assistance in countries at war and lately also in Europe; the cultural association 'Libertà e Giustizia' (Freedom and Justice).

[46] Since the onset of the Greek debt crisis, self-managed social clinics are providing free health care to people in need.

would identify a separate meeting point for the demonstrations called by the union confederations, considered to be 'government-friendly'. The initiative was welcomed by many groupings, including the RLPs, student unions and even NGOs. The alternative meeting point consequently became important for the whole movement, gathering tens and occasionally hundreds of thousands of protesters; at the same time members of the grassroots unions became involved in the occupation of squares and the social solidarity structures.[47]

The organizational methods improved and innovated in 2011 when activists who never revealed their political background used Facebook to call for citizens' occupation of central squares in Athens and Thessaloniki. Their choice for a popular movement, with no political links and radically horizontal, reflected the rising mistrust towards political parties and large associations, considered part of an increasingly undemocratic system. Party members could participate as individuals but a consensus rule forbade party or other organizations' symbols as well as any form of political propaganda (Sergi and Vogiatzoglou 2013). Horizontality was ensured by the daily assembly and the working groups. As in the Social Forums, the assembly became the main decision-making body, while working groups undertook specific tasks, such as defying the movement stance on specific issues, drafting documents, organizing activities (Vogiatzoglou 2016). Later on, a flexible and direct-democratic, assembly-based structure also characterised the social solidarity structures.

Both horizontality and inclusivity allowed the movement to attract a great number of new supporters. Compared with the earlier Greek movements, organizations now had a secondary role: pre-existing SMOs and RLPs were no less active, but were less visible. All the activists and militants belonging to the major political areas – i.e. the anti-authoritarian left, the radical left, the extra-parliamentary left and the anarchists – took part in the Indignados' protests, but without exhibiting their flags or other political symbols.

Among the leftist political parties, both SYRIZA and the extra-parliamentary ANTARSYA were particularly supportive: the first contributed especially through its youth branch, and the second through its militants in grassroots unions and student organizations. Instead, the KKE adopted its habitual 'isolationist' policy: it mobilized its members in separate events and, when it participated in general demonstrations, avoided coordinating with other actors (GR.Int.22).

Finally, the anarchist and anti-authoritarian areas were also part of the anti-austerity movement. Consisting of around 10,000 activists dispersed in small groups, squats, social centres, political associations or unorganized, these movement sectors stressed the need for horizontal, direct-democratic, assembly-based decision-making (Vogiatzoglou 2016). Some of the leftist anti-racist collectives, in particular the 'Diktyo', encouraged direct action by immigrants.

Ideology. In the case of the anti-austerity protests, a new and articulated collective identity was generated only in Greece, while in Italy the movement appeared more as an aggregation of pre-existing groups. A general anti-austerity master frame is however common to both countries, as the protests were all linked by the following features: a similar reading of the origins of the economic crisis and developments, seen as the effect of immoral financial economics; the

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[47] During the occupation of Syntagma Square in Athens, the audio-visual workers' collective 'Diakoptes' helped set up the media team and technicians from the telecommunications unions provided the internet infrastructure. The social kitchens that serve free meals to the impoverished population were first initiated by the 'Waiters and Chefs' Union' in Athens in 2010 (Vogiatzoglou 2016).

stigmatisation of austerity and neoliberal policies, considered as favouring the protection and increase of private profits rather than citizens' rights; the safeguard of the welfare state. In both cases, the anti-austerity framework comprised different material claims, such as demands for labour and housing rights, access to education and health care, and refusal of public service privatisation (see Diani and Kousis 2014). Due to the movement's greater cohesion, the final aim of blocking austerity was more clearly stated in Greece, where the square's occupants even formulated a 'Blockade Plan' that consisted of pressurizing MPs to reject the measures (Vogiatzoglou 2016). Moreover, in Greece materialistic grievances and political issues were more closely intertwined and demands focusing on democracy prevailed over other topics, assuming a greater centrality than in Italy (Diani and Kousis 2014).

In Italy, students understood at an early stage that the cuts to education spending were an effect of the financial crisis created by the private sector but discharged on the public finance. In Greece instead, trades unions were the first to denounce the social effects of austerity policies. In both cases, cross-fertilization between traditional labour organizations and youth collectives helped to contaminate traditional labour-related issues (such as the need for jobs and better wages and resistance against the abolition of collective bargaining and wage cuts) with the proposal for a universal basic income, and to expand the students' discourse from the right to study to a denunciation of the precarious future facing young people. When the movement of the squares developed in Greece in 2011, some Italian student collectives tried to introduce the same 'Indignados'/Occupy identity in their own country by defining themselves as 'outraged'. This representation, which initially drew some public attention, was firmly resisted by the movements themselves and was soon ignored by the media (Andretta 2016) so that only two ideological frameworks remained to connect protest movements: opposition to austerity and defence of common goods (the 'commons').

 The commons framework was introduced by the Italian water movement and it subsequently diffused abroad including to Greece. Resisting privatisation, the movement elevated water to a symbol of the commons, understood as a crucial economic and social sector that should be shared, and therefore removed from the possibility of private appropriation. Activists not only fought for the protection of (both material and non-material) commons, but also called for forms of democratic 'self-government' of resources such as water, the Internet, knowledge (rejecting intellectual property rights) and public spaces (Fattori 2012; Mattei 2013). In Italy, this framework became so dominant that not only did most anti-austerity groups define the focus of their action (houses, labour, academic knowledge, culture) as 'common goods', but the slogan 'Work, Knowledge, Commons' was used to link together the three main movement areas (Andretta 2016). In both Italy and Greece, the water movements opposed national privatisations, while a wide range of initiatives addressed the privatisation of local services, particularly in the health care and transport sectors.

The anti-austerity frame also entered the discourse of previous movements. For instance, the Italian No-Tav movement stated that its "arguments […] are potentially the same as those who will oppose plans involving blood, sweat and tears" (Infoaut 2011). Similarly, the banner opening the national demonstration held on 19 October 2013 read: 'Only one big project: income and houses for everyone!', linking together the by now historic struggle against 'useless' infrastructures and the new claims advanced by young people and the housing rights movement.

In addition, the Florence 10+10 meeting, held to revive and expand the movement network active ten years before around the first ESF, incorporated the fight against austerity measures into the global justice discourse (Fattori 2012). In Greece too, environmental claims remained present throughout this period and the strong movement opposing the opening of a gold mine in the north of the country became fully embraced within the anti-austerity demands (GR.Int.1).

Italian and Greek anti-austerity protests also expressed a similar preoccupation concerning the shrinkage of democracy and the meddling of a triad of democratically unaccountable institutions (the Troika) in the EU member countries' politics.[48] Italian social movements denounced the erosion of democracy in the workplace, within schools and universities and in public services management[49] and called for their democratisation. In continuity with the GJM, the water movement highlighted the influence of large private corporations on policy making and promoted referenda as a democratic tool to defend the commons. Criticism towards the impoverishment of representative democracy increased a year after the water referendum, when the 'Italian Water Forum' launched the campaign 'My vote has to be respected', accusing the government of not having applied the popular will (Martinelli 2011).

Echoing the Spanish 'Indignados', the movement in Greece rejected the mainstream conceptualisation of democracy and called for 'Real democracy now' (Oikonomakis and Roos 2016). In the protesters' view, the crisis of representation that had hit the Greek political system was not only due to the growing role of the Troika, but also to the malfunction of representative democracy at the nation-level. Protesters vehemently denounced the inefficiency of the system, the connections between the economic, financial and political elites, as well as corruption. Slogans against elected politicians, such as 'They are all the same', voiced the mistrust felt towards the mechanism of representation itself. At the same time, alternative forms of democracy were formulated and activists also studied how to introduce direct democratic provisions to the Greek constitution.

Similarly to the GJM, the anti-austerity movements advanced a range of proposals to overcome social and political problems: the promotion of redistributive policies; the taxation of big capital; cuts in the military sectors and parallel public investments in welfare, education, housing and the commons; the enhancement of democracy. Demands for the welfare state to be restored and expanded and the management of services to be democratised became particularly visible in Greece after the June 2012 elections, when activists set up 'social solidarity structures' to provide food and other goods to the population in need and also made it clear that they did not aim to substitute the state, perceiving their actions as an emergency response to an extraordinary situation (GR.Int.16). Horizontally organized and democratically run, in the view of many activists the social solidarity structures could serve as a model for the welfare state services of the future.

The idea of revising the European treaties also gained popularity within the movements, which remained substantially Europeanist, but also sharply critical of the Union. Most of the Italian and Greek SMOs continued to emphasise the need to change the EU rather than dissolve it. This scenario changed only partially after the failed negotiations between the SYRIZA-ANEL

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[48] The Troika is formed by the European Commission, the European Bank and the International Monetary Fund.
[49] The Italian student movement accused the university reforms of weakening the student representatives' voice, concentrating power in rectors' hands, and including private actors within university governance.

government and the EU partners, with a slight increase in the number of movement groups supporting the idea of dismantling the EU and the Euro-zone.[50]

In both Italy and Greece, the anti-austerity movements also expressed international solidarity with other countries hit by the economic crisis, and incorporated anti-fascist and pro-immigrant claims within the anti-austerity frame (GR.Int.22; GR.Int.5).

Repertoire of action. Both the Italian and the Greek protest scenes during the economic crisis were characterized by demonstrative and disruptive forms of action. However, while the Greek movement was able to broaden and innovate its repertoire of action, the Italian groups, with the exception of the students and the water movement, remained anchored to traditional tactics. Violence is a constant experience for both anti-austerity movements, but in Greece it was diluted amidst a variety of other activities which made the movement popular, massive and cohesive.

In Italy, the most visible demonstrative forms were the strikes and the traditional marches associated with them. An attempt to renew this form of action was brought forward by a coalition formed by the FIOM and grassroots groups which organized the 'social strike' against the PD-led government labour policies, in November 2014. Aimed at including, besides wage workers, the variegate world of irregular workers and the students, the initiative touched 45 cities, proving successful although belated.

Following the GJM tradition, demonstrations held by the commons movements were colourful and creative. Demonstrations of the housing rights movement, although more traditional, were distinguished by the large presence of immigrants. The students adopted a broader repertoire which, besides demonstrations, included symbolic actions: in 2008, they occupied universities and organized public lessons in the squares; in 2010, they climbed monuments to attach or wave banners, and blocked railways and highways under the motto 'If they block our future, we block the city', while precariously employed researchers camped out on the roofs of universities. As also occurred in Greece, occupations increased both as a response to the housing emergency provoked by the economic crisis and the contemporaneous arrival of refugees, and as a means of protest. For instance, in both Rome and Athens artists' collectives revived disused theatres, criticising the cuts in public funds for cultural activities.

Compared with the GJM actions, the Italian anti-austerity protests were more violent, in part due to the lack of coordination between the movement groups (della Porta and Zamponi 2013). Violence escalated in 2011 after the fall of the Berlusconi government when strong austerity policies began to be implemented and established trades unions and formal SMOs withdrew from the protest arena. The effort of some student collectives to introduce innovations from abroad failed: Italian 'acampadas' (tented camps) involved only a few activists belonging to specific groups, were short-lived and often degenerated into clashes with the police. The outbreak of harsh riots during the 15 October demonstration held in Rome for the global day of action against austerity confirmed how refractory the Italian movements were to adopting the 'Indignados/Occupy' identity. The visibility of organized groups, the choice of a traditional national march and violent tactics entirely contradicted an identity based on unity, local events

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[50] Again in 2017, the call for a national demonstration in Rome organized for the 60th anniversary of the Treaties, significantly titled 'Our Europe' and signed by most SMOs, affirmed that: 'to save Europe from dissolution, social and environmental disaster, and authoritarian regression, it is necessary to change it'.
See: http://www.lanostraeuropa.org/appello-la-nostra-europa/la-nostra-europa-unita-democratica-solidale/.

and peaceful repertoires (Zamponi 2012). Previously massive, in 2011 the student movement withered and increasingly adopted more confrontational forms of action, such as non-authorized demonstrations (Andretta 2016). Riots also occurred during the largest protest event of the housing rights movement, on 19 October 2013.

In Greece, strikes, traditional demonstrations and urban riots prevailed in 2010. The movement rethought its strategy after the 'Marfin Bank incident', which took place on 5 May 2010 during a strikers' demonstration in Athens.[51] While riots were taking place in the area surrounding the parliament, a protesters' fringe group set fire to a branch of the Marfin Bank causing the death of three employees. Exploited by pro-government media to promote a 'law and order' rhetoric and delegitimise the protests, this episode opened a heated debate on the implications of political violence within the movement. The anarchist organizations were induced to self-criticism while other groupings pushed for 'non-violence'.

After a period of essentially peaceful protests, the sense of ineffectiveness of previous tactics led activists to embrace a new and unusual action repertoire for the Greek movements inspired by the Arab Spring and the Spanish 'Indignados'. Begun in Thessaloniki and Athens on 25 May 2011, square occupations spread to several cities and enjoyed huge participation and popular support.[52] Protesters camped in the squares for two months, organizing daily activities consisting of: theatrical plays, concerts, schooling for children, public debates and so on. The larger demonstrations held during this period, coinciding with the general strikes (15, 28 and 29 June 2011) and the Sunday protests, were also animated by choreographies and flash mobs.

Innovation, creativity and non-violence were interrupted by the two days of protests remembered as the 'Battle of Syntagma' which took place on 28-29 June 2011 while parliament was discussing a new set of austerity policies. Aiming at blocking the vote, all the SMOs, RLPs, trade unions and grassroots groups converged in Syntagma Square, embracing contentious tactics such as street blockades. Some protesters even attempted to invade parliament and engaged in clashes with the police and violence against property. Over two days of riots almost 800 people were injured, millions of Euros of damage was caused, while approval of the austerity package went ahead unimpeded, leaving a sense of impotence which led to the slow deterioration of the square movement.

A new phase of mobilization began, which was characterised by inclusion of acts of civil disobedience and factory occupations in the movement's action repertoire. In the summer of 2011, some collectives supported vulnerable social groups in their refusal to pay the newly imposed additional tax on housing property. This initiative found allies among many left-wing mayors and favoured the blossoming of solidarity networks (Solidarity for All 2013). Protests extended to previously non-politicized actors and settings, such as football stadiums, military and school parades (Vogiatzoglou 2016). The immigrants staged one of the most visible national protests: helped by movement groups, 300 of them occupied a building in the city centre and went on hunger strike for six weeks, until they got legal papers (GR.Int.5).

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[51] Participation in both the strike and the protest was exceptionally high for Greek standards: some 250,000 people were reported to have participated in the Athens protest (Vogiatzoglou 2016).

[52] According to a poll, 20 per cent of Greek citizens participated in at least one protest event during May and June 2011 (Vogiatzoglou 2016).

General strikes continued and some categories (hospital doctors, lawyers, port workers) introduced multiday strikes. Factory occupation, an old labour movement's tactic which had been abandoned, gained new popularity. The unpaid workers of 'Viome', a building materials factory in Thessaloniki, occupied it in July 2011 and ran the production under their direct democratic control.[53] In December, 300 steelworkers of the 'Hellenic Steel Chalyvourgia', near Athens, stopped production and occupied their factory in order to resist their employer's business restructuring plan. Both initiatives obtained media coverage and solidarity and donations from all over the country.[54] Workers also staged the two main protest events of this period, with some 500,000 people participating in the general strikes of 21 October 2011 and 12 February 2012 (Vogiatzoglou 2016); the latter resulted in property destruction, dozens of injuries and arrests and was the last mass event of the period.

In the fourth and final phase, protests became rarer, less well-supported and only centred on labour issues,[55] while movement activists concentrated on building social solidarity structures. Together with unaffiliated individuals, they collaborated to open clinics, pharmacies, grocery stores and soup kitchens, and crews of electricians started illegally reconnecting the electricity supply to those who could not afford to pay their bills. Still active, these projects are providing services and goods to the poorest among the population, migrants and locals included (Solidarity for All 2013; Vogiatzoglou 2016). They involve all movement sectors, except for the most 'isolationist' anarchist groups who have preferred to set up their own structures. Since 2012, anarchists and football team fans have also organized squads to protected immigrants from the attacks of Golden Dawn's militants.

4.4.2 Overlapping membership and attitude towards institutions

Due to their fragmentation, in the Italian anti-austerity protests interactions between different movement actors were less frequent and constant than in the GJM. This time, the tools that the GJM had employed to connect the various movement sectors, such as the national committees and the social forums, were absent. As a result, we observe a greater detachment from political parties. The percentage of those who declared not to feel close to any political party remained constant: they were 18 per cent in Genoa and 19 per cent in the anti-austerity protests. However, they increase by 10 percentage points in the case of the 'No Monti Day', which is the only openly anti-government demonstration of the period.

Compared with the GJM, the radical left was less present in the movement arena due to the scarce involvement of SEL. Among the respondents who declared to be party members, those belonging to the PRC were an overwhelming majority, while SEL was substantially absent, and the militants of the Democratic Party only participated in the more traditional type of actions, such as the May Day celebrations and general strikes (Tab. 4.4). Therefore, while the PRC was

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[53] http://www.viome.org.

[54] While 'Viome' is still self-managed, 'Chalyvourgia' was forcibly evicted.

[55] Some major events took place in 2013, in coincidence with the strikes of the metro workers and the high-school teachers, both of which concluded with the eviction of the protesters. In June, some 50,000 people resisted the closure of the public TV/Radio broadcaster ERT by protesting outside the company's headquarters in Athens. ERT studios were occupied and the television and radio stations continued broadcasting clandestinely until police intervened.

still the closest party for 45 per cent of the interviewees, 10 per cent chose SEL. Despite generally attending demonstrations, the involvement of the PRC members was however qualitatively different to that of the GJM: all the movement activists interviewed for this study highlighted that they played a residual role in planning and running anti-austerity mobilization and confirmed that contacts were overall limited (IT.Int.8; IT.Int.12; IT.Int.14; IT.Int.11).

As regards Greece, no survey data were collected about the political affiliations of the participants in the anti-austerity protests. Nevertheless, previous qualitative analysis highlighted the contribution in square occupations of a large number of SYRIZA's movement-friendly members and low- and mid-ranking officials, who helped to organize the assemblies and working groups (Vogiatzoglou 2016). SYRIZA's militants were also present in all large demonstrations and since 2012 the party has invested in assisting the social solidarity structures by stimulating its members and voters to participate in local initiatives. It also founded the umbrella organization 'Solidarity for all', which undertook the task of coordinating the distribution of goods and services across the country. All those interviewed in the course of this research confirmed the high rate of overlapping membership between the social movements and SYRIZA, especially its youth branch (GR.Int.5; GR.Int.6; GR.Int.11; GR.Int.22).

In line with the whole European anti-austerity movement, both the Italian and Greek strands adopted a strongly conflictual attitude towards representative politics. In Italy, bypassing political intermediaries was an aim of all the groups, including the water movement, which nevertheless had demonstrated continuity with the GJM both in its organizational form (an inclusive and large network of organizations) and strategies (peaceful events aimed at gaining massive support). The impossibility of convincing parliament to consider a citizens' initiative law presented in 2007 led water activists to appeal to citizens' direct participation in a popular referendum, by-passing all forms of political mediation. When the government refused to apply the outcome of the 2011 referendum, mistrust in political representation grew further. Moreover, the Italian movement is notable for its fragmentation, weak involvement of large national associations and established trades unions, all of which tended to organize their own events,[56] and the marginality of RLPs. In this context, especially from 2011 onwards, grassroots groups took over the leadership and promoted a highly contentious mobilization, where the preservation of identity became central. Lacking in creativity and inward looking, the characteristics of the Italian anti-austerity movement were, in general, more similar to those of the countercultural, than the instrumental, movement.

In Greece, the movement appears strongly jealous of its independence from political parties, but also externally oriented, well interconnected and strategically sophisticated. The presence of political organizations was prohibited, but party members could be involved in the protests at an individual level, favouring the development of a dialogical attitude at the grassroots. No plans were made to channel movement claims within institutions through movement-friendly parties. Acts of political violence were tolerated, but supported by actions that could also involve the population and transform the movement into a political counterpart capable of exercising external pressure on MPs and the government to reject the austerity programme. These

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[56] An exception is the FIOM which, however, connected with the broader movement environment belatedly and using old methods (such as the failed attempt to build a national network of organizations through a top-down agreement).

characteristics are similar to those of an instrumental movement with a dialogical approach, although the frequent use of violent actions prevents full inclusion in this category.

Table 4.4 Italian Anti-Austerity Activists' Affiliation to a Political Party, 2011-2012

Political Party		Euro May Day Milan		May Day Florence		General Strike Florence		No Monti Day Rome		Florence 10+10		Total	
		N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%
Left	Communist Refoundation Party (PRC)	11	69	14	36	26	48	40	93	8	80	99	61
	Left, Ecology and Freedom (SEL)	1	6	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	1
	Democratic Party (PD)	2	13	25	64	24	44	0	0	1	10	52	32
	Other	2	13	0	0	4	7	2	5	1	10	9	6
	Total	16	100	39	100	54	100	43	100	10	100	162	100

Source of Data: Protest Survey Project

Table 4.5 Italian Anti-Austerity Activists' Closeness to a Political Party, 2011-2012

Closest Political Party		Euro May Day Milan		May Day Florence		General Strike Florence		No Monti Day Rome		Florence 10+10		Total	
		N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%	N.	%
	None	25	22	10	10	30	15	53	29	6	15	124	19
Left	**Communist Refoundation Party (PRC)**	**61**	**54**	**38**	**38**	**72**	**35**	**92**	**51**	**26**	**63**	**289**	**45**
	Left, Ecology and Freedom (SEL)	12	11	4	4	17	8	29	16	3	7	65	10
	The Greens	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	2	0
	Socialists	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	1	2	4	1
	Democratic Party (PD)	16	14	46	46	81	40	8	4	4	10	155	24
Right	Populist Right and Conservative Parties	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
	Total	114	100	100	100	205	100	182	100	41	100	642	100

Source of Data: Protest Survey Project

4.5 Summary

This Chapter has analysed the general characteristics of the GJM movement and the anti-austerity protests along the dimensions – organization, ideology and behaviours – discussed in this thesis, and has also identified the national specificities of the Italian and the Greek waves. In the following chapters, we will see whether the RLPs' were influenced by the novelties introduced by these movements in each of the three dimensions.

Table 4.6 summarizes the similarities and differences between the Italian and the Greek expressions of the two movements, with particular reference to cases of overlapping membership and their attitude towards representative institutions, which were identified in Chapter One as possible determinants of the interactions between RLPs and social movements. While the GJM showed a dialogical and open attitude towards representative politics, the anti-austerity protests proved more conflictual and jealous of their independence from political parties. Cases of double membership in both social movements and parties were high in both countries for the GJM. They declined in the Italian anti-austerity protests, where RLPs held a minor role. In Greece, they remained high, but the movement itself imposed a 'discrete' participation of all organized actors in movement mobilization.

Table 4.6 General Characteristics of the GJM and the Anti-austerity Movements in Italy and Greece

Social Movement	Organization	Ideology	Action Repertoires	Attitude towards Representative Politics	Overlapping Membership
GJM	Heterogeneous Network Cross-national Decentralised Social Forums Horizontal (Assembly-Based) Deliberation Acceptance of Delegation Spokespersons	Against Neoliberal Globalisation Global Justice and Equality: - for Workers, Women, the Environment, the Global South Democratisation of International Institutions and the EU Strengthen Democracy at Home Change the EU from the Inside (Europeanism) Pluralism and Diversity Anti-imperialism and Peace	Prevalence of Direct Action Spectacular Large Demonstrations Counter-summits and Social Forums: - Debates + Cultural Events + Protest International Campaigns Nonviolent Civil Disobedience Critical Consumption Institutional Pressure	Mostly Dialogical Interaction with Institutional Politics and Political Parties The Movement as a Civil Society Initiative Instrumental Movement	/
Italian Specificities	Heterogeneous and Large Network Working Agreement between SMOs (including PRC) Internal Sub-networks: - Eco-pacifists and Feminists; Post-autonomists; Leftists Support of Trades Unions Horizontal Interactions between Organizations	Emphasis on Social Justice Democracy from Below Environmental Issues Moral Change in Politics	Mass Demonstrations and International Events Civil Disobedience and Symbolic Actions Institutional Pressure Mostly Nonviolent	Critical, but Dialogical and Open The Movement as 'Political Interlocutor' Instrumental Movement	High PRC as Main Ally
Greek Specificities	Homogeneous Network of RLPs and few SMOs SYN as Pivotal Organization Centralised Only External Support of Trades Unions Anarchists and KKE = Isolationist Strategy	Radical Leftist Identity (Social Justice) Anti-Racism Consensus Rule as Method of Coexistence Emphasis on Diversity	Mass Demonstrations and International Events Traditional Action Repertoire Tolerance of Riots	Overlap between the Movement and the RLPs Political Representation as a Normal Strategy Instrumental Movement	High SYN/SYRIZA as Main Ally
Anti-Austerity Mov.	Loose Networks; Individual Participation Emphasis on the Domestic Level Broad Social Coalition ('Social Inclusiveness') Radical Horizontality	Against Austerity Measures Against Collusion between Economy and Politics Morality in Politics Solidarity Protection of Welfare and the Commons Quest for 'Real Democracy' Intergenerational and Interethnic Justice	Direct Action No Internal Pressure or Formal Collaboration Large Demonstrations Strikes Symbolic Performances Square Occupations 'Acampadas'	Conflictual Preference for External Pressure Full Independence from Parties Radical Horizontality Direct Commitment of the Citizens Tendentially Instrumental	/
Italian Specificities	Segmented Protests Trades Unions and Grassroots Groups No Large Associations Temporary Thematic Networks: - Students, Workers, Water, Women - Housing Action, Immigrants, Environment	Aggregation of Pre-existing Identities Anti-austerity Framework Emphasis on Right to Study and Youth Precariousness Defence of Commons	Mostly Traditional Repertoire Strikes and Demonstrations The 'Social Strike' Students' Symbolic Actions Occupations Violent and Disruptive Actions	Highly Conflictual Against Political Intermediation Citizens' Political Participation (Water Referendum) Highly Contentious Mobilisation Led by Grassroots Groups Defense of Fragmented Identities = - Countercultural Movement	Declining Cases of Double Militancy Residual Role of RLPs in Protests SEL = Substantially Absent
Greek Specificities	High Level of Unity and Innovation Horizontality and Inclusivity Loose Network of SMOs, but: - Bottom-Up Mobilisation - Emphasis on Individual Participation KKE = Isolationist Strategy, Involvement of Anarchists Presence of Immigrants	New Collective Identity Anti-Austerity Framework Mix of Material and Political Claims Emphasis on Democracy Restoration of the Welfare State	Strikes and Large Demonstration Urban Riots Square Occupations 'Acampadas', Creative Activities and (temporary) Non-violence Civil Disobedience Immigrants' Hunger Strike Occupations and Factory Occupations Social Solidarity Structures Anti-fascist Actions	Radical Independence from Parties Only External Pressure on the Political System but also: Externally Oriented and Dialogical at the Grassroots Vast Repertoire Instrumental Movement	High SYRIZA's Members in All Movement Activities SYRIZA's Members' Prominent Role

Part three

Empirical analysis

5. Organizational changes in the RLPs under the impulse of social movements

Chapter Five is the first of three empirical chapters which investigate the transformations that the Italian and Greek RLPs analysed here introduced to respond to the GJM and, later, the anti-austerity mobilizations. More specifically, it describes the changes that occurred in the structural dimension of the RLPs, while Chapters Six and Seven deal respectively with the innovations in their political culture and strategies. In the Conclusion, I discuss the hypothesis and the findings, consider the reactions of social movements to the RLPs' choices and provide a map of cases of cooperative and conflictual interactions between the two collective actors.

In what follows it will be noted that the two cycles of social mobilization constituted an opportunity for these RLPs, all of which have all tried to respond to the movements. However, differences are to be found in the depth and duration of the changes, resulting in different degrees of party-movement interactions. The empirical analysis focuses on similarities and differences between the cases and explains them on the basis of the theoretical explanatory propositions presented in Chapter One (Section 1.4). Party changes are expected to be deeper and more long-lasting in the following situations:

1) The party's prevailing political culture is 'heterodox', because resulted from a previous process of rethinking of the orthodox communist identity, which I conceive as based on a) absolute supremacy of the centralist party over any other organizational form; b) a propensity to see state institutions as the primary field of political action; c) the prevalence of labour-related issues over all other topics (such as environmental protection and gender equality). Vice versa, I foresee only attempted and superficial transformations in those RLPs that kept closer links with orthodox communism or have strong internal orthodox communist factions. This assumption emerges from research which proved this political culture to be basically closed towards external independent actors (Tsakatika and Lisi 2013; Charalambous and Lamprianou 2016) and environmentalist issues (Piccio 2011). In their relation with social movements, traditional communist parties have often adopted a strategy of hegemony and co-optation (Tarrow 1990; della Porta 1995, 1996; Tarrow 1998).

I add that other RLPs which might not be entirely sensitive to movement stimulation are those that, in reinventing their original identity, developed a moderate profile, although still locating themselves to the left of contemporary social democracy. I understand their moderatism as consisting of a pragmatic and office-seeking orientation which contrasts with the radicalism of most social movements.

When the GJM appeared, both the PRC and SYN were 'heterodox' RLPs as they had already renounced key communist concepts, such as proletarian revolution, and organizational principles, such as Leninism and democratic centralism (a concept that translated the will of the majority, i.e. the leadership, into the official party stance and prohibited internal dissent) (see Kalyvas and Marantzidis 2002; Chironi 2011). However, the PRC continued (and will continue) to maintain the term 'communist' in its name and the sickle and hammer symbol in its logo, while SYN had abandoned traditional symbols since its foundation. Moreover, a rooted orthodox communist

current within the PRC remained (Baccetti 2003; Bertolino 2004; Chironi 2011), while in SYN, there was a moderate component, which was however an isolated minority (Eleftheriou 2009). Cultural differences between the Italian and the Greek RLPs were evident also later, when the anti-austerity movement mobilized. At that moment, SYRIZA was a variegated coalition of small RLPs of Eurocommunist, green and Trotskyite origins, which had distinguished itself from the KKE for having publicly supported the youth revolt in 2008 (Astrinaki 2009; Spourdalakis 2013). The PRC, now an extra-parliamentary formation, had instead just suffered the split of the majority linked to the Secretary Bertinotti, which separated to found SEL in 2009. While the PRC's leadership reacted by reinforcing the sense of belonging to traditional communism, SEL embraced a moderate path (Chironi 2011; Bordandini 2013). Taking these differences into account, both SYN and SYRIZA should have enacted deeper changes under the influence of social movements than the PRC and SEL.

2) The cases of double membership in both the party and the movements are more frequent, producing a 'contamination from within' of the party with innovations deriving from movements. As scholars observed, both the involvement of party members in social movements and the enrolment of movement activists in a political party strongly condition the attitude of parties towards social movements (Lange 1980; Lange et al. 1990; Piccio 2011). In Chapter Four, I showed that, except for SEL, the RLPs analysed here were largely present in both the alter-globalist and anti-austerity mobilizations, confirming previous assessments (Hutter 2012; Tsakatika and Lisi 2013). In addition, I was able to highlight the internal differences within the same party family, not only between 'renewed' and 'orthodox communist' RLPs (see Bull 1995), but also between similar 'renewed' parties.

First, in both Italy and Greece the more innovative RLPs – the PRC and SYN/SYRIZA – participated far more, while the orthodox communist parties – the PdCI and the KKE – generally remained distant. Second, within supposedly similar 'renewed' RLPs, members of the Greek SYN and SYRIZA were constantly and massively active in both the Global Justice and anti-austerity movements, while the Italian 'renewed' RLPs showed a more discontinuous engagement. Indeed, the PRC significantly contributed to the GJM and only marginally to the anti-austerity protests, and in SEL cases of double membership in both the party and the anti-austerity movements were reduced to a minimal degree. Given these variations, party change should be deeper in the Greek RLPs in relation to both social movements, and the PRC after the GJM; and much more superficial in both Italian RLPs after anti-austerity mobilizations.

3) The movement tends to develop a dialogical attitude towards political institutions. Party scholars believe that the different reactions of political parties to external demands also depend on the characteristics of the demands themselves (Sjöblom 1968; Harmel and Janda 1994; Kitschelt 1990). As regards social movements, Kriesi and his co-authors (1995) suggested that political parties tend to support instrumental movements whose action is externally and goal oriented, and typically excludes violent tactics. On the contrary, they would be less prone to sustain countercultural movements which, although directing their initiative to the external environment, are primarily preoccupied with defending their identity rather than accomplishing their aims, and often embrace violence (ibid.). Similarly, Piccio (2011) – although denying that political parties are more responsive to 'moderate' social movements – proved that they establish

more intense interactions with those movement groups open to dialogue with representative institutions. March (2011) focused on the influence of 'autonomous' and 'neo-anarchist' strands maintaining that this lead to the GJM remaining detached from political parties overall.

Drawing on this literature I proposed to verify whether changes in RLPs are greater in response to instrumental movements, where groups open to dialogue with representative institutions are stronger. To this end, in Chapter Four I pointed out the differences between the GJM and the anti-austerity movements in their attitude toward institutional politics. The GJM was an instrumental movement: although jealous of its independence, it developed a dialogic attitude and considered institutional channels and pressure from within the system as effective tactics to reach its goals. In both Italy and Greece it relied on the logic of showing numbers to become a credible political interlocutor and the RLPs, notably the PRC and SYN, were involved in the mobilizations. The principal dissimilarity between the two national movements was only related to the Greek GJM's greater tolerance of urban riots.

Having emerged amidst profound economic and political crisis, the anti-austerity movement embodied a more conflictual attitude towards representative politics. It rejected formal collaboration with political institutions, preferring to put pressure on them from the outside, and renounced alliances between pre-existing organizations, emphasising instead individual participation. However, the national expressions of the anti-austerity movement deeply differed from each other. New and inclusive collective identities as well as advanced tactics developed mostly in Greece. Here, the movement acted instrumentally and adopted a vast action repertoire which, although it never explicitly excluded violence, aimed at maximum inclusivity and increasing the number of participants. Although political parties were not allowed to participate as recognised and organized forces, intense contacts took place at the grassroots level, especially with SYRIZA members. In Italy, instead, the anti-austerity protests resembled more a countercultural movement: when the international mobilization was at its peak, the Italian groups prioritized preserving their radical identities rather than building a large and unitary movement. As a consequence, overall they remained divided and proved reluctant to innovate their action repertoire, which often resorted to violent methods.

Considering this analysis, both the Italian and Greek RLPs should have enacted deep changes when they interacted with the instrumental and dialogical GJM, but the situation can be differentiated for the anti-austerity movements in Italy and Greece. In Greece, an instrumental and dialogical anti-austerity movement would again have represented a strong stimulus for SYRIZA, while in Italy the more closed and conflictual nature of the anti-austerity groups would enable them to play a role in the interruption of interactions between the RLPs and movements.

In sum, under the influence of social movements changes within RLPs would be more vigorous and constant in Greece, where the factors under consideration here assumed a positive connotation: both SYN and SYRIZA showed a heterodox political culture and constant high rates of double membership, and the Greek expressions of both the GJM and anti-austerity movements embodied an instrumental and dialogical attitude. Instead, less pronounced changes may be expected in Italy, where the first factor (political culture) assumed a negative connotation for both parties and the two other factors (double membership and attitude to political institutions) varied more than in Greece. First, the echoes of the orthodox communist culture lingered in the PRC, while SEL espoused a moderate path. Second, processes of double

membership regarded only the PRC in any significant manner and not SEL, and members of the PRC engaged mostly in the GJM and far less in anti-austerity activities. Third, while the local GJM was instrumental and dialogical, the anti-austerity mobilizations were fragmented and highly conflictual. Therefore, in the Italian case, greater changes are expected in the PRC as a result of the GJM influence (although probably inhibited by the party's prevailing political culture) and only minimal changes would occur in both the PRC and SEL during anti-austerity mobilizations, due to the combination of decreasing frequency and intensity of double membership processes and the movements' closure towards institutional politics. Among all those considered, SEL should be the party least affected by social movements.

5.1 Exogenous and endogenous stimuli for change in RLPs

In Chapter One, I highlighted that movement mobilization does not entail per se any automatic response from political parties, not even those of the radical left. Based on party literature, I argued that political parties tend to seize external opportunities when they are facing a crisis, particularly at the electoral level (Mair 1983; Katz 1986). Moreover, in order for changes to occur, the external stimuli have to be perceived as disruptive (Panebianco 1988; Ignazi 1991) and must match the party's own priorities, which are inevitably influenced by its political culture and history (Kitschelt 1990; Harmel and Janda 1994). Moving from the theoretical level to an examination of the RLPs studied here, the contextual analysis proposed in Chapters Three and Four suggests that they are all likely to have introduced organizational, cultural and strategic changes to respond to social movements. When a new movement cycle emerged at the turn of the Millennium, both the Italian PRC and the Greek SYN represented typical cases of parties that were losing control over their environment and facing an electoral crisis.

The PRC had just suffered a serious split which prompted both organizational and electoral losses. When the party withdrew its parliamentary support of the centre-left government in 1998, and assumed the responsibility for its fall, part of its 'pro-governmental' faction decided to break away and establish a second neo-communist party, the Party of the Italian Communists ('Partito dei Comunisti Italiani'-PdCI). In the words of a PRC leader, this division represented "a watershed" (Cannavò 2009, 63) which marked the second phase of the party's life: the majority of its MPs, numerous local administrators and important national leaders, as well as 18 per cent of its members and 13 per cent of the local circles, joined the new-born PdCI (Bertolino 2004). Moreover, the competition with a direct antagonist which appealed to a similar constituency, resulted in unsatisfying outcomes both in the local elections of 1998-99 and in the 1999 European election. The leadership considered the 4.3 per cent obtained in this last election as "a fully negative result" (PRC, 17 June 1999) because, contrary to expectation, the split of the 'conservative wing' proved insufficient to renew the party's image and increase its power of attraction.

In the same period, SYN was also dealing with electoral decline and internal conflicts (Eleftheriou 2009). At the municipal and regional levels, the convergence with PASOK pursued in the biennium 1998-2000 produced poor electoral performances. At the national level,

PASOK's 'double expansion' strategy towards both the left and the centre eroded SYN's share in the 2000 general elections. These outcomes provided the internal left with a powerful argument against the moderate profile embodied by SYN in the previous years, which they claimed made the party look like "a satellite of PASOK" (Petrou, 11 June 2012). The growing internal hostility towards PASOK triggered the split of sixteen Central Political Committee (CPC) members who created the small and short-lived Renewing and Modernising Movement of the Left ('Ananeotikí Eksinkhronistikí Kínisi tis Aristerás'-AEKA).

Within both the PRC and SYN, the electoral defeats and the splits of the moderate factions acted respectively as the 'exogenous' and the 'endogenous' factors that allowed for the internal balances to shift and a project of organizational, cultural and strategic renovation to be formulated. In this context, the GJM constituted a major opportunity for both RLPs to intervene in the social sphere. While in both Italy and Greece the major social-democratic parties (respectively the PdS/DS and PASOK) as well as the more orthodox communist parties (the PdCI and KKE) kept a prudent distance from the protests, the RLPs, which embodied closer values, invested in proximity with the GJM aiming to expand their social base and overcome their crisis.

In the case of the PRC the 'new course' lasted about six years, from 1999 to 2005. In 2006, the party became reconciled with the centre-left and even participated in the national government, substantially interrupting the cycle. As recalled in previous chapters, when the anti-austerity movement appeared, not only was the party marginal and weak, but it also divided again, giving birth to SEL. During anti-austerity mobilizations, both the PRC and SEL proved incapable of enacting incisive party transformations that could respond to social movements and interactions decreased. In the Greek case, instead, the proximity of RLPs with movements was more durable: it began in the early 2000s and lasted until SYRIZA came to power in 2015. Moreover, as we will see, it contributed to a process of convergence of small parties rather than their division, favouring the constitution of SYRIZA, first as a stable electoral coalition, in January 2004, and then as a unified party, in July 2013.

5.2 Organizational changes within the Italian and Greek RLPs

As anticipated, in this Chapter I look in detail at the organizational changes made by the Italian and Greek RLPs under discussion aimed at responding to the horizontal and participatory model offered by the social movements. It is divided into four main sections, each of which investigates one of the four 'organizational variables' identified in the Chapter on methodology: the conditions for acceding to the party (Section 5.3), the forms of political participation of its members (5.4), the modes of internal democracy within it (5.5) and the transformations at the topmost level (5.6).

Both the PRC and SYN inherited from their communist past a traditional and vertical party and the emergence of a new movement wave stimulated a rethinking of this model. In Italy, the debate about the party structure was particularly heated, while in Greece it was a less contested issue until the constitution of SYRIZA in 2004. In both cases, proposals for a transformation of

the party structure triggered internal fights, which were however more intense within the PRC, resulting in a more difficult and less effective process of change. Despite being of different intensity and depth, the changes that were implemented within the PRC and SYN in the years 1999-2006 appear as largely inspired by two basic organizational principles of the GJM: openness and networking. Internal democratization was instead assumed as an important value especially in SYN and later on in SYRIZA. From 2004 to 2012, SYRIZA functioned as a coalition, led by SYN's leader, of small RLPs whose constituent parts retained their autonomy and the right to dissent from the official line, and where decisions were assumed through the consensus method. In parallel, the process of organizational change in the PRC concluded when the party embraced an 'institutional turn' in 2006 leaving little sign of the hoped-for transformation.

When the anti-austerity movements mobilized, the SYRIZA coalition model was more fit to interact with the rank-and-file groups than that of the Italian PRC. Also due to its minor role in the protests, during this period the PRC introduced only minor movement-oriented organizational changes: in 2009, the constitution of the Alliance of the Left ('Federazione della Sinistra'-FDS), a formal coalition with other small RLPs, was merely aimed at achieving an electoral recovery. Founded in 2010, after two years of anti-austerity activities, SEL did not adopt a creative structure able to respond to movements' demand for participation. In Greece, instead, transformations regarded the grassroots level of SYRIZA and the foundation of the organization 'Solidarity for All' in 2012, which connected the independent social solidarity initiatives diffused in the country. However, in this case too, no major organizational innovations were implemented when SYRIZA was transformed into a unitary party in 2013. On the contrary, the unification implied a distancing from the organizational models proposed by social movements.

5.3 Transformations in the conditions for accessing the RLPs

This Section investigates whether the presence of social movements induced the RLPs to open their organizations towards the external environment in order to include non-members and sympathisers in party life and promote interactions with movement groups. The indicators considered were four: a) the provision for partial participation; b) the functioning of the local headquarters; c) the involvement of the youth organization in social movements; d) the establishment of European connections. It emerged that while none of the RLPs considered here included specific rules to provide for limited forms of participation, taking inspiration from the GJM both SYN/SYRIZA and the PRC sought to broaden activities through the remaining three instruments: the local branches, the youth organizations and the transnational Party of the European Left.

During the period of the GJM, the PRC had attempted to render their boundaries more porous, but it subsequently returned to a more traditional and self-sufficient organizational model that was not particularly suitable for cooperation with anti-austerity movements. After an initial experimental phase, SEL finally arrived at a 'party of cadres' which interacted with the external groups from the topmost level. Only in Greece did the need to involve younger cohorts and the

mobilized strata of society lead to a genuine network structure with the creation of the SYRIZA coalition. From 2004 to 2012, SYRIZA became SYN's privileged means of embracing movement activists and non-member participation; a tendency to close the organization surfaced only with the foundation of the unitary party in 2013 and the prospect of becoming the governing force in the country.

5.3.1 The local branches

In the years 1999-2006, the party form occupied a major space in the internal debate within the PRC. Immediately after the electoral defeat in the 1999 European elections, the new leadership proposed abandoning the communist model inherited from the PCI and designed a 'community party' aimed at strengthening the PRC's social roots (PRC's majority 1999, IV Congress; PRC, 18 June 1999). According to this plan, the local headquarters, called 'circles', though keeping their autonomy, would become part of a "larger network […] able to include and give voice to increasingly large disadvantaged social sectors" (Secretary Bertinotti's speech 1999, IV Congress). The 'innovative coalition', formed by the Secretary, the leaders linked to him and the youth organization, reaffirmed the need to connect with society and the anti-neoliberal social movements in several party meetings (PRC, 18 June 1999; 4 July 1999; speech of Milziade Caprili, Organizational Manager, 6 February 2000) and pushed for the transformation of the traditional 'circles' into 'people's houses' conceived as multicultural grassroots bodies open to non-members and single issue movements (PRC's majority 1999; Secretary Bertinotti's speech 1999, IV Congress). However, while concrete efforts were made at the local level by the party federations that were more directly linked to the leadership, in many areas the party's action continued to focus mostly on institutional channels. A clearer 'left turn' was therefore imposed after the involvement in the anti-G8 protest in Genoa, exploiting the political energy that proximity with movements had aroused in large sectors of the membership.

A document, significantly named 'Expansion and Innovation' (PRC 2001), was released to criticise the "vices and conservatism" of the communist party model (oligarchic and male dominated, reluctant to innovate, bureaucratic and institutional oriented). In the V Congress (Rimini, 4-7 April 2002), the structure of the PRC was described as inadequate to interact with the new "constellation of individuals and associations" which had become politically active with the mobilization of the GJM (PRC 2002, thesis 48) and a phase of experimentation was officially launched. The proposal for party reform encountered the opposition of the 'conservative wing' of orthodox communist inspiration, known as 'l'Ernesto', which controlled important top positions and local federations, as well as the criticism of the Trotskyite minority. The leaders of 'l'Ernesto' sustained the validity of the mass party model, based on a solid and formalised structure, and the need to preserve the PRC's autonomy (PRC 2002, alternative thesis 56), while the Trotskyites expressed a rigid hegemonic vision of the relationship between the party and the movements (PRC's minority 2002, thesis 10). Despite these internal conflicts, the leftist turn, "necessary to meet the growth of social movements", was finally approved (PRC 2002, final document). The aims of involving non-members (art. 3) and promoting greater participation of the local circles in movement activities (articles 4 and 12) were formally stated in the party's Constitution (PRC Constitution 2002).

According to party members, the efforts of the 'innovative wing' resulted in a period of intense vitality for the local circles (IT.Int.16; IT.Int.17; IT.Int.19). One of the PRC leaders in Tuscany who, at the time of the GJM, was deputy mayor of the town of San Giovanni Val d'Arno, recalled in an interview how interaction with the movement changed party life at the grassroots level:

"In the years around Genoa, the party managed to be very closed to social movements. In the party's periphery, there was a great innovative effort to interact and cooperate with the movements […]. In my town, we did everything together with movement activists: we held meetings, we opened up the local headquarters […] and became an open circle. We even gave the keys to local movements" (IT.Int.19).

Despite the vitality of the local circles and the involvement with the movement, two factors were identified as slowing down the process of change: the presence within the party of a 'traditionalist' component and the last echoes of an office-seeking political culture that still lingered in the leadership. As the same PRC member explained:

"A part of the party was very reluctant to open up our own offices. For instance, giving out the keys of the headquarters was not a consensual choice […]. Some of us continued to think of movements as something 'external', linked to a single, temporary, issue which would probably disappear. They never thought of movements in the broader sense and didn't understand that the 'movement of movements' was not a 'sectoral' movement, but a general political movement" (IT.Int.19).

Moreover, the national leadership tended to assign greater importance to gaining a presence within institutions rather than involvement in social movement activities. Precisely this attitude finally led to the party joining the centre-left coalition in the 2006 national elections and participating in the national government in the same year. A former member, who was previously active in the Young Communists ('Giovani Comunisti'-GC), highlighted that, although 'innovative', the majority which led the party maintained a more traditional vision of both the relationship with social movements and the party structure itself than that prevailing among the younger elements:

"We [the GC] were not interested in the classic dynamic of establishing a relationship with movements because it would increase our electoral consent or party membership […]. We believed that the party organization should also act as an infrastructure for other groups, as had happened in Genoa and in Florence. […Later on] it emerged that Rifondazione's majority did not intend to move forward in that direction" (IT.Int.18).

Consistent with these accounts, the discussion at the VI Congress, held in 2005, only concentrated on the party strategy avoiding the problem of the party's 'self-reform'. The PRC focused on its presence within institutions, overlooking the need for activity in the social sphere and thus preventing the project of opening up the local circles becoming a reality. As the former national spokesperson of the GC, now retired from politics, explained, with "the end of the involvement in social movements there was a slump everywhere, the levels of activism of the regular members decreased almost to zero" (IT.Int.17). The leadership concentrated its energies in building the alliance with the centre-left parties and subsequently participation in the national

government. The latter proved to be a difficult and divisive experience, which marked the beginning of the decline of the PRC. The calamitous electoral defeat in the 2008 national elections which, for the first time in Italian history, saw the radical left constituency without any parliamentary representation, constituted a 'breaking point' in the recent process of party evolution. A new dominant coalition took control of the party (see Section 5.6), with the aim of recovering the Communist organizational model and encouraging forms of traditional militancy. From 2008 onwards, with the party now outside the national parliament, the local circles were weakened by a severe loss of members and financial difficulties (IT.Int.9; IT.Int.17).

In this context, the anti-austerity mobilization had almost no impact on the grassroots of the party and local groups did not achieve the same levels of activism and openness that occurred in the earlier movement period. The PRC's leadership insisted on instituting the 'social party' (Secretary Ferrero et al. 2011) that would promote the practices of mutualism and self-organization which had existed at the beginning of the socialist movement. Despite these declared intentions, the only concrete innovations consisted of activating the 'Gruppi d'Acquisto Popolare-GAP', citizens' associations advocating responsible consumption at fair prices (ReteGAP.org), and the 'Brigades of Active Solidarity', groups of volunteers who would intervene in emergency situations (such as earthquakes, refugee disembarkations, floods) in order to support the most disadvantaged social groups. Both initiatives were intended to restore the party's class profile, and to some extent re-establish its 'communist' boundaries, rather than relax them. However, while the GAP lasted only three years, the 'Brigades' soon became independent from the PRC, and transformed into a sort of SMO (IT.Int.7; IT.Int.13; IT.Int.16; IT.Int.19).

Born in continuity with the movement-oriented phase of the PRC, SEL formally included openness and participation within its organizational principles (SEL Constitution 2010, art. 1.1, 1.4, 1.5). The founders intended that openness would be achieved mainly through the web, conceived as a tool to communicate with their constituency as well as to experiment with forms of e-democracy (SEL Constitution 2010, art. 1.4). However, the formal structure of SEL was similar overall to that of other leftist parties and in practice was not particularly open to the external environment. According to a local leader in Florence, the party embraced a moderate strategy and could not count on an active membership base involved in social movements:

"I soon realised that SEL was a limited project because its very existence was based on the idea of being hegemonic within the centre-left camp […]. The party was composed mainly of a political caste and the party personnel; in the end I was a local leader too. It was not able to intercept the desire for participation and resistance that existed in society, which later on was absorbed by the Five Star Movement" (IT.Int.4).

The same interviewee also mentioned the inability of his party to understand the specificities of the Italian anti-austerity protests, their fragmentation and distance from the traditional SMOs, as one of the obstacles that impeded SEL from constructing a fruitful interaction with social movements and extending its boundaries:

"There was the traditional logic of inviting the leaders of large trades unions or environmental associations, such as 'Legambiente'. We did not understand that the crisis of representation involved not only parties, but also other types of associations. Citizens were now organized in local committees, permanent grassroots assemblies, small movements. Therefore, we lost contact

with the people, because our conceptual framework [the party that develops relationships with the leadership of big SMOs] was old" (IT.Int.4).

The Greek experience shows a more linear evolution. SYN pursued the opening of the party's boundaries by progressively adopting a network form that enabled collaboration with other RLPs and social movements. In 2000, it promoted the creation of the 'Space for Dialogue and for the Unity and Common Action of the Left', which included several small leftist extra-parliamentary organizations, informal groups and independent activists. The Space facilitated the preparation of joint events, such as the first protests against the Kosovo war and the Greek participation in the Genoa counter-summit in 2001. According to the protagonists of that political season, the cooperation between previously divided groups was a determining factor in the construction of SYRIZA as a plural and open party (GR.Int.4; GR.Int.10; GR.Int.12; GR.Int.14). As a former member of SYN and of the Central Committee and Political Secretariat of SYRIZA stated,

"The various leftist organizations which participated in the anti-globalization movement – the Trotskyites, the Maoists and the Eurocommunists – started to work together, and their members began to appreciate each other, to create bonds and trust each other. That was the climate in which the idea of SYRIZA was born" (GR.Int.10).

Led by SYN, the Space also allowed the involvement of party members in movement activities and the opening of its local branches to the external environment. The impression of a possible permeability of the party to the claims and practices of movements also led some movement activists to join SYN, thereby activating processes of double membership. Describing this dynamic, a former leader of the Youth of SYN first in Crete and then in Athens highlighted how the arrival of young activists in the party influenced the organizational model:

"In 2003, when Greece had the Presidency of the EU, an intense period of rallies occurred in Greece [...]. I participated in those actions, but I was not yet a member of Synaspismos […]. I thought of joining to influence it from a leftist point of view […]. My first struggle was to impress on the Youth of Synaspismos an identity based on more democratic ideals, introducing the atmosphere – sometimes also radical – present in social movements. For me, this identity means a break with the traditional notions of the party and the revolution" (GR.Int.14).

The "aim to combine our ideas and the forces of ecology with the modern social movements embodying a radical intellect" was officially stated in the 3rd Congress (Athens, 29 June-2 July 2000; SYN 2000, Political resolution). Consistent with this aim, SYN's local branches started to coordinate their activity with the local movement groups and to include environmental activists dealing with territorial problems:

"Being part of the anti-globalisation movement helped to open up the organization; the local branches became more interested in supporting the local movements even if they dealt with less class-related topics, such as the defence of public spaces or environmental problems. This was not the case before, because SYN was a traditional party, mainly focused on labour issues" (GR.Int.10).

Another of my interviewees, a member of SYN Youth in the early 2000s and later of the Central Committee of SYRIZA, confirmed the positive effect that involvement in the Greek Social Forum (GSF) had on the party: "The local headquarters became more open to new ideas and new people, even encouraging the creation of a circle of non-members who were friends of the party" (GR.Int.4). Contrary to the Italian case, the strategy of participation in the GSF was agreed by the whole party: "Everybody realised that a new era was beginning and nobody wanted to stay out of it. There were differences about how close the relationship should be but there was no opposition" (GR.Int.4). Internal cohesion facilitated the process of convergence with the movement and in parallel the development of a network structure, which is quite unusual for a party:

"The platform of the GSF became the structure upon which SYRIZA was constructed: within it, a new relationship began between SYN and the smaller units of the left, so that they started to discuss unity, not only at the social level, but also in the political sphere. One could say that SYRIZA was the outcome of the GSF and this is why when the coalition was created the Forum stopped functioning, as all its activities and struggles were transferred to the SYRIZA framework" (GR.Int.4).

In SYN, the organizational model became a slightly more contested issue only after the 2004 national election, the first to be contested as SYRIZA, when the moderate factions opposed the party majority's project to stabilise the coalition and asked for its dissolution, fearing a takeover of their party (Eleftheriou 2009). However, their internal power was too weak to impede the break with the party's past (GR.Int.4; GR.Int.10; GR.Int.14), which was officialised in the political resolution passed by the IV Congress (Athens, 9-12 December 2004): in the long run, SYRIZA would become the unifying agent for a broad left and a strong, constant presence in the Greek party system (SYN 2004). From 2004 until 2013, SYRIZA worked as a coalition of political parties and SMOs characterised by internal diversity and variety which led to a pluralistic and decentralised model.

Compared with the PRC, which had inherited from the PCI numerous local headquarters spread across the whole country, both SYN, and later SYRIZA, had a weaker organization, mainly located in the big cities. Their ties with trade unions were also limited and SYN affiliated union (Autonomous Intervention) was always less influential than the unions linked to the KKE and PASOK (GR.Int.22). What may be regarded as weaknesses turned out to be clear advantages as far as connections with social movements are concerned as they forced party members and local headquarters to be constantly open towards the broader leftist environment. Thus, unlike the PRC, SYRIZA was in a position to interact with the anti-austerity movement precisely because an openness to collaboration remained one of its fundamental principles:

"If you want to explain why SYRIZA became the major political representative of the anti-austerity demands in Greece, a major component of the answer is that this coalition was very open and very well connected with the social movements and the activists. Out of necessity, out of the inability to be a traditional communist vanguard party, because of the presence of a new generation of members… the crucial reason is that since the beginning of the 2000s we were a very open party" (GR.Int.10).

If during the GJM mobilization, "SYN was essentially many parties in one" (Katsourides 2016, 58) a decade later, SYRIZA still appeared as "a coalition in progress" (della Porta et al. 2017), presenting an image of a pluralist and open party which was attractive for movement activists. In her interview, a member of the Network for social and political rights 'Diktyo' described the common processes of double membership in both the anti-austerity movement and the party:

"Almost all its members were part of different movements, for the environment, water, the neighbourhood, the rights of workers and so on […]. Some militants of 'Diktyo' are also in SYRIZA, even in the Central Committee. I participate in one of the party's local committees in Athens, and although my main identity is still that of a 'Diktyo' activist, I have a double political engagement. Moreover, we ['Diktyo' and SYRIZA] try to plan common activities, for example for the antifascist struggle, the migrants' situation, the core political issues" (GR.Int.11).

After the electoral growth of 2012, the party invested in spaces that could act as meeting points for both party members and sympathisers. One of the youngest representatives of the party, elected in the local parliament of the Attiki region, explained that although the party paid the rent, these places were fully controlled by the youth organization, which ran them according to a criteria of complete openness to outsiders:

"Here we host party meetings, but also music bands, poetry nights, book presentations […] and support solidarity activities: we collect toys for children, food, clothes, medicines and we provide doctors. We have a great headquarter in Thessaloniki, 'Eterotopia', in Patra and other cities" (GR.Int.3).

5.3.2 The youth organizations

Both the PRC and SYN actively pursued the strengthening and opening up of their youth organizations in coincidence with the GJM presence. Although small and rather marginal until that moment, the Young Communists ('Giovani Comunisti'-GC) and Synaspismos' Youth ('Neolaia Synaspismou'-NS) became the preferred means of re-engaging with younger generations, a process identified as one of the main opportunities to emerge from the phase of intense social mobilization (Secretary Bertinotti's speech 1999, IV Congress; SYN CPC Resolution, 17-18 September 2005).

In Italy, the more innovative components of the PRC had initially opposed the creation of a separate youth organization, considering it part of the 19th-century party model. Under pressure from the orthodox communist current, the youth section was finally founded in 1994 though the party never really invested in it until the emergence of the GJM, when the leadership realised that it could become a generational and political bridge with the movements (IT.Int.17; IT.Int.18). Similarly, in Greece, the 'Union of Leftist Youth' was initially very small and not even officially linked to SYN. While the other Greek RLPs (the KKE and 'ANTARSYA') had a strong presence in all the universities, the Union's membership was confined to Athens and mostly to doctoral students (GR.Int.14). However a new phase began in 1999, when the Union changed its name to 'Neolaia Synaspismou' (NS), clearly strengthening its connection to the party, and elected Alexis Tsipras as its Secretary. Under his direction, from 1999 to 2003, a process of re-organization was brought forward in parallel with engagement with the GJM.

Their activity in the social sphere consolidated both youth groupings and helped them to gain an unprecedented freedom of action and the ability to influence their parties' internal debate and political line. As the period of proximity to the GJM came to an end, the Italian PRC formally attributed full "autonomy of political proposal and initiative" to the GC (PRC Constitution 2005, art. 5) and consequently reduced the control of the top management over the youth members (art. 7). While this reform recognised the enhanced role of the youth organization within the party, it proved insufficient to stabilise its relations with the social movements established in the early 2000s, as both the PRC's political culture and its strategic choices prevented intense interaction between the GC and the more recent anti-austerity movements (see below). In Greece too, the involvement in the GJM meant a path to empowerment for NS. Born out of an agreement between the two main internal factions, the 'leftists' and the 'moderates', its representatives had initially been excluded from SYN's leadership. Supported by most of the youth members, the leftists pushed for the foundation and financing of a real youth organization; the moderate sectors accepted but in turn imposed the exclusion of NS' leaders from the party's upper management fearing that they could strengthen the hand of the left wing (Eleftheriou 2009). Nevertheless, NS provided zealous support to the shift to the left until it gained "full organizational autonomy from the party" (SYN Constitution 2005, art. 14) and the right to participate in the internal procedures (ibid.). When SYRIZA became a unitary party in 2013, the youth section retained considerable autonomy (Transition articles II) but it also absorbed the divisions into currents that characterised the party and started to look inwards (della Porta et al. 2017; GR.Int.17; GR.Int.18) after a whole decade of openness and constant involvement in social movements.

In Italy, the GC were fully involved in the GJM and established stable relationships mostly with the occupied social centres, 'heirs' of the extra-parliamentary protest of the 1970s, which formed a heterogeneous and vast field where various groups, often in contrast with each other, coexisted. The component more open to dialogue with the PRC was that of the 'Tute Bianche' (White Overalls, see Chapter 4), derived from the old 'Autonomia Operaia' (Workers' Autonomy) and able to mobilize thousands of young people. Traditionally rather impermeable to party influences, in the 1990s this movement sector went through a deep cultural transformation which resulted in it embracing the 'civil disobedience' repertoire, but also a strategic project of 'mediation' with institutions which allowed for proximity with the GC (IT.Int.17). The two formations demonstrated together in Genoa and strengthened their relationship at the first National Assembly of Social Forums (Florence, October 2001) where, together with the association 'Ya Basta' (Enough) and other minor groups, gave life to the 'Laboratory of Civil Disobedience'. A few months later (Bologna, 12 January 2002), the same forces merged into the 'Movimento delle/dei Disobbedienti' (Movement of the Disobedients), a step that implied for the leaders of the GC not merely an enlargement of their organization's boundaries, but a genuine takeover. The dissolution of the Young Communists was officially ratified at their II National Conference (Marina di Massa, 4-7 July 2002) amidst heated internal debate.

According to the accounts of the interviewees, the transformation that affected the GC in those years was fed by the general feeling of political renewal generated by the GJM and by the flow of young movement activists into the PRC:

"I entered Rifondazione when the bridge was built between the 'Tute Bianche', 'Ya Basta' and the GC. The convergence between part of the old 'Autonomia' that aimed to open up and a part of the PRC that wanted to change was fundamental to my decision, as it allowed me to be active both within a structured political party and within social movements. And that specific compromise took place only because of the no-global movement, otherwise it would have been impossible [...]. In my view, it was the more progressive opportunity in the terrain of political experimentation" (IT.Int.17).

The GC became "extremely heretical and determined to provoke a general innovation of the party, that was precisely in line with the Secretary's project" (IT.Int.17). Nevertheless, this project was inhibited by the political culture diffused within the PRC, defined by young members as "very classic, basically derived from the PCI, or, at best, from the 'Proletarian Democracy' of the 1970s" (IT.Int.17). Close collaboration between the Disobedients and the GC continued in the following years but a real alliance never came into being. According to the interpretation of one of the leaders of the PRC, the youth organization faced a crisis as soon as the GJM began to weaken because it had focused entirely on the movement, neglecting more classic forms of territorial activity (Cannavò 2009).

When the anti-austerity movements emerged, the Young Communists were a residual presence and thus the cases of double membership, so crucial in the previous phase, were greatly reduced. During their interviews some former supporters of the GC described the feeling of disappointment within the youth members of the party after the failed experience in government and the turnover in leadership in 2008 (see Section 5.6). During this period, "a mass exodus of young members occurred" (IT.Int.18) and while "many of them even stopped participating in politics" (IT.Int.18) and only a few joined SEL, others contributed to the anti-austerity initiatives purely as movement activists:

"The 'Wave' [the student movement] arrived immediately after the cleavage within the PRC, which had left many base members free to engage in the protests. There was a large group of ex-Young Communists who no longer identified with the party, after its recent 'identitarian' turn, and did not approve the moderate attempt to build SEL, because of their 'Bertinottian', movement-oriented understanding of politics. When they found themselves without any party linkage they reacted by adhering only to the movement" (IT.Int.20).

One of the movement activists interviewed claimed that the few young members who remained instead in the PRC were often perceived as "bureaucrats" who participated in the student mobilization only for instrumental reasons (IT.Int.8).

In the case of SYN too, interaction with social movements was carried out to a large extent by the youth organization, NS. Unlike events in Italy, however, the youth members of SYN, and later of SYRIZA, were able to actively contribute to both the GJM and the anti-austerity movement and create stronger and more lasting relationships, at least until the party entered government in 2015 which, as we will see, signalled a critical new phase for the NS. According to those interviewed, at the very beginning of the cycle, SYN's youth expressed great interest in the international GJM (GR.Int.4; GR.Int.10; GR.Int.12; GR.Int.14; GR.Int.19; GR.Int.21; GR.Int.23). The director of SYRIZA's Department for the Environment and Ecology, who was part of NS at the time, stated that much of the appeal of the movement came from its specific

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character which was radically different from both the tradition of Greek movements and the party's internal ethos:

"The traditional Greek movement was dominated by the more purist and dogmatic positions of the Communist Party and the extra-parliamentary left […]. When they went abroad, the young activists of SYN, and later on SYRIZA, saw a much broader spectrum inside the movements, ranging from NGOs to 'Tute Bianche', and were fascinated by this aspect. They felt that a variety of positions was acceptable and also saw different ways of doing politics" (GR.Int.12).

Before becoming a conscious strategy, the commitment of NS was based on a spontaneous reaction to the emergence of the movement: "The leadership didn't care about the anti-globalization movement and they left young people to play with it […]. So, in the shadow of the typical party functions, younger people mostly had in mind the anti-globalization movement" (GR.Int.12). As another interviewee confirmed, SYN's participation in the GJM initially was "a choice of members and cadres, and only afterwards did the leadership officially decide to fully support it" (GR.Int.10).

As cases of double membership intensified, approval for the line of intervention in the protest field broadly diffused within SYN and was never contrasted by the leadership or specific party factions:

"A big delegation of the youth section was present in Genoa, but other party sectors and the President were there as well. The whole party was able to grasp the change that was taking place […]. Of course, the younger members contributed more, for reasons of age and energy, because not all the older members were ready to travel around Europe to take part in the demonstrations, but the party was supportive as well" (GR.Int.4).

The interviewees underlined that participation of SYN (and SYRIZA) youth in social movements continued uninterrupted for the entire decade and beyond, particularly through the active role of younger members in the student mobilization of 2006 and in the anti-austerity protests (GR.Int.3; GR.Int.8; GR.Int.14; GR.Int.15; GR.Int.18; GR.Int.24). A young SYRIZA member explained how the experience in the GJM, and especially in the social forums, helped in designing a strategy of permanent involvement:

"Our basic idea is that in order for a leftist party to achieve results the first indisputable condition is to be in the movements 'like a fish in the water': participating in them, respecting their autonomy, bringing ideas, providing structures and eventually trying to take the direction of the movement after its creation. SYN developed this vision thanks to the social forums and since then there were a lot of movements in which we, as NS, participated" (GR.Int.15).

This strategic approach began to be problematic when SYRIZA was transformed into a unified party in 2013, and the focus of action shifted from the streets to institutional interests (GR.Int.4; GR.Int.7; GR.Int.10; GR.Int.17; GR.Int.20). The youth organization entered a phase of inward looking politics in which the internal contrasts became highly evident (GR.Int.17; see also della Porta et al. 2017). Disagreements partially reflected the debate within the main party and regarded both the content and the form of the organization. A large number of youth members formed a minority group and proposed the adoption of a more traditional party model, advocating in particular for a classic territorial rootedness through local sections diffused

throughout the country (GR.Int.18; GR.Int.15). Despite their divisions the youth of SYRIZA remained active for the whole anti-austerity period and continued to support its party and the Tsipras government until the referendum over the third Memorandum was held in July 2015, when the youth section became one of the fundamental actors during the 'Oxi' (No) campaign. However, it substantially dissolved after a new deal was signed between Greece and its creditors generating great delusion in the party base.

According to the account of a former activist, the experience of the SYRIZA youth section was very similar to that of the GC in Italy: while most of the former members found other channels of activism, the few who remained were seen as careerist politicians:

"There was a strong internal clash between a vast majority, that was against the party's choices and had decided to leave it, and a small minority, who was instead in favour and wanted to remain. To give you an idea, we were around two thousand young members and only two hundred of us stayed. Since then, the youth organization has changed its name and now it's basically a bureaucratic body" (GR.Int.17).

5.3.3 The Party of the European Left

The expansion of SYN and PRC boundaries also envisaged the construction of a European party. Originally emerging from the social forums, this project was actively promoted by the Italian PRC, for different purposes. First, and most important, it could facilitate the creation of an extended space for action, which responded to the GJM's goal of a new internationalist politics. Second, it could provide the RLPs already associated in the 'Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left' (GUE/NGL) with an effective instrument for permanent interconnection. Third, it gave access to the funds allocated for continental parties.

The decision to create the Party of the European Left (EL) was taken at the international meeting of fifteen communist and socialist forces held in Berlin on 10-11 January 2004 under the auspices of the PRC. The process continued with a meeting in Athens (14-15 February), in which the constitution and the foundational documents were approved, and at the first Congress in Rome (8-9 May) in which the PRC's Secretary Fausto Bertinotti was chosen as President. The EL was conceived not as a simple alliance, but as a real transnational party, with its own congresses endowed with the power to elect the executive bodies and leadership. Moreover, the possibility of direct enrolment of both single citizens and national political parties was established. This latter had been highly debated within the PRC as it entailed the risk of dismantling the traditional form in favour of a federative model, which included both RLPs and social movement actors.

The PRC had indeed guided the whole operation amidst harsh internal confrontation. The Secretary and his closest collaborators had participated in the Berlin meeting without consulting the party's leading boards, provoking criticism of their undemocratic methods. Internal factions also disagreed with the content of the project. The 'conservative' group, 'l'Ernesto', believed it would profoundly transform the PRC (due to the change of name and symbol) until bringing about its demise and breaking the linkages with the orthodox communist parties, which did not

join the EL (PRC's National Direction report, 28 Jan. 2004).[57] For the two Trotskyite factions, instead, it was moderate in character and incapable of communicating with the European anticapitalist left. In 2004, the executive bodies ratified the entrance of the PRC in the EL by a narrow majority (55 per cent)[58] and approved the introduction of the formula 'European Left' in the party's symbol (PRC Constitution 2005, art. 65).

An ex-party leader, who had strongly encouraged the birth of the EL, explained how at first it was considered an important resource in the hands of the 'innovative coalition' to strengthen the process of party transformation:

"We understood the EL as a reinvention of the traditional party structure […]. The idea was: 'given that there is a global movement, we should dissolve our party within something wider into which other alter-globalist and anti-war components could also converge. Let's invent a new, inclusive container, which should be European and not national'. And indeed we had also managed to involve movement organizations, such as ARCI and FIOM" (IT.Int.17).

SYN enthusiastically supported the project, also organizing one of the foundational meetings in Athens. Unlike the situation of the PRC, the Greek party experienced no internal opposition to joining the EL, which, as one interviewee explained, was a universally shared and agreed decision:

"[Within SYN] the debate regarded the characteristics of the transnational party and the policies that it would implement, but nobody was against the idea of a pan-European unity of the left. We also discussed which parties should be included and how strong the opposition to European policies would be. But everybody realised that being a single party in one country was hopeless." (GR.Int.4).

However, neither SYN nor SYRIZA changed their symbol accordingly, demonstrating the minor importance that this issue held for the Greek RLPs compared with the relevance it had in the PRC.

Despite being a very significant innovation, in the long run the EL never became a true continental umbrella organization able to overcome the classic party form as its founders had intended: its action remained confined to international meetings, including the European Social Forums (GR.Int.4), and conferences. Among the obstacles, one Italian informant mentioned "resistance within the PRC, because some had never believed in the plan and others were afraid of losing their position" (IT.Int.17). The defensive disposition of the SMOs was also recalled:

"In 2004 [when the EL was created] there had been a decline in the power of the movement and what was left were the movement organizations. [Therefore] the logic of preserving the status quo functioned also outside the party: organized groups were afraid of losing the visibility they had built during the mobilization by introducing their group to a larger container. In addition, there were both party bureaucracies and also movement bureaucracies" (IT.Int.17).

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[57] The Communist parties of Portugal, Greece, Catalonia and Cyprus were not involved in the project. The Italian PdCI participated only as 'external observer'.
[58] Report of the meeting of the National Direction, 28 January 2004.

5.4 Transformations in the RLPs' modes of political participation

This Section examines how interaction with social movements transformed the traditional modes of political participation of RLP members. Moving beyond mainstream analysis of party activism, which at present focuses mainly on electoral behaviour and leadership selection, here I concentrate on involvement in protest and adoption of non-conventional actions. It emerged that from 1999 onwards both SYN and the PRC promoted new modes of political participation, particularly encouraging their members to engage in the GJM activities. In the case of Italy, however, the strategy of 'immersion' in the social movements was already being reviewed in 2005 and from then on, although there was always a closer relationship between the PRC and the movements than other parties, the party members returned to their normal party activities. Later on SEL did not offer any more innovative approach and instead repressed the participatory format that some members had introduced in the early stages of the party's life. On the other hand, right since the early 2000s SYN/SYRIZA had continuously participated in large numbers and with conviction in all the movements (the GJM, the peace movement, the student movement, the youth revolt in 2008 and the anti-austerity movement from 2011 onwards).

As mentioned, during the period of the GJM, both SYN and PRC not only officially joined major movement events, but on many occasions also helped to organize them. In the Greek case the youth party members were the first to travel around Europe and it was only later that the leadership approved and invested in a policy of proximity with the social movements. In the Italian case, instead, it was the Secretary himself who planned a 'social turn' that entailed involvement in both national and international movements.

As early as 1999 the PRC supported the peace movement that opposed the war in Kosovo, thus starting a dialogue with important SMOs, while at the international level it promoted European initiatives, events with Fidel Castro and – more relevant to the 'new course' – the 'Subcomandante' (Subcommander) Marcos, leader of the Zapatista National Liberation Army ('Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional'-EZLN), and the São Paulo Forum. The PRC and the Greens were also the only Italian parties to be present with their representatives in the Seattle counter-summit against the WTO meeting. A supporter of SEL/SI[59] in Florence, who at the time was a member of the [centre-left] DS party and spokesperson of the Florence Social Forum, pointed out the consequence of this early action:

"The only party which was really accepted within the movement was Rifondazione. Of course the DS, which had invited its members not to go to Genoa, was not admitted. There had been a definitive fracture with them […]. Those of us [members of the DS] who were participating as a personal choice envied Rifondazione because it had decided to invest its energies in the movement […and] managed to become one of its leading bodies" (IT.Int.11).

Counter-summits multiplied in the following years and from 2000 the PRC's line was also followed by SYN. Both parties participated in the protests against the EU summit in Nice and the IMF and WB meeting in Prague (2000), the Genoa anti-G8 protests (July 2001) and the WSFs in Porto Alegre (2001, 2002, 2003). In 2001, the PRC even became the only political party

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[59] As mentioned in Chapter Three, SEL no longer exists, having changed its name to 'Italian Left' ('Sinistra Italiana'-SI) in 2017.

in the world to be admitted to the International Assembly of Social Movements. At the domestic level, it subscribed to the Genoa Social Forum, the umbrella organization in charge of organizing the anti-G8 mass demonstrations in 2001 and, after that, collaborated in the preparation of the first ESF in Florence in 2002. The party members contacted for this thesis expressed satisfaction for the positive role the PRC played during the most intense phase of the alter-globalist mobilization (IT.Int.16; IT.Int.17; IT.Int.18; IT.Int.19). As an ex-GC member told me: "Without the infrastructure of Rifondazione, from the money to the organized networks of militant communities diffused across the whole national territory, probably we [the movement] could not have done what we did" (IT.Int.18).

Confirming the points made above, another member of the PRC stated:

"We were not perceived as something external because we had been involved since the beginning. We didn't choose to participate when Genoa arrived, as others did. For instance, the FIOM decided just shortly before Genoa, and in reality they only came to act as the security service in the demonstrations […]. We were in the planning of Genoa, then in Genoa with a massive presence, and we continued to be there after Genoa. Those years were the golden age for us!" (IT.Int.19).

Similarly, SYN had energetically contributed to the foundation of the Greek Social Forum in 2003 and in both countries the RLPs were involved in the anti-war movement of the biennium 2003-2004. In both cases, none of the internal factions objected to the participation of their parties in the movement events. The 'conservative' faction of the PRC opposed the leadership's aim to transform the party's political culture and structure, as well as its detachment from the centre-left coalition, but no attempts were made to impede its participation in movement initiatives (IT.Int.9). In Greece, it was the 'centre-left' of SYN that was more critical, but it lacked the strength to stop the process (GR.Int.12).

The unanimity of the two parties regarding the new participatory frameworks brought about great changes in both. At the formal level, the leadership encouraged the diffusion of both civil disobedience and non-violence (PRC 2002, thesis 39). In effect, party members, especially younger ones, became involved in the movement, without stressing their adherence to the PRC: "For us, not to organize a segment of the party (or of the youth organization) within a demonstration was an added value […]. If I went to an assembly of whatever movement, even the least influential, everybody knew who I was" (IT.Int.18). The double membership favoured the adoption of a new repertoire of action, which eventually included illegal practices such as the occupation of buildings: "We [the Young Communists] occupied around ten social centres all over Italy. In other cases, the [PRC's] youth members started to participate in the steering assemblies of existing social centres" (IT.Int.17).

Despite the fact that this participatory wave had generated great enthusiasm in the party base (IT.Int.16; IT.Int.17; IT.Int.18; IT.Int.19), the PRC began to reconsider its strategy of proximity with the social movements already at the end of 2004 and officialised reconciliation with the centre-left coalition and institutional politics in its VI Congress, held in 2005 (PRC's majority 2005). According to a former leader, who had worked for the movement-oriented turn of his party, reversal was influenced by two factors: a generalised mentality which considered

institutions to be the primary field of action and ultimately led to a more moderate approach, and a period of reduced participation in social movements:

"When the movement began to weaken in 2004 and participation was no longer massive, it became more difficult to maintain the previous position of closeness to social struggles. Someone, in my opinion Bertinotti himself, thought that this tactic was not productive from the point of view of 'real politics' […]. Many party leaders started saying that they were unsatisfied with the experience […]. Especially for those coming from the PCI it sounded like: 'The fun is over! Let's do politics now'„ (IT.Int.17).

Later on, also as a consequence of the decline of double membership, political participation once more took place through traditional party channels. From 2008 onwards, party texts insisted on the 'social party', a project developed by the new leadership which aimed at members' participation in social solidarity initiatives (PRC's documents: Acerbo et al. 2008; Ferrero et al. 2011). Interviewees described the 'social party' as a good idea which however did not become a lasting reality due to the greater influence of those who preferred to seek office:

"It was a great opportunity for my party and it started off well. But it did not last because no one invested in it strongly enough. We began with the 'Gruppi di Acquisto Popolare-GAP' and a frank discussion about what this party model could really be: was it a form of 'red' charity or a new political reality? […] Sadly the people who thought that the elections and institutional matters were more important predominated" (IT.Int.19).

In the case of SEL, in theory the internal decisional mechanisms were to be based on the maximum use of new technologies (SEL Constitution 2010, art. 1), but these were loosely formalized and never translated into particularly innovative activities. The intention of promoting "participatory and direct democracy" (ibid., art. 1) was put into practice only in primary elections. At first, the party's participatory vocation was experimented in 'Nichi's Factories' ('Fabbriche di Nichi'), a sort of 'para-organization' directly linked to the leader. These 'Factories' were the evolution of the 'committees for civic participation' which had spontaneously come into being in Puglia in 2005 to campaign for Nichi Vendola as President of the Region (Romano 2005). Following their success, they re-emerged in 2009, when Vendola announced his re-candidature, but they lost their original inter-generational character and were managed mainly by young IT and communication specialists (Romano 2009).
When SEL came into being, this experience extended throughout the country, and even abroad, for a total of 600 structures which their founders intended as political laboratories able to recruit new activists. The party had indeed refused to build the classic collateral organizations, such as the PRC's women's forum and youth branch, aiming instead at conjugating traditional party militancy with the limited commitment of sympathisers. According to the main organizer of Nichi's Factory in Florence, at the beginning the experimental formula functioned as a positive model of civic participation:

"They were self-organized committees which constituted an informal network, because there was no formal regulation […]. People met once a week to discuss political issues and produce local initiatives, often inspired by Vendola's proposals […]. Informality made it possible to

enlarge the political participation […]. It was a free space for debate managed by generous people" (IT.Int.10).

Although they openly supported SEL, the Factories were not party bodies subjected to its rules and control. As the activists said, precisely this absence of formal linkages, which reflected the broadly diffused scepticism towards political parties in Italy during the economic crisis, made the proposed model particularly attractive for the volunteers but was disliked, instead, by the leadership:

"[Participants] were interested in public issues and wanted to contribute to changing the destiny of the public good, their neighbourhood etc., but could not think of themselves within a party […]. You don't believe in it, you need something more fluid and free […]. The Factory was open and inclusive, the party meetings are not […]. We were a grey zone of contamination where the party and civil society could meet. The M5S understood it, SEL didn't because it continued to perpetuate old systems" (IT.Int.10).

Despite the euphoria of the 'Factory' volunteers, SEL's leadership, still adhering to an old concept of party politics, decided to halt the expansion:

"The relationship with SEL was conflictual and not constructive because, at best the party saw us as its youth organization […] at worst, we were seen as a competitor […]. Those who had experience within a party considered us a problem: 'What do they want? Who are they? Are they willing to become candidates for us, or what?' The experience ended with a sort of suppression from above […]. (IT.Int.10).

The situation in Greece was different from that of Italy, because the strategy of participation in transnational and domestic social movements initiated by SYN in the early 2000s was continued by SYRIZA after its foundation in 2004. In 2006, SYN/SYRIZA sustained the teachers' strike and the student movement against the planned university reforms, and co-organized the fourth ESF together with other leftist groups and SMOs. The party sources that I consulted said that the ESF in Athens "was mainly organized and run by SYN members. I would say 70 per cent of the people who worked to prepare the Forum were from SYN" (GR.Int.4).

In 2008, SYRIZA was the only parliamentary formation that did not condemn the violent uprising following the killing of a fifteen-year-old boy by a police officer in Athens. Fully approving of the way his party acted, a SYRIZA member declared: "We were the only ones to say: 'this is a social phenomenon' – I mean the clashes, the fires, the burning of the city – 'As politicians, we need to understand the causes of this, let's not blame our youth. We will stand by them!'„ (GR.Int.12). Public declarations of sympathy were coupled with participation in protests, thus highlighting the deep transformation in the forms of action:

"By that time we already had a very strong youth organization, that was formed in the anti-globalist and anti-Bologna process student movement […]. So, when our youth members were on the streets in December 2008, maybe not rioting, but really angry with the police and being aggressive, the party could not do anything different. So, ok, it was a good reading of the situation by Alavanos [SYN's President], but also the party had changed so much that the minority could do nothing about it" (GR.Int.12).

In the Greek case, therefore, a real participatory attitude had penetrated the base membership of SYN and SYRIZA thus facilitating continuity in involvement with movements that was instead absent in Italy. For this reason, when the anti-austerity movements emerged, SYRIZA militants were ready to join the protest immediately, regardless of the nature of its convocation:

"The occupation [of Syntagma Square] was called through Facebook by a group which had already organized a similar happening near the Acropolis, in solidarity with the Spanish 'Indignados'. They were a small group of movement activists, leftist […]. On the first night, I arrived in Syntagma very late, and some SYRIZA comrades were already there […]. And they said: 'Oh, it's a great situation, many people have gathered, we are forming assemblies and working groups, it's a serious protest here!'. They rapidly understood that something very important was taking place there" (GR.Int.12).

Thanks to their assiduous intervention in the protest field, party members became familiarised with the new repertoire proposed by the GJM activists:

"[University groups close to SYN] were affected a lot by the [SMO] 'Diktyo', particularly its youth sector called 'Virus' that was fascinated by the Italian 'Ya Basta' and the 'Disobbedienti' and was trying to bring that model to Greece. In 2003 there was an intense period of rallies […]; so, a lot of protests occurred that were influenced by those ideas and forms of action [...]. I participated in those events, including in the only 'Disobbedienti style' of protest that ever occurred in Greece!" (GR.Int.14).

The propensity to take part in direct actions continued later, even when movements increasingly embraced violent methods. Interpreting the words of one of the interviewees, it is possible to maintain that, in the Greek case, processes of double membership helped to overcome the resistances deriving from the characteristics of the anti-austerity movements themselves:

"From 2006 onwards, violence became the hegemonic means of struggle and anarchists started to increase and their ideas spread a lot […]. Ever since the 2006 events, most political events are ones that we didn't plan. Radical events took place and whether they were left-wing or not had to do with how we positioned ourselves regarding something that was happening anyway. We had to find a way to deal with it" (GR.Int.14).

According to many of the statements given, the way of 'dealing with it' was to be supportive without any pretention to lead:

"We managed to enter this [Squares'] movement from the very first moment even though there was hostility towards parties […]. We were not hiding that we were part of SYRIZA, but we spoke as ordinary members of the assembly. The other activists did not perceive us just as members of SYRIZA, because we were there every day […] and they had the opportunity to see that 'these are guys from the movements, their mentality is similar to ours […], they are not bureaucrats, they are participating here in the movement, they are being beaten by the police, they are suffering from the teargas',, (GR.Int.15). Later on, "[Party members] started setting up solidarity networks but they weren't trying to say 'this is SYRIZA' and this somehow worked well" (GR.Int.14).

We could therefore conclude that, as in Italy during the period around the events in Genoa, overall the frequency of the double membership phenomena eventually modified the way in which SYN/SYRIZA related to social movements, moving from a hegemonic model to a more horizontal one:

"The party members who were educated inside the new movements knew we could not relate with them in the old way: 'you [the party] call for a demonstration, you make a speech, you put up your banners, you control the situation' […]. Now you had people in the party who were sensitive enough to realize that in order to influence this movement you cannot send a representative saying: 'SYRIZA believes that we must do this!'. You have to be there in person and respect the other's ideas" (GR.Int.12).

5.4.1 Renewal in the RLPs' membership base

In the Italian case, involvement in the GJM resulted in a slight growth of the PRC's membership base and its rejuvenation. According to official figures, the adherents increased from 89,977 in 2000 to 97,416 in 2004 (+8.3 per cent). The Young Communists under 25 rose from 11.7 per cent in 1999 to 14 per cent in 2006 (+2) and those between 26 and 35 from 16 to 18.5 per cent (+2.5). Although limited, this increase emerges as important if compared with the crisis which at the same time affected mainstream political parties (della Porta 2015b). Subsequently, however, membership of the PRC declined continuously falling to only 17,053 in 2015 (source: PRC's Organization Department), while the organizational structure of SEL remained light (IT.Int.4).

In the Greek case, the influx of new participants to SYRIZA started with intervention in the student movement of 2006-2007:

"This was the first wave of massive expansion for the youth of SYRIZA. So, the first generation was just a very few people, including Tsipras. The second generation, mine, was a bit bigger and comprised activists whose identity had been formed in the alter-globalization movement" (GR.Int.14).

Recalling the reasons that had encouraged her to enrol in SYRIZA, a young member referred to the discourse proposed by the party's youth within the universities which differentiated the 'renewed' left from both the orthodox communist KKE and the extra-parliamentary Antarsya, proving attractive for activists in the student movement:

"I have been a member of SYRIZA Youth since 2006, when we were against the education law that proposed cuts, ending the provision of free books, barring students who hadn't finish their degree after six years […]. I chose the SYRIZA Youth because I agreed that what was happening in the University wasn't just our problem, but also regarded the professors and society as a whole […]. The KKE did not get involved in the movement, while Antarsya […] presented the situation as just a student issue. So, you get along with some people, you can trust them, and through these ties you start participating" (GR.Int.2).

According to the scenario described to me by one of the party leaders, SYN set the goal to enlarge its base after the SYRIZA alliance was stabilized:

"In 2004, there was the first campaign to enrol new members which did have some outcome, though not anything spectacular: SYN used to have around 15,000 members and then after SYRIZA was created this rose to 25,000 […]. Then, there was a second campaign in 2009, and the third and last one was in 2013" (GR.Int.4.).

Despite these efforts, the party membership did not increase in proportion to the electoral growth of SYRIZA: in 2012, with the coalition's vote share at 26.9 per cent, the members were approximately 30,000 (GR.Int.15), while from 2009 to 2013, the youth groups rose from 1,000 to 2,500 (della Porta et al. 2017). Although an important increase, the active base remained too limited to cover the needs of the second party in the country. Indeed, young party officials lamented "The big gap – claiming that – We need many more people everywhere" (GR.Int.15). Complaining about the party management, one of them denounced:

"The party says that we must make solidarity networks, be in the unions and in the movements but the actual activists are 3,000 people! Then there are another 30,000 members who are older […] and who do not mobilize. So, the life of younger party militants is being annihilated and this can also eventually lead to bureaucratic behaviour, because they would have done nothing else in their lives. This form of over-politicisation of a small group of 3/4,000 people is a problem and can only be overcome if we find a way to become more much larger" (GR.Int.14).

Later on, the unsolved problems deriving from a weak membership combined with the pressure to adhere to institutional politics resulted in the same concentration of party activities on internal issues (GR.Int.17) already mentioned within the youth organizations and is also confirmed by other empirical studies (Tsakatika and Eleftheriou 2013; della Porta et al. 2017).

5.5 Internal democracy in RLPs

This Section verifies whether the desire of social movements to achieve horizontalism and participatory democracy led the RLPs to introduce mechanisms for the redistribution of power within their organization. The empirical analysis highlighted that the RLPs studied here fundamentally maintained a traditional party model with a permanent thrust towards a centralization of internal power. However, Greek RLPs – though not particularly innovative – appear as more democratic, especially due to a greater ability of their membership to influence decisions. Intense processes to create a vertical and top-down structure are also seen in SYRIZA from 2013, and were only partially opposed by initiatives from below such as 'Solidarity for All'. All the parties under examination show a pyramidal structure, with different territorial levels that reflect the respective layers of governance of their countries: 1) the municipal level; 2) the Italian 'province' and the Greek 'nomarchie'; 3) the Italian 'regions' and the Greek 'periphereia'; 4) the national state (Figure 5.1). While for the Greek parties the key organizational level is the third, for the Italian parties it is still the second. The 'regional' bodies, historically weaker than the powerful federal branches inherited from the PCI model, were strengthened in the 2000s and today are increasingly important.

In all cases, the base members form the 'local congresses' which elect the congresses of the higher order. The congresses are tasked to discuss the political line and elect the executive bodies as well as the leader of their respective party layer. Each of the four levels is provided with a collective assembly (the 'congress'), an executive body (the 'political committee' or 'coordination group' in SEL), and a chairperson. The meso-level congresses elect the National Congress, which in its turn elects the national steering body and the leader, known as 'National Secretary' in the PRC and in all other cases the 'President', who holds executive functions and represents the party. The steering body (called 'Central Political Committee' in SYN and SYRIZA, 'National Political Committee' in the PRC and 'National Assembly' in SEL) is considered the principle organ of political direction and elects the top executive collective or 'Secretariat' ('Presidency' in SEL) from within its members. The Italian parties conceive the Secretariat as a very restricted group, which operates in close connection with the leader. For this reason, they also include a larger executive body, called the 'National Direction' in the PRC and 'National Coordination Group' in SEL. In all the RLPs discussed here, the 'party in central office', i.e. the organizational core of the party (Katz and Mair 1994), is divided into thematic 'Departments'.

Differences between the Italian and Greek RLPs in the actual functioning have developed over time. From the point of view of the 'innovators' who began the process of party transformation in 1999, the PRC appeared as a rather hierarchical and bureaucratic machine:

"Overall the party structure was very traditional, the same as that of the PCI. There was an extremely vertical model: the grassroots level, then the federations, the regional level, the secretariats […]. We had the idea of building a different type of organization, more similar to a network and less vertical" (IT.Int.17).

In order to achieve this, the party modified some of its formal procedures. First, it decided to reduce control by the higher echelons over the actions of the local units (PRC Constitution 1999, art. 5). From 1999, the prohibition to form internal factions, typical of twentieth century communist parties, was gradually abandoned. The right of the minorities to publicly express their dissent, even outside the formal setting of the Congress, was finally recognized in 2002 (PRC Constitution 2002, art. 8) and the rule that excluded them from the executive bodies was ignored from 2005, when it was also established that the electoral lists should be formed according to the internal weight of the various components (PRC Constitution 2005, art. 57).

In the eyes of movement-oriented party members these internal changes were effective in responding to the need to maintain internal equilibrium between the various 'souls' of the party, but largely insufficient to move the PRC towards a more horizontal format:

"We used to talk of 'self-reform of the party' but it never worked. Big organizations cannot self-reform, because they tend to reproduce themselves. And this is a basic rule of political sociology, not only my personal experience. Therefore, every time we attempted to introduce a real reform we clashed with the resistance of someone or other […] Inside the party there was the resistance of those who had never believed in following that route as well as those who were afraid of losing their posts" (IT.Int.17).

De facto, power remained highly concentrated at the upper levels, and particularly in the hands of the leader. Unlike SYN, turnover of the Secretary has been generally limited in the PRC

(Table 5.1), revealing that, from this point of view, it learned little from the horizontal culture of social movements and their antipathy towards individualistic leadership. During the years of innovation, Fausto Bertinotti (in office from 1994 to 2006) even enhanced the role of the leadership figure. After the split of a significant part of the conservative faction in 1998, the position of President was deleted from the organogram (PRC Constitution 1999), ending the diarchy that had characterized the party since its origins. According to internal minorities, the new order allowed for a "personalistic centralization in the life of Rifondazione" (Cannavò 2009, 74). This impression was confirmed by an external observer, an activist in the GJM and used to mediating with the PRC: "Sometimes the party leaders themselves remained disoriented. The Secretary might even release an interview and they would learn from the newspapers that the party line on a certain issue had changed. Crazy!" (IT.Int.6).

Nevertheless, the factions continued to condition Rifondazione from within, producing a permanent conflict that brought the introduction of mechanisms to strengthen the leadership and further restrict internal democracy. In 2002, the number of members in all the top bodies was drastically reduced (PRC Constitution 2002, articles 38, 39, 40) in order to marginalise opponents, while the regional apparatus was strengthened (art. 20) with the ultimate purpose of improving the peripheral power of the Secretary's faction. These changes generated a bitter clash in some local federations with negative consequences on their external political activity. Also in 2002, the central 'Organization Department', traditionally of great importance within the communist parties, was suppressed and substituted with the 'Central Operative Group' and the 'Department of Leading Groups and Innovation', both assigned to individuals close to Bertinotti. According to one of the exponents of the 'Ernesto' and at the time director of the Organization Department, this choice had the undeclared aim of weakening his faction, which had controlled that particular organ since the party's foundation, but was also linked to the transformative will that animated that phase:

"In that period it was rightly decided to invest in the commitment within social movements […]. The mistake was to believe that in that situation we could overlook or pay less attention to the organizational aspect of the party. This was an illusion because movements, as has always happened, alternate moments of expansion with moments of flux, while the party has to continue through time" (IT.Int.9).

In 2005, a third executive body, the 'National Executive' (PRC Constitution 2005, art. 38), was introduced to provide the Secretary's faction with its own political organism whose members were proposed by him and appointed by the National Political Committee. This organism was suppressed and the 'Organization Department' was reintegrated (and once more assigned to the 'orthodox communist' faction) in 2008 when the PRC's dominant coalition changed following the electoral disaster at national level. The new leadership emphasised the aim of 'democratising' the party to mark a distance from the previous stigmatised methods. For this reason, it formally imposed temporal limits to the posts of federal, regional and national secretary (PRC Constitution 2008, art. 48); reinforced the regulation that prohibited a single individual assuming both executive roles within public institutions and important functions within the party (art. 53); extended the already existing prohibition of standing as a candidate again after two consecutive parliamentary legislatures also to local and regional mandates (art. 68). Moreover, it continued

the democratisation of the youth organization, which had already begun in 2005, when the top position was assigned to two individuals, one male and one female, and its restricted National Executive was suppressed (PRC Constitution 2005, art. 22). In 2008, the party's control over the youth section was further reduced and enrolment within it was facilitated (PRC Constitution 2008, art. 25).

The 'women's forum', established in 1994 (PRC Constitution 1994, art. 17), continued to function, "Making important and significant examinations especially in 2012 and 2013 […], but then it ceased to operate. It no longer exists today because there too personalities and diatribes took over" (IT.Int.19). Over the years 'gender democracy' was also formally implemented: in 2002, a new rule stated that at least 40 per cent of the governing bodies should be composed of women (PRC Constitution 2002, art. 43) and in 2008 full equality was imposed for all party bodies at every territorial level, the GC management structures and the electoral lists (PRC Constitution 2008, articles 30, 25, 67).

Although important, these were all minor changes that could not substantially transform the party's structure. The initial project of self-reform was not only gradually abandoned, but openly rejected by the leadership which took over in 2008. The various components that converged in the new dominant coalition agreed to preserve the current and future existence of Rifondazione, which they perceived as threatened by the former leaders (PRC's document: Acerbo et al. 2008; Ferrero's interview, 27 July 2008). This intent was even formalised in clause 43 of the 2008 Constitution based on which the dissolution of the party or its convergence into a new political entity has to be decided by the Congress with a two-thirds majority. Although this 'return to the norm' did not evolve into either a genuine democracy or electoral improvement for the party, in the words of a local leader, it perfectly represented the new purpose of the PRC, that of "keeping alive a dream" (IT.Int.19).

Tab. 5.1 Secretaries and Presidents in the PRC, SEL, SYN and SYRIZA (1991-On-going)

Party	Role	Duration	Months
PRC	*National Secretary*		
	Sergio Garavini	Feb. 1991-June 1993	29
	Fausto Bertinotti	**Jan. 1994-May 2006**	**149**
	Franco Giordano	May 2006-July 2008	27
	Paolo Ferrero	**July 2008-April 2017**	**105**
	Maurizio Acerbo	April 2017-On-going	14
	National President		
	Armando Cossutta	Dec. 1991-Oct. 1998	83
SEL	*National President*		
	Nichi Vendola	**Oct. 2010-Feb. 2017**	**77**
SYN	**National President**		
	Maria Damanaki	June 1991-Dec. 1993	30
	Nikos Konstantopoulos	Dec. 1993-Dec. 2004	132
	Alekos Alavanos	Dec. 2004-Feb. 2008	39
	Alexis Tsipras	**Feb. 2008-July 2013**	**65**
SYRIZA	*National President*		
	Alexis Tsipras	**July 2013-On-going**	**46 (Tot. 111)**

In the Italian case, the personalistic attitude that developed within the PRC was fully transposed to SEL, though in this case, the presence of a charismatic leader was a precondition and a resource for the foundation of the party. Born between 2009 and 2010 out of the merger of three political groups (see Chapter Three), the main pillar of SEL was however the 'refounded' communist component drawn from the PRC, a cohesive group that could count on the high profile of its leader, Nichi Vendola. In 2005, he had surprisingly defeated the DS' competitor at the centre-left primaries to decide the candidate for President of the Puglia Region, obtaining national visibility and personal support. In the regional elections, he defeated the centre-right candidate and became president of the Region after a campaign based on his communication skills and the incessant activity of volunteers. The same schema was successfully repeated in 2010. The narrative and the participatory methods adopted during those two electoral campaigns influenced SEL's organizational model. The candidate was presented as the honest and popular local politician who challenges the political apparatus (the leadership of the DS/PD), preferring citizens' direct involvement to instrumental alliances (Telese 2010). This representation aimed at stressing the difference between the new party and the PD and, combined with the symbolic impact of the victories, increased the authority of Vendola. As a result, he embodied the "situational charisma" (Tucker 1970, 81) determined by a condition of acute uneasiness that induces a social group (in this case the constituency of the left in crisis) to perceive the leadership offering salvation from distress as extraordinarily well qualified. The founding Congress of SEL, where I was an external observer, was characterised by a climate of collective emotion and an atmosphere of hope and 're-birth' evoked by Vendola's speeches and the energy of new beginnings.

The process of party formation resulted in a weakly structured, personalised and centralised organization, built around the figure of its President and based on a "singular mix of a personality cult and participatory rituals" (Romano 2009, 156). The communication ability and personal qualities of Vendola helped the newborn SEL to make inroads in the Italian 'mediatised' and 'personalised' competitive context. He exploited the potentialities of the internet, but also accepted the mainstream media logic, providing a mix of political and private information (Telese 2010) that previous leftist leaders had refused. At the internal level, the President and his close collaborators, all young and formed within the PRC during the season of innovation, held a great deal of decisional power. On the whole, SEL was more similar to a contemporary 'light' party focused on entering public institutions by means of electoral alliances and political communication than a movement-oriented, participatory organization.

Described by scholars as an "unsteady" party (Romano 2009, 155), it was often stigmatized by related leftist groupings for its personalistic and non-democratic structures and the lack of territorial roots (Bazzocchi 2010, 2011). Dissatisfaction was diffused also within party members, particularly those young 'renovators' who aimed to complete the project of cultural and organizational reform attempted and failed within the PRC. One of them explained that the distance between the original project and the reality of SEL soon led him to abandon it: "It had nothing in common with the party we had imagined. Zero. I stayed in SEL only eight months" (IT.Int.18). Among the reasons for this unexpected outcome, interviewees mentioned a move towards standardization arriving from within the cadres themselves:

"The last phase of Rifondazione and the birth of SEL aimed to give an opportunity to the young generation [of activists and leaders] that had grown within the movement and had joined the majority of Rifondazione aiming to 'rejuvenate' the party. They lost and so had to leave and create SEL. And then, inside SEL, a part of them had embraced a moderate path" (IT.Int.11).

Similarly to the PRC, in the 1990s SYN was a centralised and vertical party, but it also showed a greater genetic propensity towards the adoption of democratic procedures and a less charismatic attitude. All three political groupings which had created the party – the young reformists from the KKE; the KKE-Interior, renamed EAR in 1987; and the social-democratic KODISO – had a centralist vision, which the EAR's cadres however combined with an emphasis on internal democracy. In 1991, the merging parties created a national body, the 'Executive Committee', with the task of guiding the coalition, all of whose members later entered the first Central Political Committee of SYN. Verticality and centralisation were partially mitigated by formal mechanisms designed to enhance intra-party democracy, notably the institutionalization of factions and their proportional representation in the leading bodies, both measures that the Italian PRC introduced only in the 2000s. The principle of "unity and diversity" had guided the party since its foundation resulting in the formal acceptance of "tendencies and currents" (SYN Constitution 1992, art. 2) and leading to a pluralistic model. Moreover, charisma was not particularly important in the initial phases of SYN: a party of intellectuals, its leadership had a strong anti-populist vocation. After the brief regency of Maria Damanaki (1992-1993), the Congress elected as President Nikos Kostantopoulos, a popular politician and lawyer. His popularity exceeded that of the party itself (Kalyvas and Marantzidis 2002) and although he led it for eleven years, he cannot be considered a charismatic leader: not only was SYN not his creation and he was not the only interpreter of its goals, but he also met the opposition of the minority which did not support his line.

Similarly to what happened in Italy, proximity with social movements in the early 2000s had triggered a debate within SYN about the need to improve the internal democracy and construct a stronger peripheral organization. In its first decade of life, it had indeed relied mainly on its strength in intellectual circles (journalists, academics, artists) and less on its local roots. The headquarters were concentrated in major cities, while in many regions activities were carried out only by local cadres through traditional means (GR.Int.14). This situation evolved when the new wave of alter-globalist activism brought to the party young double militants who injected new energy into the organization. A member who had joined SYN in 2003, after his involvement in social movements, recalled his effort to reactivate and democratise the party:

"I was helping some young students to create the local branch of SYN's youth in Rethymno and later on in Crete. SYN was not a party, but just a network of ex-members of the KKE-interior or of the KKE, an old generation of militants […]. Their commitment consisted of involvement in unions and local representative politics […]. So, creating SYRIZA was about invigorating SYN at the same time […]. My idealistic view was that I could influence the party because I was a radical leftist. And after all, it was true, because those people were old, they couldn't become activists" (GR.Int.14).

Following these developments, as well as the emergence of a new dominant coalition at the head of SYN in 2004 (see Section 5.6), a Statutory Congress was called in 2005 to modify the internal

procedures. Among the basic values, it stated the will to "create a new type of relationship between citizens and politics, distanced from models of leadership-centred, bureaucratic parties and from clientelistic relationships" (SYN Constitution 2005, Preamble). The existence of various factions was officially recognised and they were allowed to publicly dissent from the main line (SYN Constitution 2005, art. 3). They were conceived not only as streams of ideas but also as distinct political groups with their autonomous procedures and positions (ibid.). Moreover, the party promoted "the renewal of the leading bodies" as well as "measures to ensure the gender balance and increase the participation of young members" (ibid.). As in the PRC, relations with the youth organization became more horizontal and non-hierarchical (art. 14).

SYN also provided the local units with a greater autonomy and more instruments to determine the party line. Formally, they could take part in the Permanent Congress held before each national election to prepare the party's programme and approve or reject the CPC's resolutions in established local meetings (art. 6). Two other clauses, which also formally existed in the PRC, established that the members had the possibility of expressing their opinion about the strategies through internal referendums and of participating in the selection of party candidates for municipal and prefectural positions (art. 6). However, as in the PRC, it was the centre that actually controlled the decision-making process on crucial matters (GR.Int.4; GR.Int.10): while direct consultation with the base occurred sporadically, the members tended to accept the leadership's political guidance, preferring to express themselves on local issues (Eleftheriou 2009). Moreover, though in agreement with the local secretaries, the national leadership had the final say on the candidates in the municipal and regional election. It should be noted, however, that participatory methods for the formation of the electoral lists were adopted during the anti-austerity period, when candidates were chosen in local horizontal assemblies (see Section 5.6).

The new majority within SYN also attempted to strengthen its power through technical procedures, again revealing that the radical horizontality typical of social movements had not permeated the RLPs. The leftist current, now leading the party, had indeed suggested assigning the role of electing the President to the CPC instead of the Congress, thus restricting rather than enhancing internal democracy. The proposal was rejected following strong opposition from the minority, but the majority succeeded in introducing the new figure of Secretary of the CPC (SYN Constitution 2005, art. 7).

Official documents therefore reveal that, besides the construction of a coalition of RLPs such as SYRIZA, the involvement in the GJM did little to change the configuration of SYN. However, compared with the Italian experience, the Greek interviewees express a much greater influence on the party from its base, which made SYN more democratic than the PRC. As one member explained,

"The members who were active in the alter-globalization movement became more familiar with horizontal and participatory processes. Having people who were trained in these processes is very good for your organization even if you do not really change it. We started using our traditional structure in a more open way, exploiting the degree of freedom we had in order to become closer to the movements" (GR.Int.10).

The result was that "SYN was a vertical party, but because it was not so strong it was easily inspired by the movements and by the active members […]. You could condition the party from below: there were various internal sectors that the leadership could not control, not because it didn't want to, but because it couldn't" (GR.Int.10).

Notwithstanding the fundamentally hierarchical construction, for the whole of the decade, members and cadres maintained a large degree of autonomy and an informal capacity to define the party line. As we already noted above, when the anti-austerity movement emerged there was a more spontaneous reaction of SYN/SYRYZA base members which ultimately forced the party to actively support the mobilization, configuring a more horizontal decision-making:

"The weakness of our organization […] turned out to be an advantage. A characteristic example of this is the Squares' Movement. The party members and cadres started participating without any decision by the Political Secretariat, such as 'now the party will go there, will do this and that'. It was the opposite: we were helping the movement, facilitating processes, trying to solve problems and so on, and then it was officially decided that we would fully support the movement […]. People could determine the course of action from below, but organizationally speaking we were a vertical party" (GR.Int.10).

Another interviewee agreed that "At their very core, the party mechanisms were less open to change than other dimensions" (GR.Int.4). A traditional political culture re-emerged when SYRIZA came close to gaining power, acting as an obstacle to innovation. In the account of an ex-party leader, who left the party precisely for this reason, "During the years before coming to government, it became very evident that the mentality of the leadership had remained hierarchical" (GR.Int.4). Moreover, the transfer of political personnel from PASOK in crisis to SYRIZA reinforced the component that had a conservative vision of the organization. Since 2010, the mobilization of mainstream trades unions against the policies of PASOK executive had deepened the long-term rift between this party and its voters, leading various socialist politicians to join SYRIZA. Their entry created pressure to accept some old-style, party-machine arrangements with career politicians (della Porta et al. 2017). In 2013, a component pushing for a traditional mass party also formed within the SYRIZA Youth (GR.Int.3; GR.Int.15; GR.Int.18).

As a consequence of these internal developments, not only did the structure did not democratise, but "From 2012 onwards, a restriction on democracy emerged with growing intensity" (GR.Int.17). The transformation of the coalition into a unified party in 2013 was very little inspired by the organizational model of the anti-austerity movements. On the contrary, the network form was abandoned and SYRIZA adopted the usual vertical structure which substantially reproduced that of SYN. Contrary to what happened in Spain with the leftist 'Podemos', which grew in parallel to anti-austerity mobilization and absorbed some of the participatory methods of social movements (Chironi and Fittipaldi 2017), the unitary SYRIZA did not introduce any original democratic mechanism. The sole innovation was 'Solidarity for All', an umbrella organization aimed at facilitating the diffusion and connection of the grassroots solidarity structures across the country. Close to the party and financed by its MPs, the network functions as a rather autonomous horizontal assembly providing economic support and resources to thousands of small local initiatives, linking SYRIZA with social movements (GR.Int.16; GR.Int.22).

Though evaluating positively the presence of 'Solidarity for All', a large number of party members expressed dissatisfaction with SYRIZA's foundational choices (GR.Int.17) and great disappointment with the progressive shrinking of democracy:

"After 2014, it was absolutely clear for anyone who wanted to see it that SYRIZA was a vertical party. The deliberative centre was around the President while the Central Committee played a very weak role in the decision-making process" (GR.Int.10). Not only did "internal democracy not work at all", but also the openness that had characterised the party during the anti-austerity years was rapidly abandoned: "Important decisions for the country were taken by Tsipras and his five friends. A Congress was not called, nor did any public assembly take place" (GR.Int.17).

5.6 Changes in the RLPs' leadership

This Section concludes the analysis of the changes in the organizational dimension of RLPs. The focus is on the parties' top level, particularly considering: a) transformations in the executive leadership, looking at the eventual formation of innovative and movement-oriented dominant coalitions; b) the mechanisms of candidature selection, checking for the inclusion in the electoral lists of individuals from social movements; c) the political functionaries working in the top structures. Once more it emerged that in Italy the greatest changes occurred within the PRC during the GJM season, with the formation of an innovative coalition, the rejuvenation of the party's cadres, and incorporation in the lists for the 2006 national elections of a great number of movement representatives, some of whom became MPs. The party later retracted these changes, while SEL had never been particularly experimental. In Greece renewal at the top of the party started in SYN in the mid 2000s and continued more smoothly over the following years, also involving SYRIZA. More specifically, during the economic and political crisis, SYRIZA activated horizontal procedures for the formation of the electoral lists that resulted in the entry of many movement-oriented politicians to the Greek parliament, included activists in the anti-austerity movement within its political personnel, and opened its Thematic Departments to external consultants, who were often movement figures. SYRIZA's later evolution as a governing party has still to be examined and does not fall within the scope of this study.

5.6.1 Changes in the dominant coalition

Both in Italy and in Greece, the proximity of the RLPs to the social movements transformed the configuration of their leadership in different ways, and 'innovative' dominant coalitions came into being. In the case of the PRC, the split of the orthodox communist faction in 1998 stimulated a turnover at the top of the party. The new majority, formed by Secretary Bertinotti and leaders close to him, was joined by one of the two internal Trotskyist groups, 'Bandiera Rossa' (Red Flag), which now considered a left-wing evolution of the political line possible. A 'left turn' was indeed officially announced at the V Congress in 2002.
SYN's innovative dominant coalition was formed at the beginning of the 2000s from the convergence of 'Paremvassi' (Intervention) and 'Aristero Revma' (Left Current). The two

factions gradually assumed the leadership of the party and guided it towards a radical leftist direction, isolating the 'centre-left' current which from now on had a limited influence on internal affairs. In 2000, participants in the early demonstrations of the GJM created a clearly movement-oriented group, the 'Kokkino-Prasino Diktyo' (Red-Green Network), which also supported the new dominant coalition. This order was ratified at the Congress of 2004 with the election of the leftist leader Alecos Alavanos in the role of President. Alavanos replaced Nikos Kostantopoulos, who had run the party since 1993 and ensured a balance between the internal factions by maintaining SYN in a moderate position.

In both cases the connections of the RLPs with social mobilizations allowed for the regeneration of the meso-level, with the emergence of young cadres "raised in the fluid party-movement dynamic" (IT.Int.11). In the PRC, young leaders and members, all highly committed to movement activities, had started to occupy important posts both at the local and national level in the early 2000s. They coalesced around the Secretary Fausto Bertinotti, who, until that point, had not been at the head of any specific inner circle, contributing to the creation of a cohesive faction around him. Embedded in processes of double membership, most of them pushed from the inside for movement-oriented changes, "constantly stretching the party's limits" (IT.Int.18). Exactly the same phenomenon occurred in Greece, where the generation of cadres which had become politicised during the previous years entered the CPC in 2004. According to party members, "the combination of participation in the movements, the formation of a younger generation of cadres and the election of Alavanos as President changed the party, which became more leftist" (GR.Int.12).

The renewal of SYN's political personnel continued after the involvement in the student movement of 2006-2007, which, as shown above, had brought new energy to the SYRIZA coalition. In 2008, following the suggestion of President Alavanos, the V Congress elected the 34-year-old Alexis Tsipras to head the party and allowed a further batch of young cadres to enter the CPC. In contrast to the developments within SYN, the process of renewal of the PRC's leadership was interrupted. At the VI Congress in 2005 that brought the strategy of closeness to social movements to an end (see Chapter Eight), Bertinotti was re-elected Secretary for the fifth time. Less than one year later he had to leave the position to become President of the Chamber of Deputies, the third highest role of the Italian state. On this occasion, he disappointed the expectations of his young supporters by proposing as his successor a 'colourless' leader (Franco Giordano), privileging a personality that could guarantee internal equilibrium rather than reinforcing change. According to young members this stagnation at its top prevented the PRC from reinventing itself and, consequently, leftist politics in Italy:

"While political parties were in crisis, Genoa and the Social Forum took place, and that was another way to organize politics. The problem is that this new form did not bear fruit and this was also because of the limits of our party. In particular, at the Congress where they handed over to Franco Giordano, it emerged that Rifondazione's majority was not inclined to move a step forward. We [the youth organization] wanted Gennaro Migliore as Secretary [… as] it meant that the 'Tute Bianche' were manifestly taking on the lead of Rifondazione. And for sure we would face great transformations. Bertinotti decided instead to play for time and Rifondazione started looking inward" (IT.Int.18).

The preference to maintain a stable leadership drawn from within the party was typical of the PRC and was adopted by SEL, a party centred around its leader, Nichi Vendola, whose political experience begins, in fact, with the youth section of the PCI (Telese 2010).

5.6.2 Renewal of candidatures and elected politicians

Important transformations regarded the 'party in public office' (i.e. the party in parliament and in government, Katz and Mair 1994), with the inclusion in the RLPs' electoral lists of younger candidates and exponents of civil society. The PRC started putting forward well-known movement figures for the 2004 European elections, and succeeded in having the spokesperson of the Genoa Social Forum elected (Vittorio Agnoletto). In 2006 the lists for the national elections showed a strong presence of movement activists, including young leaders of the social centres, representatives of the LGBTQI movement, pacifists and even the mother of Carlo Giuliani, the 22-year-old demonstrator who lost his life in the 2001 Genoa disorders. Many of them were elected, resulting in a clearly movement-oriented parliamentary delegation.

The practice of external candidatures declined after the difficult experience of national government. For the subsequent elections, the PRC built alliances with other small RLPs (the Rainbow Left and Civil Revolution for the national rounds in 2008 and 2013, the Communist and Anticapitalist List for the European contest in 2009) which were seen by sympathisers as clumsy attempts to overcome its crisis (IT.Int.3). In the years of struggle against austerity, SEL tried to keep good relations with intellectuals and experts especially in the environmentalist world, in a few cases also involving them in its lists, without however transforming this into organic interactions with the social movements they belonged to (IT.Int.3; IT.Int.4; IT.Int.6). The 'movementist' spirit re-emerged only recently with the birth of the unitary list 'The Other Europe with Tsipras' for the European elections in 2014, which saw candidates of Rifondazione and SEL next to many figures from the most active social mobilizations: from the water movement to the No Tav (IT.Int.2; IT.Int.3; IT.Int.6; IT.Int.20). This mixed formula paid off in electoral terms, allowing the Other Europe to pass the threshold of 4 per cent, and was considered by its protagonists "the right choice, but too late", as a well-known activist in the GJM and representative of the ARCI association informed me (IT.Int.3).

SYN/SYRIZA also adopted a new electoral tactic from the mid-2000s, the difference to the Italian case being that the trend continued consistently throughout the decade and reached its apex in 2012. Many interviewees stressed the capacity of President Alavanos to intercept the need for a regeneration of politics that would also regard party candidatures (GR.Int.12; GR.Int.14; GR.Int.21). In 2006, on behalf of the coalition he proposed the young Alexis Tsipras to stand for mayor of Athens, a choice which was successful capturing 10.5 per cent of votes, an unusual result at the time. A party cadre explained how this helped to change the image of SYRIZA both outside and inside the organization:

"This created the feeling: 'Look how innovative this left is!' Although the economic crisis had not yet arrived, there was a subtle demand for change. So a young person, a fresh face for the municipality of Athens was a proper decision. Then Tsipras very soon took over leadership of the party, in 2008" (GR.Int.12).

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The tactics of encouraging young activists continued in all subsequent elections at different administrative levels. For instance, another SYN member remembered that he was asked to stand as a candidate in his region, Chania, when he was just 26, because "Alavanos wanted very much to have a lot of young people" (GR.Int.14). Their growing weight also influenced the ideological orientation of the 'party in public office', which acquired a clearer radical-left profile than in the previous decade (Eleftheriou 2009).

The renewal of the lists was partially abandoned in the regional elections of 2010 in favour of including ex-PASOK leaders who had decided to leave their party and ran for SYRIZA. Their poor performance (della Porta et al. 2017) convinced the leadership to pursue the external, young and movement-oriented candidatures for the 2012 national election. Moreover, as a SYRIZA MP told me, the lists were completed in local assemblies, open to non-members, adopting a horizontal method of candidate selection:

"You didn't have to be a party member to attend the preparatory meetings […]. Officially, they were SYRIZA assemblies, but other external people also attended […]. It emerged that we were not interested in putting forward the usual faces of the local left as candidates. So, the few young people that were there decided to get involved in the elections. We came out with a list of five names, and three of them were aged under 30! These elections were an extraordinary moment when people who usually are not involved in political parties also participated" (GR.Int.1).

As a result of this process, not only were many of the candidates young, but they were also often linked to social movements. For example, the youngest MP of the 2012-2015 legislature, Irini Agathopoulou, was elected in the conservative electoral college of Kilkis, a town in the north of Greece, where traditionally the left was an isolated minority. She was one of the founders of the local 'social pharmacy', a community initiative for the free distribution of medicines, and also a supporter of the massive movement against the opening of a new gold mine in the area (GR.Int.1). Another case is that of Vangelis Diamantopoulos, previously a SYRIZA MP who came from the 'anarchist space' (GR.Int.7). This variety resulted in a new mode of working for many of the MPs, who described themselves as actively committed to anti-austerity mobilizations:

"As SYRIZA's representatives, we tend to have a connection with all the social movements, including the anarchists. We also try to give them institutional protection, both when they organize a demonstration and when they are claiming people's rights. We participate in all demonstrations, for example in anti-fascist demonstrations, also in order to try to prevent police brutality – because now the police frequently attack, beat and arrest the protesters – so, it's our duty to be there" (GR.Int.7).

Also in 2015, three of SYRIZA's MPs were employees of the public TV/Radio broadcaster ERT, which had been closed in 2013 amidst harsh contestation and became a symbol of resistance against cultural impoverishment due to austerity policies.

In the Italian parties, no great renewal among political officials employed at the top levels ever occurred. With few exceptions, most of the MPs and councillors elected at lower local levels (the regions, provinces and town and city councils) continued to employ staff who were party members, often close to the social movements but with no direct experience of the recent struggles. This trend continued and was reinforced as time went on because – as the electoral strength of the RLPs diminished – they increasingly sought to find positions for their own members wherever places might be available (IT.Int.6). The thematic departments too continued to be "party oriented" and the official party programme was formulated by staff who were expert but entirely internal (IT.Int.19). SEL was a partial exception as it had created a "technical committee" at the time of its formation, which included important figures from the worlds of social movements, associations, and academia, but this soon ceased to function (IT.Int.11).

It emerged from research fieldwork that the greatest renewal in the type of political personnel regarded SYRIZA after its sudden electoral growth which forced the party to strengthen its top organization. Many of the consultants who started working for the newly elected MPs in 2012 were previously movement activists, who perceived their role not simply as a job but as another form of political struggle which did not replace their commitment in the social sphere, but was an extension of it. Their presence, at least in the period from 2012 to 2015 when SYRIZA entered parliament in number, further reinforced the mechanisms of double membership. One of them, from the 'Diktyo' movement organization, explained how she interpreted her new role within the institutional sphere:

"I accepted this position because I thought it was a good occasion to do something for the left. In addition, the MP for whom I work is a very open person and we can take decisions together […]. So, for me, this is not only a job, but also a way to implement decisions that are in favour of social movements" (GR.Int.11).

Another MP consultant, this time a previous member of the Immigrant Forum of Crete, confirmed: "Even if I work as a parliamentary assistant for SYRIZA, I still continue to be a movement activist. For me, this is not just a job. I believe that we have to support this party, because it can help to improve the living conditions of much of Greek society" (GR.Int.5).

A further interesting phenomenon is the functioning of SYRIZA's Thematic Departments, responsible for formulating the policy proposals of the party. Despite being run by party officials and being high-level structures, these Departments mostly worked in close connection with external consultants who were often involved in social struggles. When, in 2013, the Constitution of SYRIZA officially stated that the Departments should be open to non-members (art. 20), it was simply recognising a de facto situation:

"We are trying to imitate the structure of a formal party […] but historically SYRIZA was always a coalition, so this pyramidal model didn't work. We are also networks that are not formally visible in the party structure. For instance, in the Education Department you can find party people who have political responsibility for the education policies, as well as trade unionists and

student unionists. The Departments are therefore networks of people working on the topic" (GR.Int.12).

Referring to his personal experience, the interviewee explained more in detail the aim of openness that guided the activities of the Environment and Ecology Department, of which he was the Director:

"My Department was the old ecology network of SYRIZA. Now we are a Department in the formal party apparatus but we have a double soul: one speaks within the party and gives opinions […], the other participates in the social mobilization that is relevant to our interests. The idea behind the Departments is that they provide a link with the broader environment. We have an affiliation with local leftist groups, professionals who deal with environmental issues (for instance the secretary of the forestry agency, biologists, marine biologists), and also activists in local movements and NGO workers" (GR.Int.12).

5.7 Summary

Chapter Five is the first in the empirical part of the thesis which focuses on the transformations in the Italian and Greek 'renewed' RLPs under the stimulus of the social movements that mobilized at the start of the Millennium, i.e. the GJM and the anti-austerity movements. More specifically, it investigates the changes that occurred in the organizational dimension, i.e. the parties' structure, which was broken down into four variables (access, political participation, internal democracy, leadership) for heuristic reasons.

In the introductory section I re-discussed the hypotheses that guide the empirical analysis both in the present Chapter, and in Chapters Six and Seven (which respectively examine the RLPs' political culture and strategies). In brief, I expected party changes to be deeper and more long-lasting when:

- The party's prevailing political culture is heterodox and both orthodox communist and moderate mentalities and factions are weaker;
- The cases of double membership in both the party and the movements are more frequent;
- The movement is instrumental and tends to develop a dialogical attitude towards political institutions, such as parties.

Consequently, I anticipated that changes within the Greek RLPs would be more vigorous than in the Italian parties, because:

- SYN and SYRIZA already showed a more heterodox and innovative political culture at the beginning of the process, while the Italian PRC was more closely linked to the communist identity and SEL appeared to be a moderate party;
- Phenomena of double membership were more constant in the Greek case, while in Italy they decreased in coincidence with the anti-austerity mobilizations;
- All the Greek social movements considered showed a more instrumental attitude, while in the Italian case, the anti-austerity movement was fragmented and highly conflictual.

The analysis confirmed these expectations and highlighted that transformative processes were more profound in SYN/SYRIZA than in the PRC, which, however, also underwent an intense movement-oriented phase in coincidence with the GJM. While the hypothesis will be extensively discussed in the Conclusion of the thesis, once the whole empirical analysis will be concluded, It is opportune here to provide a concise summary of the organizational analysis and findings.

As regards the transformations in the conditions for accessing the party, it emerged that, following their involvement in the GJM, both SYN and the PRC made their boundaries more fluid, by opening their local branches, encouraging the youth organizations to be involved in the protests, and by pursuing an internationalist strategy through the foundation of the Party of the European Left. Later, however, the PRC reversed this trend and returned to a more traditional and self-sufficient organizational model, while SEL became a 'party of cadres' which related with the external environment through political communication and links with other groups' top leadership. SYN, on the other hand, remained an open party with a light organization, that encouraged its activists to become involved in every sort of movement activity. Moreover, from 2004, it transformed into the pivotal party of the SYRIZA coalition, which was able to maintain its connections with young people and local social movements by adopting a network format.

Internal political participation transformed consistently, with both SYN and the PRC embracing a strategy of immersion in social movements, which had the effect of familiarizing party members with non-conventional forms of action. In the Italian case, however, the approach of having an organic presence in the mobilizations was interrupted in 2005-2006 when the party re-assigned prominence to activities in public institutions and later was too weak to have a decisive presence in social mobilizations. Despite its initial intentions, SEL never succeeded in becoming a truly participatory party. SYN/SYRIZA, instead, continued to contribute with more conviction to all social movements, also playing a prominent role in the anti-austerity protests.

The core of the party structure proved the most difficult to change. All the RLPs analysed maintained substantially unchanged the rigid structure typical of a 20th-century party with a tendency to concentrate power at the top. The Italian RLPs, in particular, suffered an inclination towards a clear leadership and continual visceral struggles among factions with different ideological beliefs. Greater innovation is seen in the Greek parties, deriving from both the adoption of a coalition model and a greater ability of the grassroots to influence the party line.

Finally, this Chapter has considered the transformations that took place among the party leaders. It has been shown that in both the PRC and SYN the external pressure exercised by the GJM facilitated the formation of movement-oriented dominant coalitions which guided the parties towards an innovative radical leftist direction. The processes for selection of candidates were also affected by the changes, as were the middle management level and elected members who entered the party as movement activists. Here too, however, more enduring changes took place in the Greek parties; while both the PRC and SEL reverted to giving greater weight to internal figures, SYRIZA – especially during the years of economic crisis – actively included individuals from the anti-austerity movements in its leadership.

6. Cultural changes in the RLPs under the impulse of social movements

After having focused on the transformations in the organization of the 'renewed' RLPs in Italy and Greece, the analysis continues in this Chapter by evaluating the changes brought about in their political culture.[60] More precisely, I look at the impact that the agenda of social movements had on the 'policy orientation' and the 'ideological profile' of the RLPs under study. As indicators of these two variables, I measure the parties' stances on key movement issues and the evolution in their value sphere. To this end, I revise both party documents and leaders' speeches in-depth and then consider the actual absorption of social movements' proposals and cultural attitudes through the examination of qualitative interviews with party members, cadres and top figures.

The Chapter is articulated in two main Sections: the first deals with the cultural changes that the PRC (Section 6.1.1) and SYN (Section 6.1.2) set in motion under the influence of the GJM; the second takes into account cultural changes in the Italian PRC and SEL (Section 6.2.1) and the Greek SYN and SYRIZA (Section 6.2.2) following the anti-austerity protests. Finally, Section 6.3 briefly summarises the main findings.

It appears that in both Italy and Greece, involvement in social movements transformed the RLPs' political cultures, leading to the adoption of issues, expressions and values raised by mobilized actors. Nevertheless, differences are also found in this field. In the GJM season, the PRC made a top-driven effort to adjust its already formed identity to alter-globalist claims. Despite important achievements, both internal resistance and the decrease in the levels of activism after the 'institutional turn' in 2005-2006 slowed down the process again. In the wake of this retreat, cultural fertilisation with the anti-austerity protests was therefore far less marked than in Greece, which was also due to the specificities of the Italian movements.

In the case of SYN, interviews with the protagonists of the GJM season document a story of 'identity building' rather than 'identity transformation'. Previously a rather moderate party, SYN constructed its 'radical leftist' profile in coincidence with the participation in the GJM, a development which resulted in a more stable movement-oriented political culture than in the PRC case. While in Italy proximity with movements progressively declined when the PRC joined the centre-left coalition and, later, the government, in Greece SYN/SYRIZA's discursive support for social movements continued throughout the decade. Thanks to high levels of double-membership and an eclectic culture, SYRIZA could credibly endorse its claims and embrace an anti-memorandum agenda when the powerful Greek anti-austerity movement arose.

6.1 Italian and Greek 'renewed' RLPs' stance on GJM issues and values

The political culture of the PRC and SYN were both greatly influenced by the GJM. In the case of the PRC, the rise of this movement allowed the leadership to 'push from above' for a process

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[60] The analysis is guided by the same three hypotheses presented in the Theoretical Chapter and re-discussed in the introduction to Chapter Five.

of cultural renewal aimed at promoting the 'refoundation' of communism. For SYN, which had until that point kept a moderate positioning, it was the occasion to build a new radical leftist identity 'from below'. In both cases, the strategy adopted to reach these political aims was a thematic fusion with the GJM, from which they drew opposition to neoliberal globalization and its consequences, in particular constant war.

The process was not painless for either party, as it triggered internal opposition. Clashes were particularly acute in the PRC, where minorities opposed the dismissal of the traditional pillars of Marxism-Leninism, such as the concepts of class, anti-imperialism and violent revolution. Moreover, the new 'movementist' culture contrasted with a widespread 'Togliattian' mentality[61] that assigned primacy to institutional activity - and this culture forcibly re-emerged when the party started re-approaching the centre-left coalition. Finally, when the PRC participated in the national government (2006-2008), the party proved incapable of successfully interpreting the demands of social movements. In SYN, the cultural radicalization of the party was resisted by internal centrist factions; however, these could not reverse the new trend and eventually they decided to leave the party. Sustained by a widespread critical Marxist political culture and constant high levels of double membership, the programmatic innovation and shift in values was therefore more long-lasting in this case than in Italy, where the 'movementist' political culture suffered a setback by the mid-2000s.

6.1.1 The PRC: an (interrupted) époque of cultural evolution

In the PRC's 'innovative coalition', the organizational change attempted in the years from 1999 to 2005 was to be accompanied by a radical update of the party's political culture. Already in 1999, a new symbol was adopted which included the word 'Refoundation', both to mark a distinction from the new-founded Party of the Italian Communists ('Partito dei Comunisti Italiani'-PdCI), seen as orthodox and conservative (IT.Int.16), and to highlight the ultimate goal of rethinking traditional communism (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1 Evolution in the PRC Logos, 1991-Present

Note that the word 'Rifondazione' appeared in 1999

The first theoretical transformations brought to the preamble of the Constitution the conceptual triad "equality, freedom and brotherhood", aimed at stressing a re-invigorated commitment to 'freedom'. After the experience of Really Existing Socialism (with which the Italian communism

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[61] See footnote 8.

was strongly associated) 'freedom' was perceived indeed as estranged from the left. Also, among the values included as central to the party was "the defence of the full expression of sexual identity and orientation" borrowed from the LGBT movement[62] (PRC Constitution 1999, preamble).

The critique of neoliberal globalization and of the moderate leftist parties appeared in the internal dialectics in the same year. In the programmatic document presented by the majority at the IV Congress, the opposition to capitalism *tout court* gave way to the critique of neoliberal policies and of the market-oriented dominant "pensée unique", which would permeate also the socialist centre-left parties (PRC's majority 1999). At the international level, though reaffirming the notion of "anti-imperialism" (particularly with reference to US foreign policy), the document also mentioned the role of some "powerful global institutions" (the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the G8) in protecting the interests of global capitalism and finance (ibid.). At the domestic level, the economic and social plan of the centre-left government was considered fully respondent to the logics of a "tempered neoliberalism", defined as the new ideology of "the ruling classes of Italy and Europe" (ibid.).

The path of cultural renewal timidly started in the IV Congress held in 1999, and continued amidst internal contrasts in the biennium 2000-2001 through three steps concerning the old and new interpretations of international political dynamics, a critical discussion of Marxism and the dismissal of Stalinism.

The reflection on international politics was triggered by the resonance of the book 'Empire', published in 2000, where the thinkers Toni Negri and Michael Hardt suggested a transition from the 'modern' phenomenon of imperialism, centred on national states, to the emergent 'postmodern' supranational construct created among ruling powers, which they defined as a new 'Empire', territorially diffused and without a single recognizable centre (Negri and Hardt 2000). This was a powerful and evocative thesis, which broke with the traditional analysis of the communist left, thus provoking a vivid intellectual exchange both within the social movements and the RLPs. The theory was particularly debated in Italy, where it was embraced by the large GJM sectors linked to Toni Negri, who had been the inspirer and leader of the old 'Autonomia' and was still very influent in the world of social centres, while at the same time firmly rejected by other Marxist sectors. The same contrast was reproduced within the PRC, between the innovators, close to the Secretary Bertinotti, and the exponents of the faction 'l'Ernesto'. According to the former, "a new capitalism" had emerged founded on: financial capital and its autonomy from politics, multinational corporations, and new cleavages at the global scale (PRC, 29 June 2000). In their understanding, these developments were based on the national states' unprecedented support for the "construction of a unipolar government of the world", aimed at promoting the interests of global capitalism (ibid.). In presence of such a "basically unified system", the Leninist category of "inter-imperialistic contradictions" was declared obsolete - and this led to major disagreement within the party (ibid.). In line with this vision, the leaders of the PRC hoped for a new model of international relations, in order to broaden the opposition to neoliberal globalization. As we have seen in Chapter Five, this entailed "the construction of a continental political subject": the Party of the European Left (ibid.). The whole discussion

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[62] This acronym stands for 'lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender' movement.

dragged on for two years until 2002, when the V Congress approved the dismissal of the old theory of imperialism by a tight majority (see below).[63]

The second step consisted in a non-dogmatic actualisation of Marxism, attempted by Secretary Bertinotti himself for two reasons: to connect the communist thought to the rising criticism against neoliberal globalization and to reincorporate in the PRC's discourse the concept of 'freedom' as theorized by Marx in his juvenile works and in the 'Grundrisse' (Bertinotti 2000). These theoretical reflections responded to the necessity of overcoming twentieth-century communism, which was considered a precondition to speak to younger generations for whom – this was Bertinotti's perception – communism only meant dictatorship and oppression (ibid.).

The third passage is represented by the speech the Secretary gave at the 80th anniversary of the foundation of the Italian Communist Party (PCI), celebrated in Livorno on the 21th January 2001. Aiming at "letting the criticism towards Stalinism enter the DNA of Rifondazione" (Bertinotti, 23 January 2001), the leader broke with the traditional apologetic ritual and offered a critical reading of some pages of the history of the communist movement and the PCI. While stating the contemporary value of the communist ideas, he claimed the history of the so-called Really Existing Socialism had "really ended" and called on his party to definitively distance itself from Stalinism, understood as both the oppressive regime of the Soviet Union in the 1930s and as a still vivid political culture whose traces were also in the PRC (ibid.). Contextually, it was reaffirmed that opposition to capitalism required a constant interaction between the PRC and the emerging social movements. On these grounds, a few months later, the leadership identified four new issues, all drawn from the GJM, as the fundamental points to be included in the party's programme to accredit it as the 'alternative left' in Italy: the contrariety to neoliberalism, the critique of market-driven globalization, the refusal of both war and the new imperialist order of the world (PRC 2001, 26-27 May).

All the cultural innovations introduced since 1999 were condensed into the '63 theses' (PRC 2002) discussed at the V Congress of the party, where the influence of the GJM's frames and claims became clearly visible. Here, the analysis of the capitalist phase fully echoed movement theories (particularly those elaborated by Negri and brought forward by his political arena, with which – it is worth recalling – the PRC's youth organization had converged: a greedy global capitalism had developed and was already in crisis; its expansion was based on an inconsiderate use of war (thesis 4). The "new unipolar global order" (thesis 2) rendered useless the Leninist categories of imperialism and inter-imperialistic contradictions (thesis 14). Post-Fordism replaced Fordism, assigning centrality to immaterial labour, science and communication in the process of valorisation of capital (thesis 5). While the traditional, homogeneous working class faded away, the new revolutionary subject was found in a wider mosaic of exploited and subalterns, from migrants to precarious workers, unified in the "movement of movements", a militant label used to describe the heterogeneity of the GJM (thesis 23). In this context, party innovation was indicated as "a primary necessity" (thesis 34) and the elaboration of a new programmatic

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[63] The armed conflicts and security policies that followed the terrorist attacks of 11th September 2001 proved that the role of national states, particularly the US, could not be considered exhausted and that the globalization process was often in contrast with national interests. Moreover, the economic crisis that erupted in 2007-2008 showed the necessity for the intervention of national governments in order to regulate economy. These factors led Negri and Hardt themselves to review and problematize their theory in several articles.

platform as a fundamental task (thesis 40) aimed at harmonizing trades unions' claims with the heterodox issues raised by social movements; such as direct and participatory democracy, civil and citizenship rights, defence of the environment, radical pacifism, and reform of the international institutions such as the EU and the United Nations.

After a difficult process of internal mediation,[64] the preamble of the party's Constitution was basically rewritten, to the point of redefining the official goals by replacing the classic formula of "the socialist transformation of society" with the will of "transforming the capitalist society in order to realize the liberation of women's and men's work through the constitution of a communist society" (PRC Constitution 2002, preamble). As for the values, the PRC was now inspired not by socialism *tout court* but from its "foundational reasons", crystallising the previously announced distancing from the Really Existing Socialism. Also, the party's actions were officially directed to "renew" the tradition of the labour movement and twentieth-century communism, by refusing any "authoritarian and bureaucratic conception, of Stalinist or other origin, of socialism" (ibid.). Finally, the new preamble included a variety of social movements' principles: "the communists fight for […] peoples' freedom, social justice, peace, international solidarity; commit themselves to safeguarding nature and the environment; to pursue the overcoming of capitalism as a condition to build a democratic and socialist society of free and equal women and men […] and defend the full expression of sexual identity and orientation; while actively opposing anti-Semitism and racism, discrimination and exploitation" (ibid.).

The '63 theses' and the new Statute were discussed and approved in a climate of harsh conflict. Criticism against the cultural innovations arrived especially from the right wing faction of the party, 'l'Ernesto', which presented six theses alternative to those of the majority, advocating for continuity with the cultural and organizational tradition of the communist movement (alternative theses 51-52).[65] For its leaders, the very identity of the PRC was at stake: during the V Congress they even hung a banner reading 'Communist, communist, communist' to challenge the official slogan of the event, 'Refoundation, refoundation, refoundation'. For the whole period they had resisted the process of change, repeatedly warning about the risk of abandoning the capital-labour conflict (core to the communist theory) and a clear class connotation, and considering the full identification with the issues brought forward by the GJM a deep tear in the very nature of the party (Burgio and Grassi 2001). Some opposition also came from one of the internal Trotskyite groups, constituted minority in the party, which brought forward an orthodox understanding of the processes of capitalist restructuring: neoliberalism was seen as "a necessity of capital in crisis", and the only alternative to it remained the anti-capitalist option to be pursued through a revolutionary rupture (PRC's minority 1999, 2002).

Notwithstanding internal dissents, members of the 'innovative' coalition explained that the whole cultural operation produced some important results: "We really prompted a great transformation to the party's political culture. The major strength of our component, that I could define 'movementist', was that we were very strong on the cultural terrain and on this there was a

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[64] The Congress rejected an alternative version of the preamble stressing the ties with the history of the international communist movement and listing the names of its 'founding fathers'.

[65] This faction kept a great share of power within the party. It was represented by two members out of nine in the National Secretariat and controlled the important federations of Turin and Milan. Moreover, its alternative theses (n. 51-52) about "The communists and their history" were undersigned also by the Director of the party's newspaper.

strong transformation" (IT.Int.17). This impression was confirmed by another interviewee, less close to the Secretary and nonetheless enthusiastic of the 'mentality change' his action obtained in that epoch:

"For me the refoundation was a new idea of communism, cleansed of all the encrustations of Stalinism and able to keep a libertarian character. And for a long period this renewed communism was embodied in the figure of Bertinotti. Let aside that at a certain point we had to 'kill the father', in a Freudian sense, for the PRC, Bertinotti meant a lot, he introduced the fight against Stalinism and pacifism" (IT.Int.19).

Although the cultural dimension evolved impressively compared with the other dimensions (IT.Int.6; IT.Int.17), the empirical analysis also highlighted the weight of the orthodox communist component in slowing down the process and impeding that it could permeate the whole party at the local level:

"'The right wing of the party, 'l'Ernesto', had an important presence within the organization and constituted a problem. They always wanted to have a say in the government of the PRC and controlled important federations at the local level (in Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy and the South). The Trotskyite components insisted on the fact that the alter-globalization movement overlooked the role of factory workers, but after all they did not oppose our attempt. The right wing of the party, instead, had a classic communist and 'Togliattian' mentality[66] so they were fully against what we were doing" (IT.Int.17).

Another ex-party member underlined that, due to the PRC origins through a split of the PCI, orthodox communism was very widespread at the grassroots level. The proposed cultural innovations took root especially in major cities, but were not immediately accepted in the periphery, where in some cases they contributed to sharpen internal divisions also besides the affiliations to an organized faction. In those years,

"Rifondazione was an unbelievable place. Let's take the party in central Italy. You went to Barberino del Mugello [a town in central Tuscany] and you had half of the members of local party circles who still believed in the Soviet Union. When we went for meetings in those areas, half of the room was composed of people who thought that, after all, Really Existing Socialism was a good model and the other half of the room that spoke of the 'commons' and the basic income. At a certain point the gap became enormous" (IT.Int.18).

The penetration of cultural innovations in the party's living body also negatively interacted with the party model, which, as illustrated in Chapter Five, remained rather traditional: "It was a very new political culture within a very old, traditional and vertical organization" (IT.Int.17). The leadership was also well aware of this problem, as the new Responsible of the Organization stressed in 2007, towards the end of the cycle of innovation: "the PRC is a political force that

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[66] Palmiro Togliatti was one of the founders of the Italian Communist Party and its major leader from 1927 to 1964. His action has sought to reconcile loyalty to revolutionary principles and the Soviet Union with the construction of a large mass party that could count in the Italian democratic context: for this reason, his critics from the radical left used the expression 'Togliattism' in the sense of 'art of compromise' and a line strongly oriented towards presence in public institutions.

has deeply renewed its political culture in these years, but it has not innovated its way of being" (Ferrara 2007, 1 April).

The efficacy of the cultural transformation of the party was also influenced by the strategic turn towards institutional politics which began already in 2004 and was accomplished in 2006. According to both external and internal critics, it was more the necessity to open a dialogue with the moderate leftist parties at the national level than a sincere conviction that led Secretary Bertinotti to introduce a last revision, which regarded the non-violent doctrine. What at a first glance could appear as the reception of another movement solicitation was interpreted instead by "Many [party members and movement activists] as an attempt to 'clean' the image of the party in view of re-approaching the centre-left coalition and heading for the government" (IT.Int.17). This was indeed a 'sensitive' topic both inside the PRC, because of the resistance of traditional Marxists, Trotskyites and the young members, and outside of it, as, despite being overall non-violent in practice, the Italian GJM had never framed non-violence as a shared umbrella issue (see Chapter Four).

The occasion to start the debate on the concept of political violence was offered by the arrest in October 2003 of a small armed group self-proclaiming as the 'New Red Brigades'. Echoing the radical pacifist movement sectors, Bertinotti affirmed that "Today there is no other choice than to refuse every violent act. In a world in which violence is summarized in the binomial 'preventive war-terrorism', there is no citizenship for political violence" (Bertinotti, 2 Nov. 2003). The firm condemnation of violence was accompanied by the sharp critique of power, defined as a "virus", and the Marxist-Leninist strategy of "seizing it" through an organized vanguard, and both these goals were justified with the need to empathize with the GJM and young cohorts: "These young people are extraneous to the twentieth-century history. They belong to another era. They are not confident with the concept of power as a field of conquest for change [...]. They are free of the very idea of the vanguard. The movement is an antidote for that virus" (ibid.).

In several articles and public events, the Secretary denounced the distortions of twentieth-century communism (the gulags, Stalinism, the 'Foibe' massacre)[67] as consequences of the use of violence as the very means to seize power, and stigmatized the uncritical rhetoric that, in his vision, had "angelized" the anti-fascist partisans (Bertinotti 2003, 13 Dec.). While "the twentieth century ended with a defeat [of the communist movement]", now he advocated for "a new non-violent radicalism" (Bertinotti 2003, 13 Dec.).

This new public discourse was met with strong criticism not only by the usual opponents (the 'Ernesto' group and the Trotskyite minority), but also by the Trotskyite 'Red Flag' component (which had been a part of the 'innovative coalition' since 1999) and even by many young members who had faithfully supported the 'movementist turn'. In his interview, the ex-national spokesperson of the youth organization remembered that he did not participate in the conference the party had organized on this topic to show his dissent from the leadership, which only a couple of years later led him to definitively leave the PRC. Dissatisfaction was based on the perception that:

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[67] The expression 'Foibe (karst sinkholes) massacres' refers to mass killings at the borders between Italy and Yugoslavia during and after World War II, perpetrated mainly by Yugoslav Partisans against the local Italian population as means of 'retaliation' for the previous fascist policies in territories contended between the two countries.

"[The non-violence doctrine] was a tactic of double covering: on the one hand you cleaned your face, because suddenly we were not anymore the party which was in Genoa, and on the other side we sell within the party a fascinating discourse that could justify the strategy of government. […Because] basically the argument was: 'all law is violent and all institutions are based on violence; therefore, the critique of violence is necessarily also the critique of power'. So, this was presented as 'ok, we go to the government, but through this discourse we develop the antibodies that prevent us from seeing the government as a final goal', and in reality this always remained only on paper" (IT.Int.17).

The initial intuition was transformed into the conviction that the party had made a 'hypocritical' choice when, once in government, it did not act according to the non-violent principles:

"We can openly speak of hypocrisy, because this discourse did not guide the concrete behaviour of the representatives of Rifondazione. Coherence would imply that if you revive Gandhi's and Hannah Arendt's thoughts, then you refuse the armed personal guards just two years later. And when you are in government, it should become a priority to denounce the State's forms of violence and make a battle about the prisons, the limits of police, torture and so on. On the contrary, this 'non-violent turn' did not orient Rifondazione's policies" (IT.Int.17).

In line with this account, other party members and movement activists questioned the ability of the PRC to channel social demands within public institutions. The constituency met the entry of the PRC in government as "a historical opportunity" (IT.Int.18), which, in the understanding of many, was nonetheless wasted because the party remained tragically anchored to its past:

"The fact that a party with the word 'communist' in its name not only was part of the national government, but even held the Minister for Social Solidarity was a strong event in the Italian post-war history. But there was a total incapacity and this tells you a lot about the old part of Rifondazione, the one for which 'the party is sacred', that once confronted with the challenge of government proved completely unable to make politics […]. In that moment, the party suffered the historical consequences of the 'conventio ad excludendum': you didn't know what to do and when doing it, you really had no clue and your experience vanished immediately, bringing with it the idea of the 'impossibility', both within and outside the party" (IT.Int.18).

The governing coalition included fourteen formations of different sizes and political orientation and required constant internal mediation, which left little manoeuvring space for the PRC. In contrast to its values and recent cultural transformations, the party found itself forced to support the refinancing of the military mission in Afghanistan and the enlargement of the US military base in Vicenza, a city in the north of Italy. According to a cadre: "The big demonstration held in Vicenza against the enlargement of the U.S. military base was the first fracture between the party and those who were present in the city squares" (IT.Int.19).

Some minor results were obtained on social policies, but the PRC proved unable to contrast the process of precarisation of labour, which was one of the movement claims on which it had insisted most in its public discourse, in example by participating in a mass demonstration held by grassroots trade unions and the metalworkers' FIOM on the 4th November 2006. Towards the end of the governing experience, the PRC even voted in favour of a twelve points document which foresaw the implementation of policies that openly contradicted the party's programme:

The realisation of the high speed train line from Turin to Lion, much resisted by environmentalist movements; the re-financing of all military missions abroad; and the (neoliberal) reform of the pension system.

Due to its ineffective action within the governing majority, the PRC's stance on movement issues appeared as basically symbolic. Emblematic of this merely formal support is the participation of Fausto Bertinotti, in his role of Chairman of the Chamber of Deputies, to the traditional military parade for the Feast of the Republic on 2 June 2006: although he was flaunting a brooch depicting the peace flag during the event, the refounded communist constituency considered his presence as a substantial legitimisation of a scenography of war (IT.Int.2; IT.Int.3; IT.Int.11).

After the difficult governing experience, fertilisation by movement issues was nevertheless claimed in the electoral campaign for the 2008 national elections. The coalition formed by the two communist parties (PRC and PdCI) and the Greens chose as its electoral logo the 'rainbow', a symbol that was associated to 2003 peace marches against the Iraq war. Its manifesto was characterised by a renewed focus on labour issues, mixed with proposals for advancing civil and social rights, peace and disarmament, environmental justice and immigrants' protection. All the movement issues popular in the country were included, from support for public management of water to opposition to the enlargement of the Vicenza military base and construction of 'big useless infrastructures' (Rainbow Left 2008, Electoral Manifesto). Despite this attempt to recover the previous movement-oriented spirit, the Rainbow Left did not arise enthusiasm in its social and electoral base. As recalled in Chapter Three, it only gained 3 per cent of the vote, which was insufficient for the radical left to even enter parliament. The members of the PRC offered a clear explanation for this delusive result:

"There had been betrayal! The involvement in movements had opened a great possibility, but then, with a subsequent regressive choice [the participation in the centre-left government] there was an involution. The participation in social movements had been like a parenthesis that had opened and then was suddenly closed - and for this reason it couldn't work in depth on the hybrid nature of Rifondazione" (IT.Int.19).

6.1.2 SYN: an époque of identity re-building and radicalization

In the 1990s, SYN lacked a clear political identity. Born out of the merger between the Eurocommunist orientation, represented by EAR ('Elleniki Aristera'-Greek Left), and orthodox communism, represented by the ex-KKE splitters, it suffered "an 'inbetweener' problem. In profile and self-identity, the party […] sat between PASOK and the KKE. Ideologically, it lacked the popularly understood traditions of both" (Ovenden 2015, 22). The Resolution approved in the first Congress in 1991 had designed a 'renewed' leftist force, that should be distant both from the moderation typical of social democracy and the "socialist totalitarianism" embodied in the Greek communist left (SYN 1992, Political Resolution of the I Congress). Thought of as a modern party, SYN supported a mixed-economy model, based on the injection of social policies into the market economy, and the process of European integration. Moreover, it addressed the defence and expansion of social, civil and minority rights, and adopted a strong anti-clerical

stance and an anti-nationalist rhetoric. However, these choices were not enough to clearly qualify SYN in relation to its leftist competitors, nor to secure it a mass constituency: compared with the dogmatic KKE or the catch all politics of PASOK, SYN offered "a more creative intellectual space" (Ovenden 2015, 22) that mainly attracted bourgeois intellectuals of different political orientations.

Two political groups, known within the party as the 'renovators' and the 'leftists', fought for its control. 'The renovators' emphasised a modern leftists identity, freed from references to the past communist experience and supportive of the European unification project.[68] While stigmatising the Soviet Union's model, the 'leftists' called for a radical profile, advocated for state control over the economy and were critical of the European Union's architecture and policies. Although the two different strands of ideas cohabited, the renovators led SYN all through the 1990s, while the leftists constituted the minority, with a weak presence in the leading bodies – but with good roots in the membership base (Eleftheriou 2009). The leadership kept the party in a moderate position: when the socialist Costas Simitis became prime minister in 1996, SYN's majority even proved susceptible to the neoliberal 'modernisation' ideology promoted by PASOK government and influenced by the 'Third Way' politics of the UK's Tony Blair. It was the eruption of the international movements against globalised neoliberal capitalism and against the war in Iraq between 1999 and 2003 which pulled SYN in a new direction.

According to the interviewees, participation in social movements contributed to build the radical identity that the party had stated in its foundational document but not yet embodied. A SYN cadre recalled the beginning of this process of identity formation, highlighting also the importance of double membership:

 "The party was at 3 per cent, at the verge of existence, and under the hegemonic discourse of the Third Way 'modernisation' brought forward by the social democracy. We were trying to find our distinct place between this social democracy and the dogmatic Communist Party, but there was little space, due to the economic and political hegemony of the neoliberal forces. [… When the GJM emerged] we started to regain confidence: we were part of a wider, global movement now! This was a formative experience for our members […]. It changed both the general sense inside the party and how the people perceived us" (GR.Int.12).

Another young member underlined how the new 'wave of movements' offered the opportunity for SYN to transform its original political culture and finally obtain a clearer location within the Greek political spectrum:

"The World Social Forum's ideas had challenged the way of doing politics which was hegemonic in the Greek left and allowed SYN and [later] SYRIZA to create an alternative identity in the streets […]. First, this is the identity of someone who has a more global view on problems. Second, he doesn't believe that only labour issues are important and, for instance, thinks that feminism and ecology also matter […]. The notion of unity of the left became part of our

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[68] The 'renovators' were divided into three tendencies. The first was 'Syspeirossi' (Association), mostly formed by ex-EAR politicians. It represented the right-wing of the party and pushed for a convergence with PASOK for the creation of a larger centre-left force. A second, smaller, personalised tendency, again formed by ex-EAR members, was in favour of a moderate party but against the convergence with PASOK. Close to Syspeirossi, it gradually merged with it and disappeared. A third tendency, 'Paremvassi' (Intervention), was created in 1993 to support the candidacy of Nikos Konstatopoulos for the Presidency (Eleftheriou 2009).

identity as well […]: your main opponent stopped being the guy inside the leftist movement itself and your radicalism was not exhausted in your effort to say that some other left-wing organization has it all wrong. These little steps opened a little space for us, to breathe and to create a different identity" (GR.Int.14).

Confirming these accounts, a scientific analysis on the evolution of the Greek left from 1968 to 2001 concluded that, in the early 2000s, SYN was "creatively combining all kinds of anti-globalization, ecological, anti-nationalist, pro-immigrant messages" (Kalyvas and Marantzidis 2002, 680).

The Programmatic Congress (Athens, 30 May-1 June) held in 2003 officially took note of the on-going transformation. Significantly, the name of the party was changed from Coalition of the Left and Progress into Coalition of the Left, the Movements and Ecology ('Synaspismos tes Aristeras, ton Kinimaton kai tes Ekologias'), stressing the connection with the social movements (Figure 6.2). The Programmatic Decisions approved by the delegates highlighted SYN's cultural variety: the party included "all the historical currents of the left movement in our country: the communist, socialist, social democratic, ecologist ones, as well as the forces of democratic struggles and social movements, the women's liberation and the youth movements" (SYN 2003, 2). It was however "not a sum of these trends condensed in a single political programme, but [an attempt] to overcome them, the conquest of a new comprehensive paradigm, a common strategy and a common perspective that aims towards socialism, freedom and democracy" (ibid., 2). As in the Italian case, the concepts of 'freedom' and 'democracy' were re-associated with 'socialism', implicitly taking distance from the Soviet regimes. A "fruitful interaction with the broad and multiform social movements that also mark the new era, the movements against neo-liberal capitalist globalization" was conceived as both a "strategy for the left of our time" and a method for "understand[ing] in depth the new period" (ibid., 3), thus recognising the theory-generating capacity of the GJM. Opposition towards "Neoliberal capitalist globalization under US domination" (ibid., 3) also made inroads into the party's discourse.

Figure 6.2 Evolution in the Logos of SYN, 1992-2013

Note that the word 'Movements' and 'Ecology' were added in 2003

In its IV Congress, the party formulated even more clearly its alternative programme, in which the classic values of the left ("solidarity, equality and justice") were flanked by typical movement

claims (such as "a new project for environmental protection and development, the expansion of traditional and new democratic and civil rights, new perceptions of full respect for diversity against all forms of discrimination") (SYN 2004, Political Resolution). The fight against neoliberal politics officially became the fulcrum of party activity: "[Our alternative] encompasses bold demands, structural reforms and profound in-depth changes questioning neoliberal capitalism, paving the way to socialist transition" (ibid.).

Compared with the Italian case, the category of 'imperialism' was never refused. This was also in line with the Greek peace movement's framing of the western wars in the Middle East, which was less influenced by Negri and Hardt's ideas, and more embedded in the country's anti-imperialist tradition (GR.Int.2). The novelty was rather a perceived connection between western imperialism and the development of the EU itself:

"The anti-war movement was the first time that huge masses of people went on the streets after the Maastricht Treaty was signed. In Greece, it showed that it was possible for 100,000 people to get into the street. We already had in our national culture an anti-imperialist and anti-US component. Here, it was an easy subject, but there was also a global day of action throughout the whole of Europe. And it became a very important moment in the development of SYRIZA" (GR.Int.12).

Inspired by social protest, SYN's Programmatic Decisions condemned the "preventive US and British wars against Iraq", considered "characteristic of the imperialist 'new order',, which had developed after the collapse of the Soviet regimes and where the US acted as the leading "superpower" (SYN 2003, 3-4). The document also incorporated the GJM critique of the Maastricht criteria, regarding the EU and most of its member states as fully prone to "the primacy of the market and competitiveness" (ibid., 17). While denouncing the complicity of social democratic parties in introducing and implementing neoliberal policies in Europe (ibid.), SYN committed itself to fight against privatizations, give new emphasis to materialist issues, such as the promotion of state controlled economy and full employment, and put into practice the internationalist principle through the involvement in the GJM (Eleftheriou 2009).

The radicalization of SYN's identity continued in the following years under the leadership of Alecos Alavanos. Nikos Konstantopoulos' withdrawal from the party's presidency in 2004 and the subsequent election of Alecos Alavanos ratified the internal equilibrium that had been consolidated in the previous years, when the 'leftists' had the facto assumed the guidance of the party. The new leadership carried forward a 'critical Marxist' ideology which also prevailed in the youth organization and constituted the base for the ideological renewal of the party:

"SYN is very much based on critical Marxism, and especially on the structural Marxism of Poulantzas and Althusser, who were also inspired by the thought of Mao, especially the part that shows a non-Stalinist and non-dogmatic view of Marxism. Also the idea of being part of the movements as a fish in the water comes from Mao's thoughts" (GR.Int.15).

With the new order, the consensus-based logic that had characterised the Konstantopoulos direction was substituted with a conflict-based logic in intra-party relations; the centre-left

factions then started to gradually merge in order to face the new majority's challenge.[69] Conflicts regarded especially the candidatures and their order in the lists, the foundation of SYRIZA and its stabilization, as well as the discursive support that was granted to all social movements' actions, also when they escalated to violent behaviour. Compared with the Italian PRC, however, the internal minorities in SYN were less powerful, as they were now excluded from the leading bodies and had poor roots in the party's base (GR.Int.12).

In 2006, not only did young SYRIZA members collaborate to the construction of the student movement, but also party leaders and elected representatives took a stance in defence of the movements' claims and actions, which included university occupations and various clashes with the police. This passage contributed to strengthen SYRIZA's radical left identity, concluding the process of identity building that had started a few years before:

"The construction of our identity continued until 2006, when it was fully transposed into politics implying two efforts. First, we had to figure out how to actually make a [student] movement to change the world somehow and, second, we had to build a broad social coalition. Inside the universities that meant, for example, that professors are part of the movement and not class enemies. This might appear obvious, but we had to push for it and we also had to convince the unions about the importance of the student struggle! […] Finally, those ideas dominated" (GR.Int.14).

From 2006 and onwards, the public discourse of SYN/SYRIZA caused both external attacks and internal fights. The latter resolved with the split of part of the (SYN's) moderate minority. Notwithstanding these difficulties – in the militants' view – the climate of opinion that surrounded SYRIZA was strategic to characterize the coalition in the eyes of the voters:

"SYRIZA became the scapegoat of the political system and this created huge problems: one and a half split, endless hours in TV where everybody asked whether SYRIZA's people were terrorists or had connections with the terrorist groups… These accusations were lies […] but this created an identity. Even more important than our actual connection with the movements was our rhetorical support for them. [… Because] back then, people might not have known what exactly SYRIZA was, but had a clear idea of how the SYRIZA's people would position themselves if there was a riot" (GR.Int.14).

The new public image of SYRIZA provoked the growing protests of the reformist and uncritically Europeanist centre-left faction within SYN, now called 'Ananeotiki Pteryga' (Renewal Wing), whose claims were substantially disregarded in the Programmatic Congress held in the 2007. The final document approved in this occasion appeared as a condensate of anti-neoliberal claims, which included a sharp critique of the EU. Neoliberalism was described as a "political plan" which "is not limited to the economic sphere", as it involves the division of workers, social exclusion, systematic racism, ecological destruction, citizens' demobilization and permanent war (SYN 2007, 3). The EU was stigmatised for promoting "neoliberalism all over the area by all means" through policies that deregulated labour relations, imposed privatizations and implied the contraction of the welfare state (ibid., 6). In line with the greater emphasis the

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[69] A part of 'Paremvassi' split from the new majority, 'Aristeri Ananeossi' (Left Renewal) formed and joined 'Syspeirossi' in its attacks against the leadership.

Greek GJM put on racism (when compared with the Italian strand), SYN's document also pointed out the responsibility of the EU in fostering xenophobic attitudes (ibid., 6). Social movements' popular slogans were directly quoted in the text: while Europe was becoming a "fortress" that rejected the immigrants (ibid. 6), "another world is necessary and possible" (ibid., 11). The way to achieve it was the coordination of the leftist forces and the mass movement at the European scale (ibid.). The enemy was now identified in the neoliberal "establishment" (including mainstream political parties, economic and financial elites, the "oligarchs" and their imposition of conservative values over mainstream culture) (ibid.).

Isolated within SYN, the minority organized its First Panhellenic Conference in June 2007, where it denounced a restriction of internal democracy and expressed its preoccupation for the party's future. SYN was considered "at a turning point" (Stefanos Bageorgos' speech, 17 June 2007). While the political plan of the new majority "is that SYN is transmuted, transformed and changed", the minority reaffirmed its commitment to "a party of the modern and democratic left" with "a stable European orientation" (ibid.). Despite their "significant differences", the minority reiterated the aim that the "two basic currents of ideas" present within SYN can "coexist", bringing back "the political dialogue which is essential in organizations and institutions" (ibid.).

While in Italy the presence of well rooted minorities, as well as the office-seeking orientation that still characterized the leadership had diminished the effect of the cultural change sought for in the GJM season, in Greece SYN could reinforce the newly acquired radical leftist profile, also due to the split of the moderate component. The Resolution approved by the V Congress in February 2008 confirmed the programmatic positions introduced in the previous years, and affirmed that: "the party must consolidate and enhance its ideological and political identity" (SYN 2008, X).

Besides formal statements, the confirmation of the actual penetration of a 'movementist' attitude in the party's political culture came with the 'December riots', i.e. the violent outburst of the Greek youth in 2008. As we saw in Chapter Four, the very reasons for this 'youth revolt' rested in the growing economic disparity that hit a whole generation and – a posteriori – this appears as the moment of conjunction between two phases of Greek social movements, the contestation of neoliberal globalization and the opposition to austerity policies in the context of the economic, social and politic crisis that affected Greece more than any other country in Europe. While the young members of SYN took to the street with the other protesters (see Chapter Five), the new leadership adjusted its public discourse and expressed sympathy for the youth in revolt, following the programmatic aim perceived since 2004 to re-institute itself as "the party of the young people" (Alavanos 2004; SYN 2004, Political Resolution of the IV Congress). The recently elected young leader Alexis Tsipras managed to quieten the older and more conservative heads within SYN and the SYRIZA coalition whose instinct was, while naturally voicing some concern for young peoples' living conditions, to take distance from the disorders. Also within the parliament, SYRIZA, which back then counted fourteen MPs, qualified itself as the only party that did not condemn the riots and did not endorse the police. Although this implied the accusation of encouraging violence and caused the loss of a consistent share of support (GR.Int.12; GR.Int.14; GR.Int.15; GR.Int.21), SYRIZA gradually acquired the role of the political representative of social and especially of youth struggles, which progressively became focal points in SYN and SYRIZA's political discourse. As also Katsambekis (2016) emphasised:

"these movements became constant themes in SYN/SYRIZA's discourse and acted as symbols of a broad anti-neoliberal struggle that the party considered necessary for the emancipation of society" (p. 394). By the end of the decade, the programme of SYRIZA substantially included all movement issues, such as students', labour and environmental claims, LGBT rights and gender equality, as well as immigrants' demands (SYRIZA 2009, Electoral Manifesto).

6.2 The 'renewed' RLPs' stance on anti-austerity movements' issues and values

The relation of the Italian and Greek RLPs to the austerity movements sets them further apart from each other. In Italy, at the time when the anti-austerity movements grew, RLPs were divided between and within themselves, and quite estranged from the social movements. After the split of the old 'movementist majority', the PRC concentrated on the effort to preserve its communist identity. Trapped in its Marxist vocabulary, it failed to convincingly renew its discourse and recover from its crisis. SEL, a party founded on the premise of creating an environmentalist and libertarian leftist organization, was also unable to capitalise on the anti-austerity themes, due to both cultural resistance and the infrequent cases of double membership. SYRIZA on the other hand managed not only to link itself with the Greek anti-austerity movement, but also to claim to represent it. Whereas similar to PRC, it strongly emphasized its left identity, it also managed to link this with the demands and claims of several sections of the anti-austerity movements and shift its position in response to their claims. Rather fortuitously, the "left turn" of the party had been completed by the time the anti-austerity movement erupted in full force, allowing it to focus on engaging with the movements rather than with internal fights. Additionally, unlike SEL, it took a determined stance against the bailout and the austerity practices voted through in the Greek parliament, making the party a representative vehicle for the victims of the crisis who had become radicalized by the intense economic shock Greece suffered. However, the future links between the party and the movements of anti-austerity have been compromised by SYRIZA's policy turn and the signing of a new bailout.

6.2.1 The PRC and SEL: when 'the left' becomes an issue in itself

After the heavy electoral defeat suffered in 2008 national elections, in the PRC internal discourse references to social movements and their claims started to decrease, due to a mix of factors. One factor was the decrement of double membership (described in Chapter Four and Five), another reason was the renewed focus on the communist identity impressed by the new dominant coalition, formed in the VII Congress by a convergence between the 'Social Left' of the new Secretary Paolo Ferrero and the orthodox communist faction, renamed 'Essere Comunisti' (Being Communists) plus other minor groups. 'Being Communists' immediately identified the political eclecticism of the former leader Bertinotti and his current as one of the fundamental reasons for the electoral "disaster". They advocated for "the reconstruction of a communist party" in order to avoid its "definitive dissolution" (Pegolo and Giannini, 16 April 2008).

The two main critical factions, 'Being Communists' and the 'Social Left', presented a common document in the VII Congress held in July 2008, where they finally won the control over the PRC. Titled 'Communist Refoundation in movement. Relaunching the party, building the unity of the left', the text recalled the relations with social movements, but at the same time brought forward a 'conservative proposal', because it indicated as the way for exiting the crisis: a) the organizational strengthening of the party (analysed in Chapter Five); b) the defence of its communist and antagonist identity; and c) the unity of all the leftist forces (a point which I will discuss more in-depth in Chapter Seven) (Acerbo et al. 2008, VII Congress).

The VII Congress focused especially on the strategies to be adopted to re-launch the left in Italy. Although most popular movement issues were mentioned in the document of the new majority, in practice the internal debate overlooked the programmatic renewal. According to the accounts of the critical party members who abandoned the party at this time (IT.Int.17; IT.Int.18), the discussion began to revolve around the theme of the 'reconstruction':

"At that point the season of eternal discussion on the 'reconstruction' started, a debate that concerned only the container, 'the necessity of the left, the reconstruction of the left…', a continuous negotiation about the alchemies between the groups 'x' and 'y' and never again a political in-depth analysis about the contents" (IT.Int.18).

Significantly titled 'Unifying the Alternative Left, Exiting the Crisis of Capitalism', a motion was proposed by the majority of the PRC at the VIII Congress held in December 2011, while the anti-austerity actors were protesting in the squares. The text of this motion is a testimony of the disconnection from social movements' claims. The document talked in traditional terms of "an organic crisis of capitalism", quoted Gramsci and Marx as thinkers of reference and recurred to the binomial "socialism or barbarism" to indicate the future prospects of change (Ferrero et al. 2011). Within this classic theoretical framework, it proposed to recover the strategy of "embeddedness in social movements […] started ten years before in Genoa, and that now we have the will and the responsibility to continue", implicitly considering contemporary social movements just as the continuation of the previous ones and disregarding their specificities (ibid.).

The document listed the "critical experiences" that overlapped in Italy in 2011 – those of the metalworkers and their union, the FIOM; those of the students and the precarious workers; the women's activism; the local movements; the water referendum – but it did not frame their instances within a coherent discourse about the social consequences of the economic crisis. This also reflected the fragmentation typical of the Italian anti-austerity movements and their reluctance to develop a common frame. Despite recalling some of their concrete proposals, the document essentially diluted those in a traditional narrative about the "actuality of Communism" (ibid.). While the word "austerity", which was the main target of movement fights in all the GIIPS countries[70], was never mentioned, there was instead the return of the traditional lexicon: "our basic project, our reason of being, is the alternative society. We are men and women who fight for overcoming capitalism and patriarchy towards a communist society" (ibid.). If on the one side, this terminology re-approached the party to the Marxist-Leninist sectors of the Italian

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[70] Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain.

social movements (IT.Int.12), on the other it acted as an obstacle for interactions with less ideological groupings:

"They are stuck in the 1980s! They use a language that is as old as the Communist Party! You can't speak as if we were all working in the factories. Today the kids deliver food for two euros per hour and if you go and talk with them about the actuality of communism they simply don't understand!" (IT.Int.12).

Also those young members who joined the party in recent times maintained that "[The discussion about] the history of Rifondazione started to prevail over the ambition to 're-found' communism […]. Since the participation in government the planning of an alternative cultural project had gradually lost its relevance and was not recovered when the PRC was left without parliamentary representation" (IT.Int.13).

In their interviews, they lamented the impoverishment of the internal debate, which was due to a climate of perennial conflict between "Sensibilities linked to personalities and old positions which are unconnected to the present political and social reality" (IT.Int.7). A local cadre in Florence underlined the consequences of the numerous splits the PRC had suffered:

"Those who used to propose an organic theoretical elaboration tended to leave the party. It happened with 'Critical Left' and 'Sickle and Hammer', while other cultural reviews, like 'Being Communists', disbanded […][71]. Also in its public discourse, today's Rifondazione is more the daughter of the 'party in the institutions' than of the very initial project of 1991 or of the closeness with the 'movement of the movements', because also this last approach left the party together with the leaders that had represented that season" (IT.Int.13).

Besides the lack of internal confrontation and theoretical elaboration, other reasons mentioned by the interviewees to explain the inability of the PRC to renew its language during the economic crisis were the specificities of Italian anti-austerity protests and the inability of the party to articulate an efficient communication strategy (IT.Int.7; IT.Int.13). They stressed that in 2011 the party did make an effort to oppose austerity measures. In example, the PRC adopted the opposition to austerity as a "linguistic category" (IT.Int.13) and launched a campaign against the introduction of a balanced budget rule in the Constitution. Also, together with movement groups, the party planned and promoted the 'No Monti Day', a national protest in Rome against the unpopular policies of the technical government headed by the economist Mario Monti. However, in this phase, the Italian anti-austerity movements were already fragmented and had little expansive capacity. The movements had especially been affected adversely after the large demonstration of 14 October 2011, organized as part of a global day of action called by the Spanish 15M movement, which had ended up in violent riots in the capital city (see Chapter Four). Moreover, the Monti government enjoyed great legitimacy because of the support of all mainstream political parties and mass media (see Chapter Three). In this context,

"Also SEL was unable to characterise itself on the anti-austerity themes […]. Compared with the other countries, and to Greece in particular, the front against austerity was weaker and less

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[71] 'Critical Left', 'Sickle and Hammer' and 'Being Communists' were internal factions in the PRC who had their own written journals printed and distributed among party members.

productive in electoral terms. The 'No Monti Day' failed to involve many groups and attract masses of participants" (IT.Int.13).

Finally, the party militants I interviewed considered that the messages of the PRC about challenging issues such as the role of the European Union, the Euro and austerity were too complex to catch a wide audience, largely because they were rooted in the long-lasting party discourse about the process of European unification and its defects (IT.Int.7; IT.Int.13). The PRC members underlined the coherence of their approach, which "Compared with the other European leftist forces can show a greater continuity in its opposition to continental arrangements and choices". Nonetheless, they also admit that: "This characteristic does not manage to fully emerge [and become visible in the public debate]" (IT.Int.13).

SEL, a party of more recent formation, was not more efficient than the PRC in interpreting anti-austerity demands. It was born as an eclectic party that should merge three different political cultures: environmentalism, represented by the 'Association of the Environmentalists; social democracy, represented by the 'Democratic Left' group; and 'refounded' communism, represented by the 'Movement for the Left' which had split from the PRC to escape its identitarian involution. Its name – 'Left, Ecology and Freedom' – sounded as a 'programmatic manifesto' aiming at three genetic purposes. The first was to build a renewed party of 'the left', which should abandon the symbols and language of the communist tradition in order to appeal to a broader constituency, without denying the validity of the left/right dichotomy. The second aim was to assign centrality to the environmental problems and their possible solutions, such as the promotion of a non-consumerist society and the implementation of an ecologic economy. Finally, the new party should recover 'freedom' as a fundamental value of the left, thus subtracting the monopoly of the right to use the word and liberating 'freedom' from the stigma of being understood just in terms of the privilege of the stronger and triumph of their will. Emphasis on the concept of 'freedom' implied a critique of both the real socialist systems, which had failed to combine freedom and justice, and of religious dogmatism, which in Italy prevented the acquisition of important civil rights.

Traditionally a secondary theme for the RLPs in Italy, secularism became indeed one of the main issues brought forward by SEL, also due to the openly declared homosexuality of its leader Nichi Vendola. The party introduced a homogeneous discourse on secularism which was interconnected with the subtopics of homophobia, machismo, the criticism towards patriarchal structures, the defence of (ethnic, religious, gender and sexual) differences and a sensitivity towards bioethical dilemmas. Also through policy proposals on bioethics, gay marriage and adoptions, this positioning was used to differentiate the new-born political formation from the centre-left PD, which had maintained an ambiguous and rather pale stance on most of these topics (at least until recent years) because of the pressures coming from its internal orthodox-catholic component. Combined with the emphasis on environmental protection and an economic plan based on support for the welfare state and opposition to privatizations, these policies helped SEL to address a more radical constituency than the PD, despite usually running for elections within the centre-left coalitions. This attempt was facilitated by the communication abilities of President Vendola, who, in his public speeches, managed to appeal to those nostalgic of past ideologies as well as to a more fluid, issue-oriented electorate. Leader of the PCI's youth

organization in the 1980s, among the founders of the PRC and then one of the protagonists of its renovation, he played a role as a 'connecting link', which was also condensed in the self-definition as 'communist, catholic and gay' (Telese 2010).

Figure 6.3 Official Logos of SEL, 2010-2017

Note that the personalization of the party is expressed in the presence of the leaders' name

The aim to overcome the "old identities" stated in the party's programme (SEL 2010) resulted in a modern political culture praised by party members: "I really liked the name, because I considered myself first of all an environmentalist, but I also liked that it was a libertarian left. It looked like an excellent fusion. I liked that it was the converging point of several souls" (IT.Int.4). Another ex-member, once spokesperson of the Florence Social Forum, confirmed:

"I believed in SEL, because I liked the idea that ecology was included and I hadn't any problem to speak of freedom. It was obvious that this was missing in the PCI's approach. SEL appeared as a very modern party. The fight within Rifondazione [from which it was born] reminded me of the clash between the old and the new" (IT.Int.11).

However, the party lacked both the capacity to realise its programme and to update it according to the new themes that emerged during the years of economic crisis:

"SEL failed in the concrete realisation of its initial ideals [...]. It wasn't able to intercept the social effervescence that led to the birth of the Beppe Grillo phenomenon[72]. There was a great environmentalist debate in Grillo's initial 'meet up'. SEL should have looked at these issues and forms of participation, but hasn't been able to grasp them" (IT.Int.4).

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[72] Beppe Grillo is an Italian comedian, founder and leader of the Five Star Movement. His activity in the political field began in 2008-2009 and was carried out basically through a personal blog and online 'meet ups' where followers could discuss Grillo's proposals.

As far as anti-austerity issues are concerned, SEL proved rather resistant to absorb them in its programme and public discourse. According to a party cadre in Florence, the administrative tradition and economic vision of the Italian left played an important role in this delayed understanding of the political contingency:

"For the Italian left, standing against 'austerity' did not sound well, because the left had always been characterized by its ability to run local institutions getting the accounts square, while privileges, waste and clientelism were associated with the right. Therefore, the Italian left was little reactive on this issue […]. Later on, I understood that economic rigorism is counter-scientific and that it was used in a reactionary sense to cut the welfare state" (IT.Int.15).

Overall, the reasons for the inability of SEL to intercept and incorporate the main movement issues are found by party activists themselves in the reduced size of the party, described in Chapter Five, which diminished the cases of double membership, in the intrinsic characteristics of the Italian anti-austerity movements and in an overall moderate and traditional political culture. On the first point, one interviewee explained:

"The militancy was reduced and we did not have the strength to stay inside those things [the social movements], not because we did not want to, but because we did not manage. If you knew that a party member was inside a local committee or a struggle, you perceived it as an extraordinary event: we have a comrade there! Wow, then let's call him!" (IT.Int.11).

With regards to the distinctive elements of contemporary social movements in Italy, SEL members described their fragmentation as an obstacle for the development of a general discourse that the party could espouse: "Many movement experiences, important and interesting, emerge on small, local issues, as in Florence with the 'Mothers against the Incinerator'. It is increasingly difficult to bring people together on a complex range of issues" (IT.Int.4).

According to another interviewee, the divisions in the movements and the growth of anti-party sentiments also affected the ability of SEL to perform its channelling function. Having been an elected representative in the Tuscan regional parliament, he could testify that:

"We were disconnected from social movements. In some cases, for instance with the national housing rights movement, we didn't even have contacts at all. The student movement was interesting: I tried to approach it and the students somehow considered me as a point of reference, but in the end it was a sporadic relationship […] because the anti-party sentiments led them to see me as external, I was never 'one of them' […]. They never allowed me to speak in their assemblies, there was a strong distinction of roles." The relation was so unsystematic that, at the national level, "the environmentalist world did not have as main political interlocutor the MPs of SEL, but those of M5S" (IT.Int.15).

The GJM was instead described as able to develop an organic analysis which could more strongly influence institutional politics:

"Thanks to Genoa, international themes became of public relevance […]. For a whole generation the fight against neoliberalism and the commitment to global issues were the keys to interpret everything. Until the point that they are still pivotal in the founding Document of Italian Left [the new leftist party born in 2017 out of the dissolution of SEL], a thing that is even

outdated! […] Today, the type of movement has changed. Back then we talked of the 'movement of movements', and the last real movement I can think of is the water movement. We did Florence 10+10 [in 2012] as a national attempt to re-assemble the various groups, but it didn't work. So, we can't speak anymore of an organic relationship [between the party and the movements], but only of a relationship between the MPs and the social groups active in a specific sector" (IT.Int.11).

Finally the moderate political culture of the party is also mentioned as a reason for its lack of courage: "Today a kid does not vote SEL/Italian Left, he/she votes the M5S, because SEL is not a party of rupture […]. Rifondazione had the best electoral results in the period around Genoa because it embodied a rebellion, a move against the system, the hope of building a new world […] after that, we were not able to do these things again" (IT.Int.4).

6.2.2 SYRIZA: the birth of the anti-austerity radical left in Europe

Differently than in Italy, cultural fertilisation between anti-austerity movements and SYRIZA was very strong in Greece. At the beginning of the economic and political crisis, SYRIZA became a credible interlocutor thanks to the coherent 'pro-movements' behaviour and discourse brought forward throughout the decade, and this culminated with the expression of sympathy for the rebel youth in occasion of the riot outbursts in December 2008. In the following years, SYRIZA fully embraced opposition against the austerity measures, openly supported labour claims and all general strikes and social mobilizations, and adopted an anti-bailout rhetoric. All of this transformed the party into the alternative pole to the harsh neoliberal politics of PASOK and New Democracy (Karampampas 2018; Altiparmakis forthcoming).

Also this last transformation had its costs for the coalition, which in the biennium 2009-2010 had to face the resistance of the moderate component of the last 'modernisers' who had remained in SYN. In the context of the debt crisis, they leaned towards acceptance of the bailout and towards management of austerity by tempering it with some modest social policies. Playing a reduced role within their party, they finally left it at its VI Congress in June 2010 and founded the Democratic Left ('Dimokratiki Aristera'-DIMAR), a centre-left formation which in 2012 joined the grand coalition cabinet headed by ND's Antonis Samaras. The separation of the social-democratic wing was interpreted positively by young party members, for whom "that component was a constant reason for internal clashes inside SYRIZA, a battle coming mainly from the side of the other components of the coalition towards SYN, because the other parts always thought that they were more radical and that SYN was milder" (GR.Int.15).

Freed from the more conservative thrusts, the coalition could now articulate a radical discourse on the economic and financial crisis and its possible solutions, a discourse profoundly affected by the connections with social movements. At the end of 2010, all parliamentary parties agreed that the national debt had to be returned, the difference between SYRIZA and the other political forces laying in the former's proposal to increase taxation of big capital as the sole mechanism for raising the funds. Only a minority within the SYRIZA coalition argued that the debt could not be covered and that trying to reach such a goal would only lead to economic recession due to the constant transfer of money out of the economy for debt repayments. It was the anti-austerity

movement of 2011 that shifted the majority opinion, in society and on the left, towards repudiating at least the 'odious debt', that is the portion run up profligately by previous corrupt governments. In their interviews, party members underlined that the assemblies in the squares provided the space for debating economic, financial and political issues, and that massive protest transformed the refusal to pay the debt into common sense (GR.Int.8; GR.Int.15; GR.Int.18; GR.Int.24). While "the typical way of action of trades unions and other leftist organizations could not give good results, we understood that the 'movement of Syntagma square' had a greater capacity to catch the citizens' attention" (GR.Int.20). A cadre in Athens explained how, also as a consequence of its direct participation, SYRIZA could take over the new discourse, becoming the first party to interrupt the political consensus over the debt write-off and the recipes imposed to this end:

"In the beginning the Indignados movement had some very petit-bourgeois and liberal characteristics [… as] the main idea was: 'all political parties are the same, politicians are all traitors, we are all Greeks and we need to be patriots' [… But] I was very much in favour of this movement because it ended in a very large and radical anti-governmental movement […] During the period between the movement of the squares and the elections, SYRIZA brought forward the movement issues both in the Parliament and in the streets again, and Tsipras started to travel all over the country" (GR.Int.15).

Most of the interviewees confirm that, after having supported its members in 'silently' taking part in the protests, SYRIZA was the only parliamentary force that could interpret the demands of the 'movement of the squares' and channel them into institutional politics, "thus taking a crucial step from *identification* [with the mobilizations] to *representation*" (Katsambekis 2016, 393). The fight against the Memorandum of Understanding, and the austerity policies attached to it, became the distinctive point in the party's discourse. It was "the main essence in his policy proposal […] Because we were saying that the Memorandum is a regime, not just a set of austerity measures, and everything that was worsening in the Greek society was connected to this new regime, for example, even social freedoms were at stake" (GR.Int.8).

Within this new context, SYRIZA also broadened its appeal from specific sectors of society (the precarious workers, the youth, the environmentalist movements, etc.) to 'the Greek people' who suffered because of the economic crisis and neoliberal austerity policies. Also this last passage, which according to some scholars marks the rise of a populist left in Europe (March 2011; Katsambekis 2016), reflected the transformation in the nature of social movements in Greece, and, more in general, the difference between the alter-globalist and the anti-austerity movements (presented in Chapter Four). The GJM had been a movement of the minorities, which wanted to unify all the groupings opposing neoliberal globalization. Coherently, SYN/SYRIZA had taken the role of representing the claims of the 'globalization losers' who were being marginalized by the neoliberal capitalist processes (the "productive forces", the "youth", the "precarious workers", the "unemployed", etc.) against the 'globalization winners' (the political, economic, media "establishment", the elites, the two party system of PASOK-ND, the "oligarchs", etc.) (see for instance SYN 2005, Decision of the Central Committee). In this phase, the declared aim of the party was therefore the articulation of "a new social unity. A kind of unity that would

represent the working people, the vulnerable social strata, the youth, the social groups that are marginalized" (Tsipras 2008, speech at the V Congress of SYN).

A new and broader social interlocutor was looked for only later, starting from 2011, when the outcomes of the violent economic crisis had begun to modify the structure of society, leading to a rapid impoverishment of the middle class and generating in the following years a growing polarization between a restricted elite and the majority of the population (Vaughan-Whitehead 2016). In this socio-economic juncture, an exceptionally large, durable and massive anti-austerity-movement developed, able to catch participants and sympathisers in vast social strata (on the connections between the economic structure and anti-austerity social movements, see Cini et al. 2017). With the social movements employing the motto 'We are the 99%', SYRIZA gradually abandoned calls to the 'youth' and alter-globalist forces, replacing them with a more inclusive appeal to 'the people'. In order to highlight the effort to represent the plurality of social and political subjects resisting the effects of the economic crisis, the coalition even changed its name prior to the May 2012 elections to SYRIZA-EKM – where EKM stands for Unitary Social Front (Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4 Evolution in SYRIZA Logos, 2004-present

Since May 2012, the label 'Coalition of the Radical Left' has been replaced with 'Unitary Social Front'

SYRIZA-EKM's majoritarian aim did not interfere with the peculiarities of its discourse concerning the effort to protect the interests of the weaker groups: the image of a 'party of the people' was indeed merged with the constant verbal defence of leftist social movements. SYRIZA's call to the people and its declared opposition to the 'pro-memorandum establishment' was thus combined with highlighting particular struggles that acted as symbols of a generalized, popular front against austerity, state repression, antidemocratic tendencies and neoliberalism.

First, it endorsed the most visible labour protests, linking their specific claims to a general vision of the challenges that workers were facing in Greece. The resistance of the 'cleaning ladies', who were fired from the Ministry of Finance, represented in SYRIZA's discourse the struggle of thousands of public sector employees who were laid off in order to fulfil the bailout conditions: "The heroic cleaning ladies of the Ministry of Finance show the only possible way for our people, but also for people all over Europe: the path of disobedience and struggle, the way towards a progressive subversion!" (SYRIZA's Department of Labour 2014). In a similar vein, the mobilization of the employees of the public broadcaster ERT, after it was suddenly shut down in

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June 2013, was presented as "a symbol of democracy. SYRIZA-EKM expresses once again its solidarity with the workers of ERT and supports their struggles and decisions" (SYRIZA 2013).

Second, the party backed local communities defending their territories and denounced the connections between environmental issues, greedy capitalism and the state. Examples can be found in the support to the residents in Halkidiki, in Northern Greece, against the expansion of mining activities, and the anti-landfill protests on the outskirts of Athens in Keratea, which were met with unprecedented police brutality (GR.Int.1; GR.Int.7). In January, Tsipras declared that SYRIZA was in favour of "the struggle of residents in Keratea and elsewhere, claiming quality of life against an unreliable state" (Tsipras 12 January 2011).

Finally, in relation to the 'I Am Not Paying' ('Den Plirono') movement, that encouraged civil disobedience against all sorts of private debt that was considered unfair, SYRIZA stressed "the need for social and political fronts with subversive direction, in order to reverse the destructive course of the country and to return the Greek people to the forefront of developments" (SYRIZA, 17 Dec. 2014).

Thanks to its supportive discourse, labour and citizens' movements developed a constant relationship with SYRIZA's thematic departments and MPs. Differently than in Italy, all the Greek MPs highlighted their close connection with movement activists, which in their view contributed to both a) strengthening the policy proposals of the party and b) differentiate it from the competitors (GR.Int.1; GR.Int.5; GR.Int.7; GR.Int.11; GR.Int.12; GR.Int.23). For example, Irini Agathopoulou, who was elected in the Northern Greece district, informed me of her constant contacts with the environmental movement:

"The movement against the gold mines in Kalkidica turns to me very often [...]. Almost all the citizens of the region, including right-wing people, are against the project and this forced the mayor of Kilkis and the right-wing MP elected in my district to vote against it. However, their party, New Democracy, is officially in favour of the mines, while SYRIZA instead took immediately a contrary position, and that's why the movement trusts me more. It's SYRIZA that carries the claims of the movement in the Parliament, and support them in front of the Government and the other parties" (GR.Int.1).

Another MP, responsible for health issues, explained the collaborative process through which the policy programme of the party was elaborated in those years:

In the Parliament, I monitor what the Government and the Minister of the Health are doing in the health sector, and I'm working together with other MPs at SYRIZA's health programme [...]. For this purpose, we set up a network which includes also external groups [...]. Each SYRIZA MP carries on his activity in the same way [...]. The main advantage we got from this collaboration with the movements was that we started speaking of health as a social right from the perspective of the patient and not so much from that of the doctors or the staff of the health system [...]. And it also helped us to understand the importance of opening social clinics for the immigrants and all those who cannot accede the national health system" (GR.Int.23).

Most of the demands of anti-austerity and local movements were therefore included in the programme presented for the elections in May and June 2012. The text was based on an alternative mixture of economic and social policies, mainly of neo-Keynesian and social-

democratic character, implying a decisive break with the politics of austerity and a firm re-negotiation of the Greek public debt. The party promised to annul the Memoranda signed by former governments, while securing Greece's place within the Eurozone; raise taxation on big business and the rich; put the bank sector under social control; call a moratorium on debt repayment until the economy started to grow; secure universal access to welfare; scrap salary cuts and emergency taxes (SYRIZA-EKM 2012, Electoral Declaration).

Besides the above-mentioned economic measures, which should respond to social movements' demands for enhancement of social and human rights, the sixth pillar of the 2012 Electoral Declaration focused on another fundamental movement preoccupation, i.e. the strengthening of democracy. While calling for "Democracy everywhere", the party highlighted the oligarchic behaviour of mainstream political parties: "They decided without us, we move on without them" (SYRIZA-EKM 2012, Electoral Declaration, 1). Political elites were described as agents of "globalized capitalism" together with private bankers, big businessmen and international financial speculators (ibid.). Society was pictured as divided between two antagonistic camps: the few, guided by a logic of profit and individualism typical of late neoliberalism, and the many, who were being impoverished and dispossessed of their rights. The solution for this conflict was said to be the coming of "socialism with freedom, a fully blossoming democracy where all citizens participate in decision making […]" (ibid., 6).

Defeated in the 2012 elections, the party re-proposed similar key objectives (an end to the humanitarian crisis, satisfaction of social needs, restoration of productive sectors, reinvigoration of democracy, redistribution of wealth, expansion of social and collective rights) in the European elections of 2014 (SYRIZA 2014). In this occasion, SYRIZA launched its message beyond the Greek boundaries, recovering the internationalist and alter-Europeanist spirit of the GJM. The ending statement of SYRIZA's campaign leaflet is a paradigmatic example of how this election was used as the chance to convince the peoples of Europe that there could be an alternative to austerity, triggering a wave of pan-European change: "This May belongs to the people. We can and we must win […]. Let's depose those that supported or tolerated the memoranda, the troikas, the austerity, racism and fascism. Citizens of Greece, people of Europe, unite! So we can put an end to the degradation of our lives. To regain democracy" (SYRIZA 2014).

After coming first in the European elections, SYRIZA engaged in a new optimistic and forward-looking campaign, where 'hope' became the key word: "Hope is coming. Greece moves on. Europe changes" read the main slogan (SYRIZA's poster 2015). This time, the condemnation of austerity and criticism of mainstream parties was coupled with a strong emphasis on the prefiguration of a positive governing alternative (see Chapter Eight). The most emblematic moment of this campaign was the presentation of the 'Programme of Thessaloniki' in September 2014, the basic pillars of which were in line with the rhetoric the party had espoused in previous campaigns: "1st: confronting the humanitarian crisis; 2nd: restoring the economy and promoting tax justice; 3rd: increasing employment; 4th: transforming the political system to deepen democracy" (SYRIZA's Thessaloniki Programme 2014). During this long campaign leading to the national elections in January 2015, SYRIZA developed its call to reinstate people's sovereignty against the establishment further. As Tsipras stated in one of his speeches: "We are counting on you. Not on the oligarchy […]. On the sovereign people" (SYRIZA's Framework of Government Programme 2015). The most characteristic slogan of the global anti-austerity

movements was also often employed: "We represent the interest of the 99% of the people who are paying taxes, New Democracy [represents] the 1% who hides, who has high incomes and evades tax" (Tsipras' Interview, 19 Jan. 2015).

When it finally won the national government in 2015, at least in the first phase, SYRIZA proved more efficient than the PRC in interpreting the popular will, and more specifically the social movements' claims. To begin with, the new speaker of the parliament, Zoe Konstantopoulou, established the Truth Committee on the Greek Public Debt, charged of investigating into "the creation and increase of public debt, the way and reasons for which it was contracted, and the impact that the conditionalities attached to the loans have had on the economy and the population" (Truth Committee on the Greek Public Debt 2015, 3). Other measures regarded: a) the cancellation of the so-called 'hood law' - i.e. the prohibition of wearing masks and other face-concealing objects during demonstrations; b) the removal of the metallic barriers in front of the parliament; c) a prison reform that allowed for thousands of small-time convicts to be released; d) the re-opening of the public broadcaster ERT as promised during the electoral campaign; e) a law that supplied electricity, water, rents and food for 300,000 families in need; f) the free universal access to the public health system, regardless of nationality and social security status (GR.Int.13). More in general, an interviewee remembered that "The climate changed, as there was much less repression and harshness from riot cops" (GR.Int.22).

However, also in the Greek case, the 'honeymoon' between the social movements and the governing party soon came to an end, especially after the signing of the third Memorandum of Understanding in July 2015. Not only did the new deal with the European institutions and the international creditors contradict the popular will expressed in the referendum of June 2015 (when Greek citizens had rejected the bail-out terms), it also led SYRIZA to drop most of its pre-electoral promises and to take on the management of austerity policies and privatizations. As previously recalled, the party went through a mass-exodus of members, who expressed harsh criticism towards the new line, so far as to argue that "There is no leftist vision that can be connected to SYRIZA nowadays" (GR.Int.8).

6.3 Summary

This chapter complemented chapter 5 and discussed the changes in the political culture of the RLPs in two different instances; when they interacted with and participated in the GJM movements and when they did the same in the anti-austerity movements. The main element that should be clear from the analysis is the diverging trajectories of the two cases.

The Italian PRC began from a position of full integration of social movements' demands and values during the peak of the GJM but its relation to movements slowly decreased when the (never suppressed) office-seeking vision prevailed in 2005. From the beginning, the participation of the party in the GJM was attached to a theoretical agenda of capitalism without boundaries, the need for transnational movements to fight it and the understanding that old vocabularies of imperialism and class were becoming obsolete. These theoretical roots proved troublesome and divisive for the constituency, a large part of which maintained faith in orthodox communism and

its lexicon. A long internal struggle about ideology and practices ensued, a struggle that intensified as the party was torn between re-approaching the centre-left coalition and strengthening its movement-oriented profile. Internal factionalism was coupled with external pressure when the participation into government created a rift between the aspirations of the movements and the left-in-government's policies. The heavy electoral defeat that followed the difficult governing experience led to a 'hard' left turn aimed at reinforcing the PRC's identity as a communist party. While the project of 'refoundation' of the theoretical roots of communism was abandoned, the diminished level of double membership, the new 'inward looking' and 'conservative' vision, as well as the fragmentation and anti-party attitude of anti-austerity movements in Italy all prevented the PRC from articulating a clear and coherent policy programme that would oppose austerity. For similar reasons, the foundation of SEL in 2009 was not accompanied by an attempt to forge new, organic links with social movements against austerity and incorporate their agenda.

By contrast, in Greece the trajectory of 'renewed' RLPs was entirely different, at least until the SYRIZA-led government signed a third MoU with the country's international creditors in 2015. SYN mostly sought to participate in the GJM as an attempt to find an identity that could allow it to create a political space for itself between the rigid Communist Party and the centre-left PASOK. A flexible ideology, based on critical Marxism, facilitated interactions which transformed the party both in terms of organization (see Chapter Five) and culture, giving it the opportunity to draw in movement activists who radicalized it further. By the late 2000's, the concurrent involvement in movements and reshaping by movements had resulted in a new, radical leftist and movement-oriented identity. SYRIZA's radical vocabulary and unwavering stance in favour of social movements, even in cases when those became violent, allowed movement participants and sympathizers to identify with the party and the party to represent them. This created a synergy between Greek social movements and SYRIZA which was unlike the experience of their Italian counterparts in their less well-connected relations with the PRC and SEL. Applying the same recipe to the anti-austerity movements, which included a much larger percentage of the populace, SYRIZA was again able to interact, incorporate their claims and represent the protesters, at least in the times that precipitated its eventual electoral success.

7. Strategic changes in the RLPs under the impulse of social movements

This Chapter concludes the empirical analysis of the transformations that the Italian and Greek 'renewed' RLPs have enacted after the rise of the GJM and the anti-austerity protests. It focuses on 'strategic changes', to determine whether the presence of social mobilizations conditioned the actions and the positioning of the RLPs within their respective party systems. Without denying the importance of contextual constraints, I investigate the influence of social movements on the systemic positioning of the political parties examined. I will trace the evolutions in the connections of the RLPs with the centre-left or other moderate parties, through the interpretation of two indicators: the RLPs' coalitional strategy in the national elections and in important municipalities and/or regions in local elections; and their role (whether as opposition, support or participation) in relation to the national government.

The Chapter is divided into two main Sections: the first deals with the strategic changes that the Italian PRC (Section 7.1.1) and the Greek SYN/SYRIZA (Section 7.1.2) set in motion under the influence of the GJM; the second considers the strategic choices of the PRC and SEL (Section 7.2.1) and SYN/SYRIZA (Section 7.2.2) during the anti-austerity period. In Section 7.3 I provide a summary of the main findings.

The analysis highlights that the GJM represented a tremendous stimulus for both SYN and the PRC to change the strategy they used to pursue within their respective competitive context. For the 'renewed' RLPs the vitality of civil society constituted the occasion to shift the focus of their activity from the public institutions to the squares. Moreover, this strongly influenced their connections with the larger and more powerful social-democratic parties, pushing them to become independent and present themselves as the 'alternative left'. However, as we saw for the other two dimensions, in the Greek case the transformation was more visible and durable, while the Italian RLPs followed a less coherent development.

7.1 The impact of the GJM on the strategy of the 'renewed' Italian and Greek RLPs

During the 1990s, both the PRC and SYN had tended to ally with mainstream social-democracy. The PRC was an organic part of the enlarged centre-left coalition, while SYN used to engage in local alliances with PASOK. The advent of the GJM offered the opportunity to design a new strategy that focused primarily on the social sphere and implied distancing from the previous moderate partners. In the case of SYN, this new course was never reversed, despite the internal resistance of the internal centrist faction. Rather, the 'movementist' course was sustained by constant involvement in social mobilization and through a radically renewed political culture. In contrast, the line of the PRC constantly oscillated between independence and the re-search for electoral and governing agreements. At the national level, the party distanced itself from the centre-left coalition when the alter-globalist movement was at its apex, but re-joined the coalition already in 2006. At the local level, the PRC continued to run for elections within the centre-left and, where possible, party members entered the centre-left administrations. After the ruinous

experience in the national government, the 'identitarian turn' and diminished levels of double membership prevented the party from contributing to a reunification of the disbanded radical left in Italy.

7.1.1 How the GJM (temporarily) influenced the strategy of the PRC

The PRC formulated a strategy of proximity with social movements immediately after the fall of the first centre-left government led by the economist Romano Prodi, which the party had supported in parliament from 1996 to 1998. In October 1998, the PRC withdrew its support due to major disagreements over the governments' social policies. Thereby, the PRC assumed the responsibility for provoking the fall of what was generally regarded as the most leftist executive in the history of Italy.[73] This decision had been made amidst harsh internal discussion and had led the 'governmentalist' faction to split from the party to found the Party of the Italian Communists (PdCI), characterized by its allegiance to remain loyal to the centre-left government and its commitment to form electoral alliances with the centre-left also in the future, both at the national and local levels (Di Virgilio and Bordandini 2007) (Table 7.1). However, the aim of the PRC remained within the same paradigm as in the previous decade: without retiring its support to the centre-left project entirely, the goal was to influence the line of this project 'from the left' and to promote the formation of a second leftist government to the left of the Prodi one (IT.Int.6). During the 1990s, the PRC had indeed behaved as an 'ambiguous' party. When analysing its strategy, mainstream political science had defined it as an "accommodating anti-system party" (Di Virgilio 2006, 199) because its anti-systemness was purely ideological, rather than 'relational' and practical (as it tended to ally with the parties of the centre-left both in local and national elections).[74] While justified by the PRC leadership as a way to push the PDS towards the left (Bertinotti 1994, 22 July), from the analytical point of view this coalitional choice appears rather as an adaptation to a majoritarian environment characterised by bipolar competition, combined with internal organizational weakness.[75] The goal of influencing the centre-left was never reached, as the subsequent cabinet (led by Massimo D'Alema) did not embrace the social agenda hoped-for by the PRC either. Thus, the party found itself located in the opposition and quite irrelevant in the political system.

The emergence of the GJM provided the chance to radically rethink the party strategy moving from a focus on public institutions to activism in the social sphere. Combined with the plan for organizational and cultural transformation, a strategic turn which would entail growing proximity to social movements was formulated in 1999. Right at the beginning of the movement cycle, the IV National Congress (Rimini 18-21 March 1999) approved the proposal to change the political line: the tactic of building electoral alliances with other leftist parties was abandoned in favour of

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[73] This perception was due to the major role played by the Party of the Democrats of the Left ('Partito dei Democratici di Sinistra'-PDS), that is the party heir of the PCI.

[74] Back in the 1990s, mainstream political science tended to adopt the label of 'anti-system party' for all the parties that still described themselves as 'communist'. Similarly to what Pizzorno (1993) proved for the PCI itself, the PRC was not anti-systemic. Its critique was addressed to capitalism as an unfair economic system, but not to the rules of representative liberal democracy. For instance, one its first battles had been to defend the Italian Constitution against an attempt of reforming it promoted by then President of the Republic, Francesco Cossiga.

[75] The characteristics of the Italian party system have been intensively described in Chapter Three.

constructing an anti-capitalist social block, composed by all the forces involved in the alter-globalist movements, including the groups of Catholic inspiration (PRC's majority 1999). The new positioning of the party as the opposition in parliament was considered "rich in potential" as it favoured the interaction with new subjects and groups (ibid.). Nonetheless, increasing the presence of the party in the social protest field did not imply abandoning the electoral and governing deals with the centre-left at the municipal and regional level. Officially justified as the need to channel social movements' demands within public institutions and allow them to achieve policy outcomes (ibid.), this strategy was defined as "the two poles" and agreed upon by all internal factions except the Trotskyite minority (PRC's minority 1999).

In its vague theoretical formulation, the 'strategy of the two poles' aimed to the construction of: a) an 'alternative left', formed by the PRC, SMOs and leftist cultural associations (including the newspaper 'Il Manifesto'); and b) a 'plural left', understood as a new leftist coalition between the RLPs and the major social-democratic party (now called DS, Democrats of the Left), but freed from the minor centrist forces. While in the long run, this plan was expected to force the whole centre-left block to shift towards the left, following the example of the French 'Gauche Plurielle' (PRC 2000),[76] in the short run, it translated into the above-mentioned local electoral and governing agreements which were counterbalanced by independence at the national level. Although the location at the opposition in parliament allowed for the 'immergence' in the GJM that we have noticed in the previous chapters, the simultaneous broad alliances that the party entered at the subnational levels would often disorient the membership base and constituency (Cannavò 2009).

The centre-left coalition was re-approached already ahead of the 2010 regional elections, just two years after the rupture with the government and the announcement of a strategic turn, which disconcerted some sectors of the party and its youth base in particular (Cannavò 2009). Agreements for the formation of a common government in case of victory were signed in all regions (except for Tuscany), sometimes even supporting particularly moderate candidates and provoking deep conflicts within the party. Throughout the 2000s, the same line of organic alliance with the centre-left was followed in most of the municipal, provincial and regional elections. Autonomy from the centre-left was instead put into practice in the 2001 national elections,[77] which were held immediately before the large anti-G8 counter-summit in Genoa, when the party was fully involved in the GJM. According to one of the interviewees, a local cadre of the PRC in Florence since the party's foundation, this was the moment when participation in the social movements influenced the PRC strategy the most:

"A generation of young members and some of the older elements [coming from the extra-parliamentary left of the 1970s] understood that either our communism was a promoter and supporter of social movements, from which we had to take the more advanced contents in order to re-formulate a proposal for the transformation of society, or else it was a communism of the

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[76] This interpretation is based on the analysis of party documents. For instance, the Document approved by the meeting of the National Political Committee held on 6-7 May 2000 stated that: "While we are trying to open a dialogue with the moderate left, it is always more urgent to promote […] relations […] aimed at accelerating the construction of the alternative left".

[77] Until 2009, the PRC contested alone in the European elections, which were regulated by a purely proportional representation law that discouraged coalitions. After a poor result of 4,3 per cent in 1999, the party significantly advanced to 6 per cent of the vote in 2004.

institutional spaces, unable to produce struggle and conflict. We were not interested in the second option" (IT.Int.16).

In the 2001 national elections, the PRC ran alone and openly attacked the parties of the centre-left coalition for their centrist programme. This tactic pointed at stressing the difference between the PRC and its direct competitors in order to both consolidate the existing constituency and attract new voters affiliated with the movements. The party obtained a discreet 5 per cent of the votes, enough for proving to be the only force external to the two major poles that was able to pass the minimum threshold of 4 per cent necessary for the distribution of proportional seats. Compared with the 1996 national elections, it had lost almost 1,400,000 votes (especially due to the split of the PdCI) and isolation had reduced to a minimum the inflows coming from the centre-left area, to which the PRC had given away more votes than those that it was able to intercept. In addition, external observers even accused the PRC of having facilitated the victory of Berlusconi's centre-right with its choice of running outside the centre-left coalition (Corriere della Sera, 17 and 18 May 2001), a criticism which highlights how strong the pressure was for electoral deals within the Italian bipolar environment. Nonetheless, the PRC's leadership expressed a positive evaluation of the electoral results of the party, confirming that, in this phase, maximisation of votes and institutional positions were only a secondary aim in comparison with the need to accredit the party as the main interlocutor of social struggles.

Distance from the centre-left coalition was reaffirmed in the V Congress (Rimini, 4-7 April 2002), where Secretary Bertinotti presented the construction of a "unitary front of the anti-neoliberal left" in response to the request for more direct and diverse political participation which had recently re-emerged through the social mobilizations (Bertinotti 2001, 29 June). In his speech, he insisted on the necessity of "new methods, different than the usual 'politics of alliances' […] to let the 'rupture of the movement' burst into the field of the left" (ibid.). In order to realise the re-foundation of politics, the PRC was required to move its attention "from the State level […] to the dynamics of social forces, movements and mass struggles", thus refusing "Togliattism" (the typical line of the PCI) as the praxis of institutional compromise. Yet, the importance of the "democratic battle within institutions" was not denied, provided that it developed in positive connection with social processes. At this stage, the party line of distancing from the centre-left at the national level was largely supported within the party and criticised only by the 'Ernesto' group, which pushed both for maintaining a dialogue with the DS party and for strengthening the relationship with the GCIL union. Although promoting the participation of PRC members in trades unions' demonstrations, the party majority was against the option of assigning primacy to collaboration with traditional actors, preferring to build interactions with the anti-neoliberal movement (ibid.).

The new line rapidly proved difficult to pursue successfully within a bipolar competitive context, where the possibilities for small parties to undertake independent initiatives were limited. In 2002, the PRC proposed a referendum on labour issues, gaining the support of a wide spectrum of forces (the Greens, the left-wing branch of DS, the ARCI, the Union of the metalworkers-FIOM, rank-and-file trades unions and squatter social centres), and facing the opposition of the centre-left parties and the CGIL itself. Held in June, the referendum obtained over 10,245,000 favourable votes (87.4 per cent), but it failed to reach the high participation quorum required for

referenda to be valid. Considering this a negative result, "The PRC leadership exploited the defeat to open a discussion about the need to re-establish a dialogue with the parties of the centre-left coalition also at the national level" (IT.Int.17). Another interviewee confirmed that: "The outcome of the referendum was actually an important one. Nonetheless, [Secretary] Bertinotti started to backtrack. [He believed that] 'social movements had not been enough, and that now we had to try to represent their claims through the political way" (IT.Int.16).

Despite these intentions, participation in the social movements continued with the protests against the war in Iraq in 2003. The breadth of the peace movement is a decisive factor for explaining the further re-approach to the moderate left. Pacifist mobilizations were so broad as to embrace a spectrum of forces ranging from the social centres to the Christian Associations of Italian Workers ('Associazioni Cristiane Lavoratori Italiani'-ACLI). The centre-left parties were also indirectly involved through the commitment of a large part of their sympathisers and members. On the one hand, this renewed proximity gave the PRC's leadership an argument for calling a "thematic and programmatic dialogue" with the centre-left coalition, now renamed as the 'Olive Tree' (Bertinotti's speech 2003). In the Secretary's opinion, the mass movements had gained such a legitimacy as to force the centre-left itself to change its stance on central issues, such as the role of the United Nations in international affairs and social policies (ibid.). On the other hand, the image of legitimate representative of the movement world increased the PRC's 'coalition potential', leading centre-left leaders to maintain the necessity to close the "conflictual phase" with Rifondazione and make "a government deal" (Bassolino 2003, 17 June) for the next national elections in 2006. Due to these developments, the "permeability of the Olive Tree to movement claims" (Bertinotti's speech 2003) became the core topic of the internal debate in the biennium 2004-2005 until the VI Congress (Venice, 3-5 March 2005) officially decided on the 'government turn'.

Participation in the national government was the central issue of this convention, which was characterized by fierce internal conflict and confrontation between five alternative documents. In its '15 theses', the party majority stated the need to respond with actual public policies to the social block that had gained a new political centrality during the season of mass mobilizations. The tactic to accomplish this task was identified in the acceptance of an alliance with the centre-left coalition that could defeat the centre-right led by Silvio Berlusconi. This possibility was presented as just "a step […] towards the construction of an alternative society", complementary to the parallel construction of a solid 'alternative left' pole through the permanent involvement in social movements (PRC's majority 2005). In his introductory speech at the Congress, Bertinotti stated that the priority was now "to defeat the Berlusconi Government and therefore [the PRC had] the duty to participate in building an alternative government […]. In this context, the presence of the PRC in a parliamentary majority and in a government is not the final goal of our political line, but a passage that aims to implement a reformatory project in the country" (Bertinotti's speech 2005).

The proposal divided the party's dominant coalition: the major Trotskyite group,[78] which had led the 'leftist turn' together with the Secretary's component, accepted the hypothesis of an electoral agreement that would increase the chances of overcoming the centre-right rule, but opposed the

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[78] This faction was previously named 'Bandiera Rossa' (Red Flag) and now 'Sinistra Critica' (Critical Left).

government option. Among the party minorities, the orthodox communist faction 'Being Communists'[79] approved both the electoral agreement with the centre-left and the eventual participation in government, while other two minor components only admitted "the possibility of purely technical electoral agreements" (PRC's minority 2005).[80]

The Congress finally approved the line of the Secretary with the fundamental support of the orthodox communist faction. Immediately after, the government agreement was decided upon, notwithstanding the on-going hostility between some internal party groups and the discontent that the debate was generating in large sections of the majority itself, particularly in the youth. A party member explained that the impression was that:

"We had exploited the social movements for a political operation. The participation in the government was not wrong per se, because it was important to channel the demands of social movements within institutions […]. But the challenge was to start a process of social transformation, to block neoliberal policies, and this never happened because from the very beginning there was an adjustment to the constraints and obligations that Prodi imposed" (IT.Int.16).

In the 2006 elections, the party collected 5.8 per cent and 41 seats in the Chamber, and 7.4 per cent and 27 seats in the Senate (Source: Ministry of the Interior). Despite ensuring an important presence in Parliament, the result was below the expectations of the leadership: compared with the 2001 national elections, the party had only grown 0.8 per cent and had not been able to attract the youth vote. Nonetheless, it was decided to emphasise that, due to the electoral deal, the PRC had the highest number of MPs elected since its foundation and had increased its political weight (PRC, April 2006). In reality, as showed in Chapter Six, the governing experience proved stressful and the ability of the PRC to actually influence the national policies was minimal (IT.Int.16; IT.Int.18; IT.Int.19).

The foundation of the Democratic Party ('Partito Democratico'-PD) in 2007 further reduced the PRC's manoeuvring space within the government. First, the government policies shifted increasingly to the centre, isolating the two communist parties of the coalition, the PRC and the PdCI. Secondly, the leadership of the PD made clear that it aimed for early elections in order to form a new, more cohesive centre-left cabinet which would exclude the radical left. The former PRC Secretary Bertinotti, now President of the Chamber of Deputies, did not hinder this plan, foreseeing a "consensual divorce" (Cannavò 2009, 196) between his party and the moderate left.[81] Within this hostile political environment, the PRC's tactic changed again. The leadership began a process of negotiation with the PdCI and other minor leftist formations which led to the constitution of the 'Rainbow Left' in December 2007. The 'Rainbow Left' was a federation that united the PRC, the PdCI, the Democratic Left (a group that had split from the PD) and the Greens under the same symbol. According to party members themselves, the project had little

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[79] This faction was previously named 'L'Ernesto' and now 'Essere Comunisti' (Being Communists).
[80] These were the smaller Trotskyite group, transformed in 2003 into the formal current 'Associazione marxista rivoluzionaria–Progetto comunista' (Revolutionary Marxist Association–Communist Project) and ready to leave the party; and the 'Falce e martello' (Hammer and Sickle). Their proposals for efficient electoral tactics will be nullified by a change of the electoral system.
[81] Since 2006, the Secretary of the PRC was Franco Giordano. However, Fausto Bertinotti maintained a strong weight in internal decision-making processes.

credibility as it appeared more as a mere attempt to survive after the unsuccessful experience in government and the birth of the PD, than as a long-term strategy for the reunification of the fragmented Italian radical left (IT.Int.16; IT.Int.19). The 'Rainbow Left' proved unconvincing indeed: in the 2008 national elections, called after the fall of the centre-left government, it collected a derisive 3 per cent of the votes, which was insufficient to pass the electoral threshold required to enter the parliament.

After the electoral failure, the VI Congress (Chianciano Terme, 24-27 July 2008) became the scene of a harsh confrontation between the ex-majoritarian component and the rest of the party. The 'challengers' criticised the old majority for the line followed since 2005, when a fallacious analysis of the power relations had led them to suppose that the radical left, supported by social movements and trades unions, could condition the economic and social policies of the centre-left government (Acerbo et al. 2008). They stigmatised the Rainbow Left, which was seen as the outcome of a hasty agreement between political classes, and interpreted the disappointing electoral results as a symptom of the rupture between the party and its constituency. While all party minorities advocated for a discontinuity with the past choices, the ex-majority claimed the validity of the previous line as the sole way to save the party from marginalisation (Vendola et al. 2008). According to this group, "it is essential to dismiss every ideological arrogance, every pretension of self-sufficiency", starting "a constituent process [… for the creation of] a plural political subject" open to dialogue to with the PD (ibid.). The plan was rejected and its proponents attempted to realise it through the foundation of SEL.

Table 7.1 Splits in the Italian and Greek RLPs (1994-2015)

Party	Year	Splinter Faction
PRC	1994	Communist Initiative
	1995	Movement of the Unitary Communists
	1996	COBAS for Self-Organization
	1997	Confederation of the Self-Organized Communists
	1998	Popular Action
	1998	**Party of the Italian Communists**
	2000	Popular Democracy (United Left)
	2006	Communist Party of the Workers
	2006	Communist Unity
	2008	Critical Left
	2009	**Movement for the Left (later, SEL)**
	2011	L'Ernesto
	2013	Countercurrent Flow for the Alternative
SEL	No splits	
SYN	2000	AEKA (Renewing and Modernizing Movement of the Left)
	2003	Maria Damanaki
	2010	**Renewal Wing (DIMAR)**
SYRIZA	**2015**	**Popular Unity**

As in the Italian case, the strategy of SYN changed in coincidence with the emergence of the GJM, as activism in the social sphere pushed the party to conclude its relationship with the social-democratic PASOK. Differently from in the PRC, the new course was never questioned by the party leadership and lasted without interruption until the formation of the SYRIZA government in 2015.

Since its foundation in 1992, SYN's line mirrored the contradictions faced by its predecessor, the KKE-Interior/EAR, in the 1974-1989 period. During its first decade, SYN vacillated between two courses of action: moving to the right and alliance with PASOK, or being independent and turning toward the left. Conflicts over this issue emerged already in the founding Congress: most of the former EAR delegates stressed the need to build an autonomous party, while the ex-KKE component was more open to a possible collaboration with PASOK. The final agreement was in favour of a cautious rapprochement toward PASOK. Until the 2000s, SYN was overall a moderate party with an electoral and institutional orientation. All of its internal tendencies supported a flexible coalition strategy at the local level and some even aimed at a final convergence with PASOK. Electoral agreements with PASOK were frequent, especially at the municipal level, and particularly in the peripheral areas of the country, where the party organization was weaker (GR.Int.14).[82] Overall, SYN relied on "it's indirect, though close and informal, relationship with PASOK" (Kalyvas and Marantzidis 2002, 687).

A growing competition with PASOK can be tracked in party documents since the beginning of the 2000s and onwards, reflecting the criticism of social democracy raised by the GJM. In the 'Programmatic Directions' voted through in the Programmatic Congress of 2003, SYN stated that, under the leadership of Kostas Simitis, "PASOK has implemented a neoliberal programme and its policies have transformed it into an authoritarian party" (SYN 2003). When explaining the shift in the strategic choices of his party, an ex-party member stressed the role of processes of double membership in both the institutional left and the alter-globalist movement, through which the stance of strong criticism towards mainstream social-democratic parties penetrated SYN:

"During the 1990s SYN was trying to create electoral alliances with PASOK […]. Both the Greek Social Forum and our involvement in it were processes that brought a gradual radicalization of SYN, because having a new [political] space made it easier to get rid of this tendency of making alliances […]. We knew that there was the tendency to ally with the social-democrats, our party radicalized when the social-democrats were becoming very neoliberal and, at the same time, we found other ways and other spaces for organizing our activity" (GR.Int.10).

The change in the strategy of the party provoked the split of one of the moderate currents, which contributed to reinforce the new line: "In the early 2000s there was a minimal split of the minority that was pro-PASOK. After that, everybody who remained in SYN was against any kind of coalition with PASOK" (GR.Int.4). Differently than in the case of the PRC, the rejection of electoral agreements with mainstream social democracy also concerned the local level, as

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[82] SYN's strength lied in urban areas (Athens, Piraeus, Salonika, Patras).

"During the 2000s, SYN never allied again with PASOK in important municipalities" (GR.Int.10).

Distancing from PASOK implied the need to strengthen the party in the electoral arena through new means. Still under the centrist direction of Nikos Konstantopoulos, SYN began the construction of SYRIZA, conceived as an electoral coalition that could compete in the upcoming national elections. Launched in December 2003, in its first formulation it included SYN, the Maoist KOE, the red-green AKOA, the Trotskyist DEA and a few other small organizations.[83] In the national elections of 2004, the coalition obtained a modest 3.3 per cent of the votes, sufficient to elect 6 MPs. The centre-right party New Democracy won the elections and formed a government which lasted five years. With PASOK in opposition, the perennial strategic problem re-emerged for SYN. The centre-left factions inside the party pushed for a greater collaboration with PASOK, while the leftist component insisted on bringing forward the unitary path with other RLPs. SYRIZA's future, its contents and scopes, became the subject of an intense debate inside SYN. In 2005, the rise of Alavanos at the leadership of the party and the formation of a new leftist majority marginalised the proposal of connection with PASOK. As the Greek political scientist Spourdalakis (2013) wrote, "Alavanos crafted a strategy to make SYRIZA the unifying agent for a broad 'new left' – a presence so strong that it would no longer feel squeezed between PASOK's conformist governmentalism and the KKE's dogmatism. The strategy was founded on the principle of 'empowering the powerless', while at the same time trying to gain support from the labour and social movements" (p. 102). As we saw in Chapter Six, SYN now adopted an anti-neoliberal agenda and directly targeted as its main political opponents both mainstream parties, PASOK and ND. In its IV Congress in 2004, SYN defined as its main objective the "joint action with all workers […], trades unions, local and regional institutions, autonomous initiatives, social struggles and movements [… through the formation of] a broad anti-neoliberal front against the two-party system" (SYN 2004, Political Resolution). As confirmed by subsequent documents, opening to social movements was intended to ensure not only the survival of the party, but also its development and growth (SYN Constitution 2005, art. 11).[84] This rationale was encapsulated in the calls by the leadership to "let the movements destabilise us", to "learn from the movements", to act "within and beside" them (Alavanos 2004; SYN 2004, Political Resolution). According to Spourdalakis, this strategy proved efficient in distancing the party from both the office-seeking orientation and the void 'revolutionarism' that had characterised respectively the reformist and orthodox communist left in Greece (ibid.; Spourdalakis 2014).

The enhancement of the SYRIZA coalition helped the leadership of SYN to keep the party firmly at the opposition. While the other RLPs of the coalition exploited SYN's resources in order to intervene in Greek politics and promote their own candidates, the involvement of SYN in SYRIZA triggered a process of "leftist contagion" (Eleftheriou 2009, 17) from the closer

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[83] The above-mentioned acronyms stand for: the Communist Organization of Greece ('Komounistiki Organosi Elladas'-KOE); the Innovative Communist Ecological Left ('Ananeotiki Kommounistiki Ikologiki Aristera'-AKOA); the Trotskyist Internationalist Workers' Left ('Diethnistikí Ergatikí Aristerá'-DEA).

[84] It might appear obvious that a party strategy is always designed for its growth. However, party studies have shown that, in some cases, often concerning small, identitarian parties, the leadership prefers keeping the core constituency, rather than embarking in creative attempts at innovation. For instance the Party of the Italian Communists (PdCI) has been defined a 'niche party' (Di Virgilio and Bordandini 2005).

environment, which ensured a wide external and internal support for the new course. As a result of these organizational developments, in 2006, the tactic of running for elections within the SYRIZA coalition was extended to municipal and prefectural elections. In some cases, this choice caused disputes between the central party and the local branches, because it broke a long-lasting habit of local agreements with PASOK. Moreover, the decision of the Italian PRC to ally with the centre-left and even participate in the national government had provided moderate party sectors aiming to do the same in Greece with new arguments. Differently than in the PRC, however, the 'conservative' thrusts could not influence SYN line, as the political culture of the party had already been transformed in-depth. In the Permanent Programmatic Congress of 2007, eleven members of the Central Political Committee who belonged to the three centre-left factions recommended the dissolution of SYRIZA, suggesting that "the confusion between movements and electoral coalitions is harmful for both of them" (Renewal Wing, 10-11 Feb. 2007). In his reply, the Secretary of SYN, Nikos Chountis, summarised the role that the party majority assigned to SYRIZA, clearly rejecting the centrist proposals: "[SYRIZA] is the answer for the problem of the left's fragmentation, it makes the left's resistance against neoliberalism and the two-party system more effective, it gives a political perspective to the movements struggles" (Chountis's speech, 17-18 March 2007).

Despite the internal tensions, the majority therefore continued to actively pursue independence from the centre-left until any option for a rapprochement became highly improbable. An ex-SYN cadre highlighted how this was also linked to the continuous involvement of the party in all the social movements that followed one after the other (the student movement, the December 2008 Youth Revolt, the anti-austerity wave):

"SYN and SYRIZA could not be something else than an opposition to PASOK and the policies it was implementing. It was a natural outcome and it was a normal effort to continue widening our constituency by communicating with the movements. The radicalization of the party had been built in the same years of the involvement in social movements, when PASOK was governing the country and the right wing party was just a fake opposition. SYN was actually the main opposition and it kept doing this job for years" (GR.Int.4).

In 2007, the SYRIZA coalition was even enlarged to include other leftist groupings that had contributed to the preparation of the fourth ESF held in Athens. In the national elections of the same year, the coalition won 5 per cent of the votes and 14 seats, considerably increasing its presence in parliament. This result further strengthened the majority, which could now affirm: "We managed to give a new dynamic to the unity left project and express the [will of the] movements, the workers, and the youth that resist neo-liberalism" (SYN 2008, V Congress).

Unexpectedly, an external factor also played an important role. The disappointing experience of the Italian PRC in government warned off even the most moderate currents in SYN from advocating a similar course. As the same ex-cadre recalled: "I think that going to the government was the end of Rifondazione. This example was very crucial for us. Since then it was very easy to reject the idea of cooperation with PASOK. There continued to be some alliances in the country's periphery and in minor cities, but it was not a main policy" (GR.Int.4).

7.2 The impact of the anti-austerity movements on the strategy of the RLPs

The strategies of the Italian and Greek RLPs during the economic crisis could not have been more divergent. In the anti-austerity years, neither the PRC nor SEL met the demands of a radical, independent left in Italy. Their line appeared quite unsteady and substantially based on the primary aim of 'surviving', which is typical of all organizations (Panebianco 1988). While social movements strongly stigmatized the PD for its policies, the Italian RLPs continued to ally with it: both at the local and national levels in the case of SEL, and only at the local level in that of the PRC. When the PD further transformed into a neoliberal party and SEL located to the opposition of its government, some experiments of unification of the small RLPs proved successful. However, neither the PRC nor the SEL pursued a path of permanent convergence, thus failing to construct a credible anti-austerity pole in Italy.

Due to the strategy of *learning* from the social movements and *identifying* with them followed since 2004 (see Katsambekis 2016), SYRIZA had managed to establish a strong presence within the protest arena; yet remained a minor force. It had coherently rejected the tactic of alliance with PASOK at all levels of governance and its electoral presence relied on the acquired credibility as an opposition force. As the Greek economic crisis deepened and the austerity measures hit both the lower and middle social strata, the preconditions for a unified anti-austerity movement began to take place, pushing SYRIZA to articulate a new strategy. From 2011 onwards, the party proposed the creation of a new political alliance of the left, able to represent the majority of the population. While this progressive subject was expected to pose a serious challenge to the long-established two-party system of Greece and put an end to austerity policies, PASOK was substantially expelled from the field of the left and targeted as a 'pro-Memorandum', neoliberal force. SYRIZA's proposal was elaborated further before the May 2012 election, when the idea of a 'government of the left' was launched and pursued until the SYRIZA-ANEL government was formed in January 2015.

7.2.1 The (unsuccessful) strategic choices of the PRC and SEL in austerity times

After the electoral catastrophe of 2008, the new dominant coalition of the PRC had immediately agreed on a line of greater autonomy from the PD, although this did not imply withdrawing from conjoint local governments (Ferrero 2008, 27 July). In this context, convergence with other subjects of the left was never realized; on the contrary, the Italian RLPs remained separated and litigious, and every attempt at convergence was seen by the constituency as a mere electoral tactic. The VII Congress of the PRC (Chianciano 2008), where the split of the 'innovators' linked to Bertinotti and Vendola took place, had become "A Freudian infantile trauma: on the one side, you had those saying 'we move for the construction of an open, leftist party and for overcoming Rifondazione, but at the same time we locate this new party in the centre-left and try to become the hegemonic force of the coalition, on the other side there was the 'identitarian' instinct […]. That Congress was ferocious and the fracture has never been remedied" (IT.Int.15).

In the European elections of 2009, the PRC, the PdCI and two other small groups (the United Consumers and Socialism 2000) formed the 'Anti-capitalist List', while the PRC's splitters ran under the electoral roll 'Sinistra e Libertà' (Left and Freedom). Neither of these experiments

passed the electoral threshold of 4 per cent, leaving the Italian radical left also outside the European parliament, but they became the prelude for the constitution of the (temporary) Federation of the Left ('Federazione della Sinistra'-FdS) on the one side, and SEL on the other. After the electoral defeat in the European elections, which was also caused by the presence of a new competitor ('Left and Freedom'), the PRC and the PdCI accelerated the process of their convergence. Together with Socialism 2000 and the left-wing faction of the CGIL (Association 23 March-Labour and Solidarity) on 18 July 2009 they founded the Federation of the Left, conceived as an independent leftist pole located at the left of the centre-left. This new subject allowed facing the elections at different levels with a larger formation that could unify the loyal voters of the weak and small Italian RLPs, but it did not entail any organizational or cultural innovation. The foundational Congress (Rome, 20-21 November 2010) established a few unitary efforts, which comprised: the commitment "not to participate with own symbols in elections at any level" (FdS Costitution 2010, art. 1); the enrolment in the FdS of the members of the federated parties, which provided them with a double membership card (art. 2); and the adoption, from 2012, of a unitary symbol (art. 26). In reality, the FdS was unable to adhere consistently to these initial resolutions and, contrary to SYRIZA in Greece, the grouping never represented a visible and innovative subject (IT.Int.16).

At the local level, the two parties of the FdS continued until recent times to separately form part of the centre-left coalition. Moreover, only in some cases did they unite under the common logo of the FdS, while in other cases they ran with their own party symbols. While this tactic was widely accepted by the PdCI constituency, as the party was born back in 1998 on the premise of sustaining the centre-left and keeping alive an organization inspired by the tradition of the PCI, it was more problematic for the PRC. Indeed, the members of Rifondazione expressed dissatisfaction with the incapability of their leadership to start a profound rethinking of the party's strategy:

"You understand the failure of Rifondazione if, to the duplicity of the years in the national government, you add the alliances done in the regions and in the larger municipalities with the PdS, the DS and even the PD. Here in Tuscany, we left the PD governing majority only in 2014, and we did so not because we decided it, but because they kicked us out! […] In the party there has always been those who criticised the choice for alliances, not as a matter of principle, but because this strategy could not provide any answer to the most important territorial struggles and requests" (IT.Int.16).

At the national level, the member parties of the FdS formulated a new proposal for the elections of 2013, continuing to disorient their members and voters: 'Rivoluzione Civile' (Civic Revolution) gained a poor 2.2 per cent and, again, could not elect any MP. In general, the presence of anti-austerity mobilizations in the country had no influence on the strategy of the PRC and SEL during the years of economic crisis, and the social demand for a firm opposition to unpopular neoliberal policies was rather catalysed by the Five Star Movement. Not only had the cases of double membership diminished and a moderate office-seeking political culture become prevalent in the RLPs, but also the social movements were seen as weak and detached:

"The left in Italy is reduced to an anomalous situation in the European panorama. We live in a society in which the right-wing is again majoritarian […]. In this context, there are localized

movements and the ability to network and connect different struggles is lacking. Rank-and-file trades unions are fragmented and after 2008 there hasn't been a strong student movement. If you want to be a 'movementist' party what you can do is to put the pieces together. And all the movements are changed because now there is an anti-party sentiment that wasn't present back in the G8 times" (IT.Int.7).

When SEL was founded in 2010 as an independent party with a 'unitary vocation', it would systematically run for (municipal, regional and national) elections within the centre-left coalition now led by the PD (see 'Manifest for SEL' 2010, 6). This plan recovered the old, never realized, aim of pushing the major leftist party (the PD) from within the coalition and condition its line, but it also pointed at eroding its electorate, especially at the local level (where the systemic constraints were fewer). While this strategy proved successful in the first years of life of the party, it later exhausted its potential. By participating in the primary elections to select the head of the coalition, SEL was able to re-impose its own President as the candidate of the centre-left for the Presidency of the Puglia Region (in 2010), and two prominent party figures as candidates for mayor in Milan and Cagliari (in 2011). They all won these important posts. Subsequently, the party ran within the centre-left coalition ('Italy's Common Good') for the only national election that it competed in (in 2013), gaining a modest 3.2 per cent. This result ensured 37 deputies and 7 senators due to effects of the electoral system, which provided a bonus for the most-voted coalition. In addition, the loyalty to the centre-left allowed the party to propose and have one of its MPs (Laura Boldrini) elected as President of the Chamber of Deputies. However, the party soon found itself amidst harsh internal fights in the centre-left coalition which led to the breaking of the previous deal and a further shift towards the centre. As a consequence, SEL did not participate in the new PD-led grand coalition government and went into opposition, opening a new phase of its political cycle.

Located at the opposition, the party could finally attempt to re-approach the other RLPs and restart a dialogue with important movement sectors open to coordinate their strategy with the parties. Particularly, the RLPs strengthened connections with the youth organization Act Construct Transform ('Agire Costruire Trasformare'-ACT), born out of the student mobilizations of previous years.

Faced with the further transformation of the PD into a neoliberal party under the guidance of the new Secretary Matteo Renzi (Bordignon 2014),[85] both the PRC and SEL opened, rather belatedly, to the possibility of experimenting unitary projects. The most important of these was The Other Europe with Tsipras ('L'Altra Europa con Tsipras'-AE), which besides the PRC and SEL included minor Trotskyite groups, and was joined by many personalities from social movements (IT.Int.6; IT.Int.20). Founded to contest the 2014 European elections, AE was characterised for its affinity with the issues brought forward by anti-austerity movements. First, it focused on the quest for an immediate end to austerity policies within the EU and on the change of the foundational treaties (AE 2014). Second, it clearly expressed solidarity with the other EU member states hit by the neoliberal management of the economic and financial crisis. Despite collecting a modest 4 per cent, the AE proved successful, as it allowed the Italian radical left, after five year of absence, to return to the European Parliament with three representatives.

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[85] Back then mayor of Florence, Matteo Renzi was elected Secretary of the Democratic Party the 8 December 2013.

Similar formulas were repeated at the local level in some regions and municipalities, under different names, again demonstrating that the unity of the left pays back in electoral terms. Nonetheless, while the AE was supposed to last over time, it never transformed into a solid organization and slowly vanished. This outcome was also due to the incapability of the small RLPs "To unite. They understand that this is necessary but they simply cannot afford it. They do not trust each other. Their perennial self-centred debate has prevented the Italian RLPs to keep their ears open towards society, because they looked at themselves, their traumas, their fights" (IT.Int.15).

In 2016, both the PRC and SEL campaigned against the PD-led government's proposal for a substantial change of the Constitution, which was finally rejected by a referendum vote. The new political course of fierce opposition to the PD led SEL to dissolve after six years of activity. In December 2016, it started its transformation into Italian Left ('Sinistra Italiana'-SI), a new party that would embrace those leaders and members that had abandoned the PD. Officially founded in Rimini on the 19th February 2017, SI is a fluid and unconsolidated party which has not yet abandoned the perspective of rebuilding the centre-left coalition.

7.2.2 How the anti-austerity movements influenced the strategic choices of SYN and SYRIZA

As we have seen, SYN arrived at the dawn of the December riots with a new organizational shape (the inclusion in the permanent SYRIZA coalition), a renewed radical left identity and a strategic positioning to the left of the social-democratic PASOK. This line was confirmed in the V Congress of the party (Athens, 7-10 February 2008) which expressed optimist expectations for the future of both SYN and the coalition (SYN 2008, Final Resolution). Based on these premises, in December 2008 the SYRIZA MPs had the strength to defend the young protesters against the moderate components in SYN, who had advocated for condemnation of violence. SYRIZA's stance in this occasion prevented any possible dialogue with PASOK and, according to many of my interviewees, was also the cause for a poor electoral result in the following 2009 national elections. SYRIZA secured 4.6 per cent, once again locating behind the KKE. The promise for an economic recovery had returned much of its traditional support to PASOK, which obtained 45 per cent and the right to form the government.[86] The poor result of SYRIZA was exploited by the centre-left component within SYN to question Tsipras' authority and his group strategy, claiming that the defence of the December uprising had caused the drop in SYRIZA's vote.

Against the moderate faction, the dominant coalition of SYN and the smaller RLPs of the SYRIZA coalition argued for a militant policy of support for the emergent strikes and social resistance to the government. Actively pursued by the SYRIZA's membership base (GR.Int.12; GR.Int.15), and later ratified by the coalition leadership, the early participation in anti-austerity protests strengthened the components inside SYRIZA who considered electoral politics only as a part of a wider strategy for change. Differently than the Italian RLPs, SYRIZA started to emerge as a credible competitor to the social-democratic party in government. The latter was targeted by

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[86] In its campaign, PASOK had promised a redistribution of wealth through a fairer taxation system and had incorporated neo-Keynesian elements in its economic programme (Katsambekis 2016).

social movements as a guardian of the neoliberal status quo for having signed the first Memorandum of Understanding and began to implement the austerity measures it imposed.

Precisely due to its chances for growth, since the 2010 SYN also became the landing place of politicians escaping from a PASOK in crisis, which boosted a discussion on the possibility to include them in the SYRIZA electoral lists. The proponents of this option argued that ex-PASOK figures would contribute to attract votes from the centre-left electorate now disappointed with their party, while their opponents, mostly coalesced around the former SYN President Alavanos, argued for a clear differentiation of the SYRIZA's electoral offer from that of PASOK. Alavanos' vision did not fully convince the whole SYN leadership, and this resulted in a crisis within the dominant coalition ahead of the 2010 regional elections. Once again the 'culture of the alliances' could not prevail due to pressure coming from the membership base and the radical left groupings within the SYRIZA coalition. The line of putting forward new and young faces was finally imposed, with one exception: an ex-PASOK cadre did become SYRIZA's candidate as President of the Attiki 'periphereia', which includes Athens and is the most populous in Greece. As a consequence of this decision, Alavanos stood as an independent and won 2.2 per cent. SYRIZA's official candidate received 6.3 per cent, and the recently formed (SYN split) DIMAR 3.8 per cent. Even when taking into account that the divisions had penalised the left, the ex-PASOK candidate who ran for SYRIZA did far worse than predicted. Conversely, the smaller ANTARSYA party succeeded to have councillors elected in several local administrations, further proving the need for a radical course. The failure of the tactic followed in the Attiki regional elections had a backlash inside SYN, and strengthened the components that advocated for a constant renewal of candidates and a radical detachment from PASOK in all elections at any territorial level.

Without overlooking the internal dynamics within SYN and SYRIZA, the main factor in keeping the party and the coalition leftward in 2011 was the high level of involvement of their members in social resistance against the austerity policies prescribed by the first Memorandum. The development of the 'movement of the squares' marked a new step in the strategy of SYN/SYRIZA, which now became "a viable 'challenger' party, a true contender of power" (Katsambekis 2016, 393). This movement expressed a majoritarian vocation that was unknown in previous mobilizations and this brought SYN to salute it as "a manifestation of popular indignation that can render society and the common people the leading actors in the upcoming developments" (SYN 2011). The openly declared aim of SYN/SYRIZA was now to turn this social majority into a political majority, building on a wide alliance with other progressive political actors that had been consistently opposing the policies of austerity (Tsipras 2011). In the beginning of the campaign for the May 2012 national election, this plan translated into a clear anti-austerity message and the promise of building an efficient opposition. Later, this proposal was enriched with another unexpected, fundamental element: "the call to take governmental power, based on the unity of the whole left" (Spourdalakis 2013, 111). The Document approved by the IV Conference of SYRIZA stressed "The need for the formation of a new popular majority, a new *coalition of power* with the Left in its core and the immediate objective of an unyielding struggle to oust the PASOK government, and to defeat all the forces that support neoliberal and reactionary policies" (SYRIZA 2011). For the first time, SYRIZA was not simply proposing to form an efficient opposition that could act as a disruptive force within parliament,

but also set forth its own radical alternative (Tsipras 2012). By this point onwards, it adopted as its core distinction the discrimination between the 'pro-Memorandum' and the 'anti-Memorandum' actors. This cleavage reinforced the left-right divide, identifying the anti-Memorandum camp with the left representing the popular masses, and the pro-Memorandum camp with the mainstream parties representing the elite. PASOK was substantially expelled from the field of the left and attacked for being an organic member of the pro-Memorandum establishment.

A proposal that only three years before would have sounded unrealistic, the 'government of the left' option was favourably welcomed by the Greek population as it was rooted in the climate of widespread disenchantment with the long-standing bipartisan political system. Years of social mobilization had contributed to politicise the public discourse about the economic and financial crisis, increasing the awareness of its causes and the political responsibilities lying behind it. The 'government of the left' implied the recognition that the old political system was finally losing all its legitimacy and the option fully responded to the demands of the social movements and their methods, including the ability to bridge different political groupings. Moreover, this goal was in line with both the expectations of the SYRIZA constituency and with the underlying shift towards the left of the Greek electoral body which occurred over the anti-austerity period.

The 'unity of the left' strategy also allowed SYRIZA to coherently absorb the ex-PASOK groups and individuals (including some MPs) who were leaving their party in growing numbers in controversy with its policies. Before the May 2012 elections, SYRIZA struck an agreement with them which was signified by the change of the coalition's name – appearing in the election as SYRIZA-United Popular Front. Unlike the Italian RLPs, which joined the centre-left pole as minor and subordinate partners, SYRIZA was now the main party, and simply enlarged to include ex-PASOK members who shared its anti-Memorandum stance. Some of them stood as candidates while others participated in the organization of the electoral campaign or in preparing the programme. A young cadre explained that this choice was successful because it did not compromise the radicalism of SYRIZA's political discourse and was therefore not opposed by party members:

SYRIZA was able to create the widest coalition possible, without altering its character too much at the same time. This is why I think that it was a good idea to ally with this splinter fringe of PASOK, also because they were not members of the government […]. Just take into consideration that among these former members of PASOK there was also Sofia Sakorafa who was thrown out of the [social-democratic] parliamentary group because she voted against the first Memorandum […]. There are times that the left has to think not only about the big ideals, but also about specific tactics" (GR.Int.15).

During the electoral campaign, SYRIZA became the main target of all the other parties' campaigns, including the KKE's, which even coined the electoral slogan 'Don't trust SYRIZA'. This stance only partially undermined the effectiveness of the call for the 'government of the left' as the closedness and unavailability of the KKE turned out to be more counterproductive for them than for SYRIZA. In May, the SYRIZA-led coalition obtained 16,8 per cent of the vote and 52 seats. The elections had produced the meltdown of the two-party system and none of the larger parties could secure a clear parliamentary majority (see Chapter Three). Another election

was called and held in June. This time, SYRIZA secured 27 per cent, less than three percentage points behind New Democracy (30 per cent), which was forced to form a coalition government with PASOK (12.5 per cent) and DIMAR (6.2 per cent).

Now the second most voted party in the country, SYRIZA had to face the attacks of the governing parties and the other competitors. A 'theory of the two extremes' developed which identified SYRIZA and the neo-fascist party Golden Dawn as the two opposite poles of the same political continuum (Spourdalakis 2014). This portrait risked delegitimising the main opposition party, which now had to adjust to its new role without compromising its strategy.

In the years 2013 and 2014, until the government appeared stable, SYRIZA managed to come to terms with a number of external and internal challenges without adopting conformist positions.[87] The internal confrontation between a cohesive majority and the new anti-Euro organized minority absorbed a part of the party's energies, but was counterbalanced by a still high presence in the social sphere. In the continental election of 2014, Tsipras was chosen as the European Left Party's candidate for President of the European Commission. In this occasion, Greece arose to a symbol of the austerity measures' consequences, the connections between SYRIZA and other RLPs in Europe were strengthened and its action internationalised. SYRIZA maintained a narrative that combined a passionate rejection of the 'establishment'[88] with a strong demand for a fairer redistribution of wealth, power, and rights, purporting to return "power to the people" (SYRIZA 2014). In the European elections of May 2014, it managed to surpass the then-incumbent ND (with 26.56 per cent to 22.72 per cent).

As the possibility of attaining power became more concrete, finding a governing partner became the main strategic problem of the party. In line with the previous course, any hypothesis of involving PASOK was rejected, and in reality, the discredited image of this party itself suggested not to actually consider it. The option that assembled the greater consensus within the party was that of a leftist government composed of SYRIZA and the KKE, and supported in the societal sphere by the extra-parliamentary left. This course was, however, highly improbable due to the firm unavailability of the KKE. A secondary strategy, basically guided by tactical considerations, was formulated. The leading group around the party's President Tsipras, which comprised old figures from SYN as well as younger members, stressed the need for a strong parliamentary majority, which the combined electoral reserves of SYRIZA and the KKE could not secure, as well as the need for a weak opposition both in parliament and in society. The concrete proposal was to divide the right by allying with a party of opposite political colour, but on the same stance on austerity policies, the European Union and the Memoranda. The idea of a governing agreement with the right-wing Independent Greeks ('Anexartitoi Ellines'-ANEL) had therefore already taken weight within SYRIZA when it won the 2015 national elections.

The grand coalition government led by the leader of ND, Antonis Samaras, lost its majority in December 2014 and called for new elections In the electoral campaign, Tsipras remained faithful to the 'government of the left' option, maintaining that, if elected, he would look for the support of the KKE and ANTARSYA. This discourse tactic allowed SYRIZA to remain coherent with the commitment assumed already in 2012 of proceeding to a deep renewal of Greek politics.

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[87] SYRIZA had been transformed into a unitary party in July 2013.

[88] The central slogan of the campaign was emblematic: "Our patience is over. On May 25 we vote, they leave" (SYRIZA 2014).

With its main opponent ND campaigning solely on the alleged dangers that a SYRIZA government would mean for Greece, conveying thus a negative message that built on fear, SYRIZA managed to articulate an optimistic campaign that promised economic relief from austerity and a greater role of the citizens in decision-making (Katsambekis 2016). After five years of social, economic and political crisis, "Greek voters chose 'hope' over 'fear',, (ibid., 399) in the election of January 2015, giving SYRIZA an overwhelming victory over ND (36.4 per cent to 27.8 per cent). After the elections, the KKE refused Tsipras's proposal for collaboration and the SYRIZA-ANEL government was sworn in on the 25 January 2015.

Since then SYRIZA is firmly in government, having won also the early elections of September 2015, which were held after the controversial signature of a third Memorandum of Understanding in July of the same year. The party suffered the split of the most intransigent current that advocated the need to exit the European Union and return to print the national currency again and, as noted, SYRIZA has lost a large part of its young members. After a moment of great vitality in coincidence with the 'Oxi' referendum campaign, the social movements and the trades unions went through a phase of inertia and have renounced to attempt influencing the line of the government. Forced by its international constraints, the SYRIZA-ANEL government has accomplished the difficult task to balance the state budgets. However, they have done so by applying recipes opposed to those previously promised, with disastrous consequences for the relationships between SYRIZA and the social movements.

7.3 Summary

This Chapter followed the evolution in the strategies of the Italian and Greek RLPs since the emergence of the GJM in the 2000s. While in both countries the RLPs seized the alter-globalist mobilization as the occasion to rethink their positioning within the political spectrum, great differences between the case studies can be highlighted. Due to a combination of factors, the Italian parties maintained an ambiguous relationship with the mainstream centre-left party (the Pds/DS/PD), while the Greek ones adopted a path of firm detachment from PASOK, a course which was never questioned and ultimately contributed to the electoral affirmation of SYRIZA.

Together with a plan for organizational and cultural transformation, the PRC formulated a strategic turn in 1999 that would entail a growing proximity to social movements and the parallel distancing from the PdS (Party of the Democrats of the Left). The new plan was followed with determination when the alter-globalist mobilization was at its apex, but only at the national level. At the municipal and regional levels, the PRC continued to run for elections within the centre-left coalition and to conclude deals of government with the centre-left parties. As social movements weakened, a prioritization of the presence in public institutions surfaced again, leading to a re-opened dialogue with the moderate leftists as early as 2005. One year later, the party was again an organic part of the centre-left coalition and even accepted governing responsibilities. After the ruinous experience in the national government, the PRC suffered a heavy electoral defeat and the split of the previous 'movementist' majority, transforming it into an increasingly marginal party. When the economic crisis hit the country, the Italian radical left

appeared divided and unable to formulate a project for the formation of a strong and independent anti-austerity pole in Italy. SEL, the party born from the 2009 split in the PRC, characterized itself as loyal to the centre-left. It only embraced a line of opposition to the politics of the Democratic Party in 2013, when it decided not to support the newly formed PD-led grand coalition government. From 2013 onwards the various attempts at unifying the divided left proved successful in the electoral field, yet still difficult to bring forward due to perennial conflicts between the RLPs.

Differently than the PRC and SEL, the Greek SYN/SYRIZA maintained full independence from PASOK and party cadres engaged in parallel activism in the social sphere. Thanks to this coherent line, SYRIZA managed to establish a strong presence within the protest arena and become a credible opposition force at all levels of governance. From the outset, it was a minor force that represented mostly the high educated and politicized groups, but as the Greek economic crisis deepened and the austerity measures hit the middle and lower social classes, the rise of a unified anti-austerity movement pushed SYRIZA to articulate a new strategy. From 2011 onwards, the party proposed the creation of a new political alliance of the left able to represent the majority of the population. As this progressive subject was expected to pose a serious challenge to the long-established two-party system of Greece and put an end to austerity policies, PASOK was substantially expelled from the field of the left and targeted as a 'pro-Memorandum', neoliberal force. SYRIZA's proposal was further elaborated before the May 2012 election, when the idea of a 'government of the left' was launched. The idea was pursued until the SYRIZA-ANEL government was formed in January 2015. Notwithstanding, a gap between the movements' aspirations and the line of the SYRIZA-led government opened immediately after the signature of the third Memorandum of Understanding later that same year.

8. Conclusions

In this thesis I focus on the 'strategic interactions' between the social movements of the third cycle (the GJM and the anti-austerity protests) and the 'renewed' RLPs of Italy (the PRC and SEL) and Greece (SYN and SYRIZA). Due to the disconnect between party studies and social movement research, no specific theory has been developed to study this phenomenon. Therefore, I provided my own conceptualization of 'strategic interactions' between political parties and social movements, which I define as "the transformative actions that parties undertake to strengthen their connection with the social movements and the reactions of social movements to the party transformations" (see Chapter Two). This (deliberately broad) definition points at analysing two faces of the same process: a) the adaptive changes within existing political parties to the emergence of social movements; and b) the retroaction of party transformations on the social movements' strategies and perception of the RLPs. This double objective has required the adoption of two theories: the dynamic approach to 'party change', and the strategic approach to collective action. So far, my empirical investigation has concentrated on the first aspect – the party transformations – by examining in-depth the evolution of the Italian and Greek RLPs under the impulse of the alter-globalist and anti-austerity movements. Here, the aim will be to discuss the main findings concerning these movement-oriented transformations, but also to expand the analysis to the second aspect, that is, the movement reactions to those changes. Once the problem is considered from both sides, the type of interactions that occurred between the selected RLPs and social movements, whether of cooperation, tension or indifference, can be established.

This Chapter is organized as follows: in the first Section (8.1) I summarise the organizational, cultural and strategic transformations that the four RLPs implemented after the mobilization of the GJM and the anti-austerity movements. Following the multilevel comparison proposed in the Methodological Chapter, I stress the differences between the cases per country and over time. In the following Section (8.2) I return to the three explanatory propositions developed in Chapter One – the role of the parties' political culture, the processes of double membership and the attitude of the different social movements towards representative institutions – and discuss their validity. I then (Section 8.3) consider the reactions of social movements to the RLPs' transformations (or missed transformations) and draw some conclusions on the relationship between the RLPs and the social movements in Italy and Greece, clarifying if (and when) it was of cooperation, tension or indifference. Finally (Section 8.4), I reflect on the implications that the type of connections between political parties and participatory actors such as social movements have on the overall functioning of representative democracy.

8.1 Party transformations across the cases observed

Following the method suggested by the 'dynamic approach' for the study of party change, in each of the empirical chapters (Five, Six and Seven) I concentrated on a specific party dimension:

organization (party structure and internal methods), political culture (values and political issues), and strategies (alliances within the political system). As the literature had rarely looked at 'social movements' as an independent variable of party transformation, I wanted to verify whether their presence represented a stimulus for RLPs to set in motion a process of change. More specifically, I highlighted the effect that their horizontal and participatory organization, claims and values, and non-conventional forms of action had on the three above-mentioned party dimensions. The analysis was diachronic (Bartolini 1993; della Porta 2008): starting from the rise of the GJM at the end of 1990s, I traced the RLPs' evolution trying to isolate the aspects that were influenced over time by subsequent social movements.

My thesis shows that the 'renewed' RLPs are complex and dynamic actors which tend to modify themselves in order to respond to external challenges. At the beginning of the cycle, both the PRC and SYN were facing an electoral and organizational crisis. Being minor actors forced to act in a two-party (in Greece) or bipolar (in Italy) environment, during their first decade of life (the 1990s), they had ensured their survival through the closeness to major social-democratic parties. For both of them, movement mobilization was the opportunity to emerge from the sidelines and achieve greater recognition. The decision to observe the impact of social movements on some existing political parties therefore produced useful and interesting results in academic terms. The analysis revealed the importance that social movements had for the 'renewed' RLPs, as they constituted both a stimulus and an opportunity. Nonetheless, this opportunity did not automatically translate into movement-oriented party transformations, and I believe that the interest of this work lies precisely in identifying a range of differences among the cases observed (Sections 8.1.1-2-3) and in the capacity to explain these variations (Section 8.2).

8.1.1 1999-2006: Organizational, cultural and strategic changes

Organizational changes. Among the three party dimensions considered, the organization proved the most difficult to modify – so the core of the party structure remained substantially unchanged in all the cases. However, an effort to transform the party form was undertaken both by SYN and the PRC, though with more satisfactory and longer-lasting results in the Greek radical left. For both the PRC and SYN, the GJM represented a stimulus to rethinking the traditional and vertical party model they had inherited from their communist past. The changes they implemented in the years 1999-2006 were inspired by the two movement principles of 'openness' and 'networking'. However, only in Greece did the need to involve younger cohorts and the mobilized strata of society lead to a genuine network structure with the creation of the SYRIZA coalition in 2004.

In line with previous research on RLPs, it emerged that they indeed remained committed to their social roots (Tsakatika and Lisi 2013) and also made efforts to recruit new members and sympathisers. Following their involvement in the GJM, both SYN and the PRC made their boundaries more fluid, by opening up their local branches, by encouraging the youth organizations to be involved in the protests and by pursuing an internationalist strategy through the foundation of the Party of the European Left. The interest of this party family in promoting grassroots' participation (ibid.) was also confirmed, as both SYN and the PRC embraced a strategy of immersion in social movements, which had the effect of familiarizing party members with non-conventional forms of action, such as the counter-forums and occupations.

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As regards internal dynamics, instead, my findings partially contradict the suggestion made by Tsakatika and Lisi (2013) that the RLPs would be more interested in promoting intraparty democracy than other party families. As has also been noted for the Spanish 'Podemos' (Chironi and Fittipaldi 2017), all parties considered here proved reluctant to introduce mechanisms for the redistribution of power within their organization and maintained substantially unchanged the pyramidal structure typical of a 20th-century party with a tendency to concentrate power at the top. The Italian RLPs, in particular, suffered an inclination towards a clear leadership and continual visceral struggles among factions with different ideological beliefs. Greek RLPs – though not particularly innovative – appear as more democratic, a characteristic that derives from both the adoption of the SYRIZA coalition model, where decisions were assumed through the consensus method, and a greater ability of the grassroots to influence the party line.

In the case of the RLPs a profound assessment of the leadership was missing in the literature. I was able to show that in both the PRC and SYN the external pressure exercised by the GJM facilitated the formation of movement-oriented dominant coalitions which guided the parties towards an innovative radical leftist direction. In the PRC, the new majority was created in 1999, after the greater part of the orthodox communist current had left the party, and the 'left turn' officially stated in 2002. Similarly, in SYN an innovative dominant coalition assumed guidance of the party at the beginning of the 2000s, isolating the 'centre-left' current which from now on had a limited influence on internal affairs. In both cases, the connections with social mobilizations allowed for the regeneration of the meso-level, with the emergence of young cadres. Important transformations regarded the 'party in public office' (Katz and Mair 1994), with the inclusion in the RLPs' electoral lists of younger candidates and exponents of civil society. For the 2004 European elections and the 2006 national elections the PRC incorporated in its lists a great number of movement representatives, some of whom became MPs. SYN/SYRIZA also adopted a new electoral tactic from the mid-2000s, putting forward younger candidates (including the 32-year-old Tsipras) in order to respond to the demand for a regeneration of politics that was coming from below.

Cultural changes. The empirical analysis confirms the scholarly perception of a general permeability of the leftist parties to the issues raised by social movements (Gilberg 1979; Kitschelt 1989; Piccio 2011; March 2011). In both Italy and Greece, involvement in social movements transformed the RLPs' political cultures, leading to the adoption of issues, expressions and values raised by mobilized actors. Nevertheless, differences are also found in this field. In the case of the PRC, the greatest changes occurred in the GJM season, when the party made a top-driven effort to adjust its existing identity to alter-globalist claims. In the case of SYN, participation in the GJM favoured building a radical leftist identity 'from below', a development which resulted in a more stable movement-oriented political culture than in the case of the PRC. Both the PRC and SYN pursued a thematic fusion with the GJM, which resulted in shared transformations in their semantics and fundamental values. First, both parties emphasised the concept of freedom and took their distance from the experience of Really Existing Socialism. Second, they shifted their discourse from the ultimate goal of overcoming capitalism to the critique of neoliberal globalization, the economic, labour and financial policies related to it and its international institutions (such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the G8

and the European Union itself). This critique also touched on the mainstream political parties, including social-democratic parties, for their role in protecting the interests of global capitalism. Third, both RLPs assigned greater importance to civil rights. Fourth, they both embraced the understanding of western wars in the Middle East as deriving from the need for insatiable neoliberal capitalism to expand and consequently firmly condemned them.

Environmentalism, instead, penetrated especially SYN, which also changed its name accordingly. [89] Another significant difference regards the review and reconsideration of communist foundations, which only interested the Italian PRC. Indeed, while SYN was already based on the critical Marxism of Nikos Poulantzas and Louis Althusser, the leadership of the PRC (and also large sectors of the membership) considered that their party was still suffering from an obsolete, orthodox vision typical of the Italian PCI. The rise of the GJM was therefore exploited to promote a process of cultural renewal aimed at the theoretical 'refoundation' of communism. This implied the dismissal of the residual traces of Stalinism, as well as of key concepts of the Marxist traditions, such as those of class, imperialism and violent revolution. While the denunciation of Stalinism was widely accepted, these theoretical revisions proved divisive. A long internal struggle about ideology and practices ensued, a struggle that intensified as the party was torn between rapprochement with the centre-left coalition in 2005 and strengthening its movement-oriented profile. At the end of the cycle, important cultural transformations had been achieved, but some internal factions and a large part of the constituency maintained faith in orthodox communism (or Trotskyism) and its vocabulary.

In SYN, the process of cultural renewal was resisted by the internal 'centrist' factions, which could not reverse the new trend and eventually decided to leave the party. The programmatic innovation and shift in values was therefore more long-lasting in this case than in Italy, where the 'movementist' political culture suffered a setback by the mid-2000s.

Strategic changes. Literature on RLPs had already noted how, since the fall of the Berlin Wall, these parties were met with a variety of new possibilities, such as the formation of electoral coalitions with other leftist parties (March 2011), the support for leftist governments in parliament and their participation in cabinets (Olsen et al. 2010; Bale and Dunphy 2011; Katsourides 2016; Chiocchietti 2017). The analysis of the Italian and Greek RLPs' trajectories confirms this strategic flexibility and moving beyond the stress on systemic constraints (March and Rommerskirchen 2015), highlights the role of social mobilizations in influencing the line of the RLPs. The GJM represented a tremendous stimulus for both SYN and the PRC to shift the focus of their activity from public institutions to the squares. Moreover, it strongly influenced their connections with the larger and more powerful social-democratic parties, pushing them to become independent and construct a real 'alternative left'. As we saw for the other two dimensions, it is in the Greek case that the transformation was more visible and durable, while the Italian RLPs followed a less coherent development.

During the 1990s, both the PRC and SYN had been "accommodating anti-system parties" (Di Virgilio 2006) because of their tendency to ally with mainstream social democracy. The PRC was organically part of the enlarged centre-left coalition, while SYN used to conclude local alliances

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[89] In 2003, the name of the party was changed from 'Coalition of the Left and Progress' to 'Coalition of the Left, the Movements and Ecology'.

with PASOK. When the GJM mobilized, both parties turned to the social sphere and took their distance from the previous moderate partners. However, only in was SYN the new course never reversed. Notwithstanding the opposition of the centrist faction, collaboration with PASOK was interrupted both at the local and national levels.[90]

In the case of the PRC, instead, the party line constantly oscillated between independence and the search for electoral and governing agreements. At the national level, the party abandoned the centre-left coalition when the alter-globalist movement was at its peak, but re-joined it already in 2006. At the local level, it continued to run for elections within the centre-left coalition and, where possible, to enter the centre-left administrations. After the ruinous experience in the national government, the party resorted to electoral alliances with other small RLPs but was unable to promote the reunification of the disbanded Italian radical left.

8.1.2 2006-2013: Organizational, cultural and strategic changes

Organizational changes. In Italy, the relationships between the RLPs and anti-austerity movements was not organic and had only a minor effect on the organizational model of both the PRC and SEL. The PRC started to review the strategy of 'immersion' in the social movements already in 2005 and from then on it retracted most of the movement-oriented changes. Born in 2010 from a splinter fringe of the PRC, SEL was never particularly experimental. Conversely, the austerity movement had considerable influence over the Greek RLPs.

In the biennium 2005-2006, when the social mobilizations started to diminish, the PRC leadership decided to embrace an 'institutional turn', reassigning prominence to having a presence in public institutions. The party slowly returned to a more traditional and self-sufficient organizational model that was not particularly suitable for cooperation with rank-and-file groups. Although maintaining a closer relationship with the social movements than the other Italian parties, the PRC members mostly returned to their normal party activities. In this context, the party never assumed a decisive role in the anti-austerity movements, which in turn did not have any substantial influence on its structure.

Founded after two years of anti-austerity activities, SEL did not adopt a creative structure able to respond to movements' demand for participation. After an initial experimental phase, it finally arrived at a 'party of cadres' which related with the external environment through political communication and links with other groups' top leadership. While the leadership and the meso-management retained a great share of decisional power, the participatory format that some members had introduced in the early stages of the party's life was not encouraged and was finally abandoned.

SYN, on the other hand, remained an open party with a light structure, that encouraged its activists to become involved in every sort of movement activity. From 2004, it transformed into the pivotal element of the SYRIZA coalition, which was able to maintain its connections with young people and local social movements by exploiting its network format. Also due to its agile model, SYN/SYRIZA continued to contribute to all social movements (particularly the student movement in 2006 and the youth revolt in 2008) and played a prominent role in the anti-

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[90] I refer here to major municipalities and regions (peripherias).

austerity protests from 2011 onwards. In the anti-austerity period, two distinctive features were the vitality of the grassroots level and the foundation of 'Solidarity for All' in 2012, an umbrella organization which connected the independent social solidarity initiatives diffused throughout the country.

The 'institutional turn' of the PRC was accompanied by a rotation at the top: when Fausto Bertinotti was elected as Chairman of the Chamber, the leadership was taken over for two years by a moderate figure who would guarantee internal equilibrium rather than reinforcing the movement-oriented changes achieved in the previous epoch. A real turnover in the dominant coalition occurred two years later when, after the ruinous experience in the national government, a deal was concluded between the 'Social Left', the orthodox communist faction and other minor groups. This new dominant coalition acted to restore the traditional identity of the PRC.

The leadership of SEL had a typical party background, as it was composed of the cadres formed in the PRC during the season of the GJM, and the political biography of the President (Nichi Vendola) was even rooted in the old PCI. Notwithstanding his internal provenance, the main distinctive elements of Vendola were his charismatic appeal and communication skills which confirm the openness of RLPs towards media-savvy personalities already discussed (March 2008). From 2008 onwards, the Italian RLPs reverted to the 'party-apparatus' model of recruitment typical of communist parties (Cotta 1979), rather than incorporating external activists within their political personnel. This trend was reinforced as time went on because – as their electoral strength diminished – they increasingly sought to find positions for their own members wherever places might be available. The practice of external candidatures declined in the PRC in favour of building alliances with other small RLPs, while SEL tried to keep good relations with environmentalist intellectuals and experts, in a few cases also involving them in its lists.

In SYN, the renewal at the top of the party which had begun in the mid-2000s continued more smoothly over the following years, also involving SYRIZA. During the years of economic crisis, the coalition actively included individuals from the anti-austerity movements in its leadership. For the double 2012 elections, it activated horizontal procedures for the formation of the electoral lists that resulted in a clearly movement-oriented parliamentary delegation. After the sudden electoral growth, activists in the anti-austerity movement became part of the coalition's political personnel, and the Thematic Departments were opened to external consultants, who were often movement figures.

Cultural changes. While in Italy proximity with movements progressively declined when the PRC joined the centre-left coalition and, later, the government, in Greece SYN/SYRIZA's support for social movements continued throughout the decade. In the wake of this retreat, the cultural influence of the anti-austerity protests was therefore far less marked in the Italian RLPs than in Greece. Here, SYRIZA could credibly endorse the claims of the powerful Greek anti-austerity movement and embrace an anti-memorandum agenda.

The institutional turn of the PRC in 2005-2006 showed that the 'movementist' culture contrasted with a widespread 'Togliattian' mentality[91] that assigned primacy to institutional activity. While the party re-joined the centre-left with the claim of representing the social movements within institutions, it proved incapable of successfully performing this function. The contradiction

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[91] See Chapter Six, note 8.

became even more visible when the PRC participated in the national government (2006-2008) and actually became associated with neoliberal policies. Left out of parliament due to the heavy electoral defeat suffered in the 2008 national elections, from this point onwards an 'identitarian' involution led the party to concentrate on protecting its communist identity. While its discourse started to focus on the 'reconstruction of the left in Italy', references to social movements and their claims progressively decreased. Trapped in its Marxist vocabulary, the PRC failed to convincingly address anti-austerity issues and recover from its crisis.

SEL, a party of more recent formation, was no more efficient than the PRC in interpreting anti-austerity demands. Originally aimed at creating an environmentalist and libertarian leftist organization, the party lacked both the capacity to realise its programme and to update it according to the new themes that emerged during the years of economic crisis.

Unlike Italy, cultural cross-fertilisation between anti-austerity movements and SYRIZA was very strong in Greece. At the beginning of the economic and political crisis, SYRIZA became a credible interlocutor thanks to the coherent 'pro-movements' stance maintained throughout the decade (including the expression of sympathy for the youth rebellion in December 2008). In the following years, the coalition embraced opposition to the austerity measures, supported labour claims and all general strikes and social mobilizations, and adopted an anti-bailout rhetoric. The proposal for neo-Keynesian economic measures was coupled with demands for enhancement of social and human rights as well as the strengthening of democracy, which were all movement preoccupations. All of this transformed the party into the alternative pole to the harsh neoliberal politics of PASOK and New Democracy. In comparison to its Italian 'relatives', SYRIZA managed to channel the claims of the social movements in parliament. Particularly after its electoral exploit in 2012, it transformed into a representative vehicle for the victims of the crisis who had become radicalized by the intense economic shock Greece suffered. This ability to act as a channel was maintained also in the early stage of the governing experience in 2015, but was compromised by SYRIZA's policy turn after the signing of a third bailout in July 2015 (see below).

Strategy. The strategies of the Italian and Greek RLPs during the economic crisis were completely divergent. Not only were the Italian parties weak and divided, but they also lacked stable connections with anti-austerity movements. Unable to meet the demand for the creation of a radical, independent left in Italy, they continued to ally with the major social-democratic party, the PD. After the electoral catastrophe of 2008, the PRC agreed a line of greater autonomy from the PD, which however did not imply withdrawing from joint local governments. Later, the party opted to oppose centre-left administrations everywhere, but could not formulate a clear electoral strategy. Its line appeared uncertain and based on 'survival' consideration. The main trend was to ally with other small RLPs, but these alliances remained temporary and linked only to the electoral moment.

While social movements strongly stigmatized the PD for its policies, SEL ran for election within the centre-left coalition both at the local and national levels. Aimed at pushing the PD towards the left, this strategy proved successful in the early years of the party's life when SEL obtained important victories in the Puglia Region and in major municipalities. Subsequently, belonging to the centre-left exhausted its potential. In the 2013 national elections (the only elections it

contested) the party obtained modest support, though a good number of MPs were elected due to the bonus for the first coalition. However, it found itself amidst harsh fights internal to the coalition which led it to break the previous deal and shift further towards centre. As a consequence, SEL did not support the PD-led government and went into opposition, opening a new phase of its life (see below).

Unlike the PRC and SEL, the Greek SYN/SYRIZA never questioned the course of full independence from PASOK and parallel activism in the social sphere. Thanks to this coherent line, SYRIZA had managed to establish a strong presence within the protest arena and became a credible opposition force at all levels of governance. Yet it remained a minor force mostly representing the highly educated and politicized groups. As the Greek economic crisis deepened and the austerity measures hit the middle and lower social classes, the rise of a unified anti-austerity movement pushed SYRIZA to articulate a new strategy. From 2011 onwards, the party proposed the creation of a new political alliance of the left able to represent the majority of the population. While this progressive approach was expected to pose a serious challenge to the long-established two-party system of Greece and put an end to austerity policies, PASOK was substantially expelled from the field of the left and targeted as a 'pro-Memorandum', neoliberal force. SYRIZA's proposal was further elaborated before the May 2012 election, when the idea of a 'government of the left' was launched and pursued until the SYRIZA-ANEL government was formed in January 2015.

8.1.3 From 2013: Organizational, cultural and strategic changes

The timeline presented in the Methodological Chapter proposed that the years from 2013 onwards should be considered as a separate period, when the SYRIZA coalition transformed into a unitary party and its action began to be strongly oriented towards gaining government. In the same period, the PRC had become increasingly marginal, and SEL was perceived as a moderate party mainly focused on parliamentary activities. It appeared that some significant party transformations indeed occurred in this recent past.

In the Greek radical left, the unification implied moving away from the networked and participatory formats proposed by social movements. The new-born SYRIZA party did not rethink the party model and, on the contrary, it embodied a vertical and top-down structure where power was concentrated in the hands of the President and a close group. Verticality was counterbalanced by the activism of the membership base and the formation of the 'Solidarity for All' organization. As far as the political culture is concerned, SYRIZA continued to be the legitimate representative of the anti-austerity movements and local struggles. The strategy varied accordingly, with the proposal for a 'government of the left' which would reverse the policies mandated by the Memorandum. While the 'left' coherently excluded PASOK, the sole possible governing partner was (in the official discourse) the KKE. The absolute unavailability of the communists led to a deal to form the government with the minor, nationalist party ANEL, an alliance which did not affect the implementation of SYRIZA's programme. In the very first phase of power, SYRIZA proved far more efficient than the PRC in interpreting the popular will, and more specifically the social movements' claims.

However, the breaking point in the relationships between the social movements and the governing party already occurred in July 2015, when the SYRIZA-led government signed the third Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) imposed by international creditors. The acceptance of this third deal openly contradicted the popular will expressed in the referendum of June 2015 (when Greek citizens had rejected the bail-out terms), and also led SYRIZA to take on the management of austerity policies and privatizations. Consequences on the party organization were immediate: a mass-exodus of members, especially from the youth branch, and the split of 'Popular Unity' transformed SYRIZA into a party of cadres, whose action is confined to public institutions.

In Italy, the 'movementist' spirit of the origins re-emerged belatedly. With the PD further transforming into a neoliberal party under the leadership of the Secretary Matteo Renzi, SEL abandoned the centre-left coalition and moved to the opposition in parliament. For the European elections of 2014, the RLPs finally unified in the list 'The Other Europe with Tsipras', which saw candidates of Rifondazione and SEL next to many figures from the most active social mobilizations. The attempt proved successful and was repeated (with different names) in some municipal elections and at the regional level in Tuscany. However, neither the PRC nor SEL pursued a path of permanent convergence. thereby failing to construct a credible anti-austerity pole in Italy.

8.2 Explanatory propositions revised

The description of the changes that occurred in the four political parties considered in this thesis highlighted that, though belonging to same family (the 'renewed' radical left) and comparable countries, they did not implement the same changes, nor was their transformation equal in its strength and duration. Variation can be observed even over the same case through time (emblematic of this is the PRC). This reinforces the conviction that the process of party adaptation is never automatic (Panebianco 1988; Harmel and Janda 1994) and that it may occur in different degrees (Wolinetz 1996). Certainly, it is more probable when an organizational and electoral crisis is on-going (Mair 1983; Katz 1986; Panebianco 1988), as indeed both the Italian and the Greek parties decided to seize the opportunity represented by social mobilizations precisely when their performances were worsening. If this factor illuminates the context within which party changes are more likely to begin, it tells us little of the reasons for the different outcomes of the process. In this Section, I will therefore provide an explanation for the above-mentioned differences in the four cases under review by discussing the three theoretical hypothesis presented in Chapter One. In brief, I expected party changes to be deeper and more long-lasting when:
- The party's prevailing political culture is heterodox and both orthodox communist and moderate mentalities and factions are weaker;
- The cases of double membership in both the party and the movements are more frequent;
- The movement is instrumental and tends to develop a dialogical attitude towards political institutions, such as parties.

This study confirms indubitably that the process of party adaptation to external stimuli is always the outcome of 'filtering mechanisms' which in their turn are conditioned by the political culture prevailing within the party (Raniolo 2006; Piccio 2011). It also confirms that this political culture emerges from (and becomes visible in) internal fights between organized party factions (Crozier and Friedberg 1977; Panebianco 1988). From this point of view, parties act as every other 'political system' (Easton 1965): in order to maintain their 'internal coherence', they regulate the inflow of external demands on the basis of cultural norms which establish what is permissible and what is not. Applied to the relationships between social movements and political parties, this means that the process of party change is more likely when the movements express demands that do not entirely contradict the party's tradition and culture.

In the early formulation of the first explanatory proposition I stated that: *The stronger the internal orthodox or moderate currents, the less the organizational, cultural and strategic innovation of the party*. The basic idea for this formulation was that since this analysis examines RLPs and left-wing social movements a certain degree of affinity exists and the explanation for the variation in the depth and breadth of the change should be found in the residue of the old orthodox communism. Previous research had indeed already proved that this political culture was sometimes refractory to some of the issues raised by new social movements (Piccio 2011; Tsakatika and Lisi 2013; Charalambous and Lamprianou 2016) and leaned towards a strategy of hegemony and co-optation (Tarrow 1990; della Porta 1995, 1996; Tarrow 1998). Considering that parties are usually divided into internal factions (Panebianco 1988; Katz 2002), I hypothesized that this residue might lie in the presence orthodox communist internal currents which could act as a brake on the process of organizational, cultural and strategic 'contamination' of the party. I added that also social-democratic, pragmatic and office-seeking cultures could have a similar effect.

When controlling for this hypothesis, it emerged that both the orthodox communist and moderate minorities were indeed the more reluctant to 'movement-oriented' party transformation. Therefore, I can consider that the early formulation of the first proposition holds for the population of cases observed. However, in Chapter Five, I proposed an enriched version of it, because through the empirical analysis I understood that, besides the resistance of orthodox and moderate internal currents, the overall political culture the party expresses through the choices of its leadership is a more powerful factor. In the updated formulation, the first proposition is as follows: *Party changes are expected to be deeper and more long-lasting when the party's prevailing political culture is 'heterodox', because it resulted from a previous process of rethinking the orthodox communist identity.[92] Vice versa, I foresee only attempted and superficial transformations in those RLPs that kept closer links with orthodox communism or have strong internal orthodox communist factions, and in those RLPs that, in reinventing their identity, developed a moderate profile.[93]*

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[92] I conceive the orthodox communist identity as based on a) absolute supremacy of the centralist party over any other organizational form; b) a propensity to see state institutions as the primary field of political action; c) the prevalence of labour-related issues over all other topics (such as environmental protection and gender equality).
[93] I understand their moderatism as consisting of a pragmatic and office-seeking orientation which contrasts with the radicalism of most social movements.

The hypothesis that was drawn from this second formulation of the proposition was that both SYN and SYRIZA should have enacted deeper changes under the influence of social movements than the PRC and SEL. When the GJM mobilized, although both were considered 'heterodox' RLPs (see Kalyvas and Marantzidis 2002; Chironi 2011) the PRC and SYN also showed important differences: the PRC self-defined as 'communist' and had kept the sickle and hammer as its logo, while SYN had abandoned traditional symbols since its foundation. Moreover, a rooted orthodox communist current within the PRC remained (Baccetti 2003; Bertolino 2004; Chironi 2011), while the moderate component in SYN was an isolated minority (Eleftheriou 2009). Cultural differences between the Italian and the Greek RLPs became evident later too, when the anti-austerity movement appeared: while SYRIZA was a variegated coalition of small RLPs of Eurocommunist, green and Trotskyite origins (Spourdalakis 2013), the PRC was an extra-parliamentary formation committed to stress its communist identity and the SEL a moderate party component of the centre-left coalition (Chironi 2011; Bordandini 2013). Does this second formulation contribute to explain the variation in the four cases considered?

In the case of the PRC, the presence of a strong internal current with an orthodox Marxist vision, as well as the weight of other organized minorities, mostly of Trotskyite inspiration, played an important role in inhibiting the process of party transformation. More in general, the traditional 'Togliattian' culture typical of Italian communism re-emerged on several occasions, also on behalf of what appeared to be a 'movementist' leadership. Conversely, the moment of greatest change was accompanied by the penetration, especially in the youth organization, of a political culture that was defined 'heretical' and pushed the leadership towards the 'movementist' direction.

The proposal for a deep self-reform was however firmly opposed by the orthodox communist wing of 'l'Ernesto' (later called Being Communists), which controlled important top positions and local federations. While not directly contrasting the involvement in social-movements, the leaders of 'l'Ernesto' advocated for the validity of the traditional party model and the need to preserve the PRC's autonomy and communist identity. Consistently, they vehemently criticized the cultural innovations introduced by the leadership in the wake of the thesis advanced by large sectors of the GJM, supporting a traditional lexicon and the (Italian) Marxist conceptual toolkit. In addition, one of the two Trotskyite minorities refused the idea of a fluid, alter-globalist organization, and reaffirmed the vanguardist conception of the communist party exercising a leading role over social movements. Moreover, both party sectors acted to block the strengthening of the Party of the European Left, which in the end never became a true continental umbrella able to overcome the classic party form. More in general, in large sectors of the membership base a very classic political culture prevailed. While movement-oriented transformation was more visible in large cities, in the periphery the activity continued to focus mostly on institutional channels and traditional forms of participation. Finally, the office-seeking attitude of the national leadership was also recalled as important in slowing down the process of change. The 'institutional turn' decided in 2005 was seen by 'movementist' members as the re-emergence of the vision that – after all – considered public institutions as the main place of party

activity, also at the cost of renouncing innovations that still needed time to reach maturity. It is no surprise that this change was instead strongly supported by the orthodox communist faction.

The party's political culture played an important role also in the subsequent phase, when the anti-austerity movements emerged. After the participation in national government (2006-2008) and the electoral defeat suffered in 2008, a new dominant coalition took control of the party with the aim of ensuring the survival of the PRC as a communist party. This 'identitarian involution' appeared to be one of the reasons that prevented the party from innovating its organizational model, discourse and even strategies. The plan of enhancing experiences of mutualism and self-organization failed because the party disinvested from it to concentrate on institutional matters and elections. Cultural elaboration was lacking and a credible project for the constitution of an austerity pole in Italy was never formulated.

In the case of SEL, a moderate political culture finally prevailed. The party was founded in 2010 by the former 'movementist' majority of the PRC on the premise of creating an environmentalist and libertarian leftist organization, open to external society. From the strategic point of view, though, the project was based on the idea of becoming hegemonic within the centre-left. This strategic aim highlighted an office-seeking oriented vision that was also due to the particular composition of the membership, mostly formed of political cadres and party personnel from the PRC. This vision primarily influenced the party trajectory, as it prevented SEL from abandoning the centre-left even when the European left was re-organizing in an independent anti-austerity pole. In addition, it also affected the adopted model, leading to the dismissal of 'Nichi's Factories', spaces of activism close to SEL but free from any control. Finally, it also conditioned the cultural renewal of the party, particularly in coincidence with the rise of the anti-austerity movements. Due to the weight of the administrative tradition of the Italian left (against money waste and clientelism), SEL proved resistant to embrace the anti-austerity agenda.

In the case of SYN, the presence of 'centre-leftist' factions could not inhibit the party change. After they had led the party for a decade, they were fully defeated by the radical left wing at the beginning of the 2000s. As a consequence, one of the centrist groups left the party while the others stayed, but with reduced weight. Actually, the GJM represented a fundamental push from the outside to the turnout in SYN leadership (see Section 8.2.2). In this new context, the debate about the party form, always heated in the PRC, was absent in SYN until the SYRIZA coalition was formed. At this point, the centrist minority wanted to impede the plan to stabilize the coalition and asked for its dissolution, but could not succeed due to its marginality. Later, it attempted to stop the party supporting the Youth Revolt and other social movements when, as frequently happened in Greece, they used violent tactics. Again isolated, they caused a split in 2010 and formed DIMAR. As in the PRC, the youth section of SYN embodied a heterodox political culture and provided zealous support to the shift to the left. Internal cohesion facilitated the process of convergence with the social movements, the development of a network structure, further transformations of the party's political culture and its strategic positioning to the left of PASOK.

Some pressure to moderate the official discourse and to transform SYRIZA into a self-sufficient organization surfaced in 2013, when the party was approaching power. For instance, a faction supporting the need for a traditional party form, based on territorial rootedness through local sections, formed within the youth groups. However, the political culture of SYRIZA remained

generally heterodox and open to contamination. The greatest change in the party's attitude is noted from 2015 onwards, due to the substantial dissolution of the youth section and the split of a large part of the leadership. The party is now controlled by those who assigned an absolute priority to permanence in power and action in public institutions. The interviews highlighted how this is provoking bureaucratic and office-seeking involution (as also noted in the PRC after 2008); however, it was not possible to investigate here the effects of SYRIZA's recent internal transformations.

8.2.2 Processes of double membership

A second factor that I considered relevant in explaining the processes of party adaptation to the emergence of social movements was the involvement of party members in those movements. Some scholars had already noted how the 'double membership' or 'cumulative involvement' (Lange 1980) of party members and movement activists could result in pressure for change from within the party (Lange 1980; Lange et al. 1990; Piccio 2011). Considering this evidence, I formulated the following proposition: *The more cases of double membership there are, the greater the organizational, cultural and strategic innovation of the party.* The hypothesis that was drawn from this second proposition was that party change should be deeper in the Greek RLPs in relation to both the GJM and anti-austerity movements, and in the PRC after the GJM, but much more superficial in both the Italian RLPs after the anti-austerity mobilizations. This was based on the analysis of the levels of double membership proposed in Chapter Four, where I was able to highlight the different presence of similar 'renewed' parties in the protest arena. Members of the Greek SYN and SYRIZA were constantly and massively active in both the alter-globalist and anti-austerity movements, while the Italian 'renewed' RLPs showed a more discontinuous engagement. Indeed, the PRC significantly contributed to the GJM and only marginally to the anti-austerity protests, and in SEL cases of double membership in both the party and the anti-austerity movements were reduced to a minimal degree.

Processes of double membership proved to be a powerful explanatory factor, thus reinforcing previous assessments. In the case of the PRC we have described a process of change that was stimulated from above. However, the 'innovative coalition' leading the party from 1999 to 2006 could attempt to impose a clear 'left turn' only due to the great enthusiasm that involvement in social movements had aroused in many base members, in particular those with a double involvement, thus mitigating the effects of the 'internal resistance'. The PRC had started to support the alter-globalist initiatives as early as 1999, both at the international and national levels, with the effect of familiarising the membership to new forms of action and political language. Cases of double membership increased due to the support the party provided in the organization of the largest GJM events in Italy: the anti-G8 protest in Genoa in 2001 and the first European Social Forum in Florence in 2002. Again, the PRC had convincingly participated in the anti-war movement in 2003. It is precisely in those years that the PRC experimented the greatest change in all three party dimensions. The youth organization (the Young Communists), in particular, was able to build a strong presence in the GJM, becoming a generational and political bridge with the movements and an internal spur for change. The commitment of the youth cohort in

the protest field had also triggered a flow of young movement activists into the PRC, favouring a process of 'contamination' with movement issues and practices from within.

The levels of double membership already began to decline in 2004, when participation in the Italian movements was no longer massive. A consequence of the base members disengagement from the protest field was the re-surfacing of an office-seeking mentality already mentioned, that led to the 'institutional turn'. Yet, due to double membership, which was also represented in the candidature of important movement activists in the PRC lists for the 2006 national election, the party discourse and parliamentary delegation had a clear movement orientation. However, involvement in the national government weakened the party and further reduced phenomena of double membership. After a period of great vitality in the local circles and youth branch, the levels of activism decreased and political participation once more took place through traditional party channels.

This tendency was not reversed in the years following the fall of the centre-left government, compromising the capacity of both the PRC and SEL to interact with social movements and transform accordingly. When the anti-austerity movement emerged, both the local circles and the youth section of the PRC were weakened by a severe loss of members; thus the cases of double membership, so crucial in the previous phase, were greatly reduced. Only a part of the ex-PRC members joined SEL, while others became entirely movement activists or lost interest in politics. Also in consequence of this, SEL could not count on an active membership base involved in social movements and emerged as the party least permeable to anti-austerity movements' forms and content.

From 2000 the PRC's involvement in the GJM was similar to that of SYN. In this case too, the emergence of the GJM activated processes of double membership which were pivotal in promoting the radicalization of the party. The impression of a possible permeability of SYN to the claims and practices of movements led a good number of young movement activists to join it: their presence conditioned its organizational model, identity and strategies. As in Italy, a greater vitality of the local branches followed, which also resulted in the inclusion in SYN of environmental activists dealing with territorial problems. As a consequence, new forms of action and a participatory 'atmosphere' penetrated the party from below, as well as new, non-class based and labour related, topics. Again the youth sections played a propulsive role in the process of connection with social movements and parallel renewal of the party. The young members spontaneously started to travel to European cities to take part in alter-globalist demonstrations and counter-summits. As cases of double membership intensified, approval for the line of intervention in the protest field diffused widely within SYN and was never contrasted by the leadership or specific party factions. On the contrary, the party energetically contributed to the construction of the GJM at home, with the foundation of the Greek Social Forum in 2003, participation in the anti-war movement of the biennium 2003-2004, and organization of the fourth European Social Forum in Athens in 2006.

Compared with Italian RLPs, cases of double membership in both social movements and SYN/SYRIZA remained high throughout the decade and beyond. Besides being a designed strategy summarized in the formula of 'acting in the movements like a fish in water', the openness of party members towards the broader leftist environment was also forced by the weakness of SYN's organization. The few structures and the low membership required constant

connections with other active groups, increasing the processes of double membership and imposing openness as a fundamental principle that was never abandoned. After the GJM, SYN/SYRIZA continued to participate in large numbers and with conviction in all the successive movements, even in cases in which violent methods were embraced: the student movement in 2006, the youth revolt in 2008 and the anti-austerity movement from 2011 onwards. In 2012 the party promoted the construction of spaces that could act as meeting points for both party members and other extra-party groups, and created 'Solidarity for All' to connect the different struggles.

Unlike events in Italy, young members of SYN, and later SYRIZA, were able to actively contribute to the anti-austerity movement. As had occurred for the GJM, their prompt involvement was a spontaneous reaction that later conditioned the whole party. Although the anti-austerity movement proved more conflictual and jealous of its independence from political parties than the GJM, in the Greek case, processes of double membership helped to overcome the resistances deriving from the characteristics of the anti-austerity movements themselves. SYRIZA militants were ready to join the protest immediately, regardless of the prohibition on displaying party symbols, and later provided their support without any pretention to leading the movement. We could say that, in the Greek case, a participatory attitude had penetrated the base membership of SYN and SYRIZA thus facilitating continuity in involvement with movements that was instead absent in Italy.

As recalled above, the signing of the third Memorandum in 2015 opened a critical phase for both the youth groups and the party, provoking a sharp decrease in processes of double membership which would have major consequences for SYRIZA and its relationship with the social movements.

8.2.3 Attitudes of movements towards representative institutions

The third proposition advanced looked at the attitudes of the individual social movements with respect to representative institutions. The awareness that parties' strategies regarding external political demands also depend on the type of demands themselves (Sjöblom 1968; Kitschelt 1990; Harmel and Janda 1994) translated into the expectation that party change under the influence of movements is conditioned by the specific characteristics of the movements concerned. Some movement scholars suggested that political parties tend to be more responsive and open to 'instrumental movements', described as externally and goal oriented, and basically pacific (Kriesi et al. 1995). On the contrary, they would be less prone to sustain countercultural movements which, although externally oriented, prefer defending their identity rather than accomplishing their aims, and often embrace violence (ibid.). Piccio (2011) denied that political parties are more responsive to 'moderate' social movements, but proved that they establish more intense interactions with those movement groups open to dialogue with representative institutions. March (2011) maintained that the GJM mostly estranged itself from party politics due to the influence of 'autonomous' and 'neo-anarchist' strands. Drawing on this literature, I wanted to test the following, third proposition: *The stronger are the movement areas open to dialogue with institutions in order to reach their goals, the greater the organizational, cultural and strategic innovation of the party.* To this end, in Chapter Four I pointed out the differences between the GJM and the anti-austerity

movements in their attitude towards institutional politics, also classifying them as 'instrumental movements' or 'countercultural movements'. The hypothesis that emerged was that both the Italian and Greek RLPs would enact deeper changes when interacting with the instrumental and dialogical GJM, but the situation could be differentiated for the anti-austerity movements in Italy and Greece. In Greece, an instrumental and dialogical anti-austerity movement would again have represented a strong stimulus for SYRIZA, while in Italy the more closed and conflictual nature of the anti-austerity groups would enable them to play a role in the interruption of interactions between the RLPs and movements.

Did the characteristics of the social movements affect the process of party change?

The intrinsic characteristics of the social movements under consideration proved to play a role in favouring or hindering processes of party change and interaction with political parties. It was found that beyond their dialogical attitude towards institutions, their unity and ability to develop a coherent and strong message also seems to matter. The analysis showed that the nature of the GJM as an 'instrumental movement' appeared especially in its capacity to mobilize large numbers and to elaborate a new, powerful reading of global capitalism dynamics. The disruptive strength of the movement could not leave the RLPs indifferent and forced them to become involved in the international events, sparking the double membership phenomena described above. The dialogical attitude of the movement was substantiated in the construction of the forums as spaces for interaction between groups with different issues and visions. Here, both party activists and leaders took part in the theoretical elaboration of the GJM which indeed soon entered the parties' discourse. Although independent, the movement was certainly open to collaboration with political parties as it took the form of a federation of pre-existing actors, allowing RLPs to feel part of a collective process of social mobilization. In the Greek case, the cooperation between previously divided groups was a crucial factor in the construction of SYRIZA as a plural and open party.

As far as anti-austerity movements are concerned, the difference between the Italian protests which were divided and highly conflictual, and the Greek movement – more united and instrumental – had major consequences on the type of relationship that they developed with the RLPs and the impact they had on them. In the Italian case, the fragmentation of the movements impeded the formulation of a strong and coherent anti-austerity message, which was reflected in the difficulty for the RLPs to transform their semantics and priorities. The protests, though frequent and in some cases massive, were not accompanied by the provision of spaces for collective inter-group debates, as occurred with the GJM and the 'movement of the squares' in Italy. An exception was the Florence 10+10 meeting in 2012, which however attracted more activists from abroad than from Italy due to the fractures already taking place in the Italian movement arena. Each movement area tended to organize its own events thus reinforcing an existing sense of belonging but also preventing the expansion of the movement base and the involvement of RLP members. In this context of reduced cases of double membership, the anti-party sentiments present in the anti-austerity movements resonated more within the Italian RLPs, which made few efforts to overcome the perceived obstacles (which included the tendency to embrace violence in demonstrations, notwithstanding the unpopularity of social struggles due to constant media and political attacks).

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In Greece there was greater similarity between the characteristics of the anti-austerity movement and those of the GJM. The Greek anti-austerity movement had clear goals and developed a variety of tactics to reach them. The movement began as a traditional wave of protest led by trades unions, in which several groups would march one after the other in large national demonstrations, and with time it transformed into a laboratory of innovative practices aimed at increasing participation and building connections. The turning point was the 'movement of the squares', which acquired the image of a citizens' rebellion against unfair economic and social arrangements. The occupied squares performed the same function as the alter-globalist forums, acting as spaces for interaction among activists belonging to different groups where an alternative and shared understanding of the economic and financial crisis was developed. Profiting from this dialogical attitude at the grassroots, party members participated in the protests on an individual level. The clarity of the anti-austerity message conveyed contributed to politicize the discourse about the economic crisis and favoured the formulation of a hegemonic strategy by the radical left.

8.3 Social movements' reactions to transformations in RLPs

The task of describing the reactions of social movements to party transformations is not an easy one. First of all, as we have observed, the movements are not unified actors and therefore each interviewee will necessarily report an individual experience and that of a specific group. When collecting the qualitative interviews for this thesis I therefore tried to consider all the main movement sectors, in order to provide an ample and complete vision of the dynamics occurring at the movement level. Second, as clearly emerged from the analysis, the interactions considered are dynamic processes that vary intensely through time. From this point of view, the accounts of the movement activists show that in Italy the moment of greater connections between the social movements and the RLPs in Italy was from the rise of the GJM in 1999 to the 'institutional turn' of the PRC in 2006. Later, contacts were less intense and more problematic. In Greece, the years of the GJM appear as a moment of reconstitution of the radical left in a wide sense, both in the movement field and in the party spectrum. Relations were therefore intense but also fluid, to the point that it becomes difficult even to distinguish between pure movement activists and pure party members.[94] As one of the Greek movement activists interviewed affirmed:

"It would have been different if in Greece we had a strong tradition of social struggles, but we do not have such a tradition. This means that every group and individual person who was interested in fighting for better life conditions was in any case connected with an organized political group. It was very rare to find political rank-and-file groups which were completely independent from the traditional political sphere" (GR.Int.5).

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[94] This is due to the absence in Greece, at the time, of large civil society organizations, such as the ARCI or the catholic ACLI in Italy, or formally structured national rank-and-file trades unions such as the Italian COBAS, or national networks of well linked and highly organized social centres such as the Italian ones. The alter-globalist and the pacifist movements represented the occasion for the Greek movement sphere to be reorganized.

Therefore, the modes of interactions between the social movements and the RLPS in a stricter sense can be better appreciated after the foundation of SYRIZA in 2004. In general, it appeared that movement groups had first learned to trust SYRIZA, particularly through the preparation of the fourth European Social Forum in Athens in 2006, the involvement of the party members in the student movement and the public support for the December riots in 2008. A process of coordination of the action of rank-and-file groups with SYRIZA was formulated especially after the economic crisis exploded in the country. Therefore, the moment of greater connections between the social movements and RLPs in Greece was from the beginning of the anti-austerity mobilization in 2010 and the referendum over the third Memorandum of Understanding in 2015. Later, connections were interrupted and SYRIZA was accused of having "learned [how] to love the status quo" (Souvlis and Fischer 2017).

8.3.1 The strategies of Greek social movements towards SYRIZA

The progressive transformation of SYN into the pivotal organization in a coalition of RLPs contributed to modify the perception that movement activists had of the Greek institutional radical left.

For instance, a former activist in the 'anarchist space' recounted how the presence of SYN/SYRIZA had changed within the universities. In Greece each political party has a university organization that coordinates its action with the main party. In the mid-1990s, the student branch of SYN in the Panteion University in Athens was described as "Composed of few people and too weak to challenge the communists [the student group linked to the KKE…]. With them there was a good coexistence, without friction and problems, but not a real collaboration. […While] the communists were not a small group, they were more isolated, they were the ones with fewer alliances because of their party politics" (GR.Int.22). Only a few years later, the SYN student group had become an organic component of the movement opposing the 'Bologna Process'[95] and collaborated with the other collectives, including the anarchists. Conversely, the student groups linked to the KKE maintained a conflictual relationship with the other groupings (GR.Int.22).

After SYRIZA was formed, this divide was transposed to other movements, contributing to differentiate the radical left coalition from its direct competitor, the KKE (GR.Int.6; GR.Int.11; GR.Int.22). An ex-activist in the student movement of 2006, who later joined SYN, recalled how "I could never join the KKE because they have this strategy of being isolated. They are against all type of alliances in the universities, in the unions and in the movements. I cannot understand this strategy, I'm totally against it" (GR.Int.20). And an activist in the anti-authoritarian left, more precisely in the 'Diktyo' group, noted that her collective had already started to interact with political parties before the economic crisis, but "We never had any connection with the Greek Communist Party-KKE, mainly because of the strong anti-Stalinist tradition of 'Diktyo', but also because of the attitude of the KKE itself. In fact, if the KKE had shown any will to connect

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[95] Started in 1999, the 'Bologna Process' is a series of ministerial meetings and agreements between European countries to ensure comparability in the standards and quality of higher-education qualifications. The student movements deemed these reforms as increasing competitiveness by cutting down the costs, while decreasing the quality of higher education (Zamponi and Fernández González 2017).

with the other parts of the Greek left, we would think about it, but they have never looked for such connection" (GR.Int.11).

On these premises, when opposition against austerity measures arose in Greece, SYRIZA and ANTARSYA were the two RLPs that were involved in the movement right from the start. Already when the first large demonstrations were called by mainstream trades unions, SYRIZA protesters would gather at a separate meeting point set up by critical rank-and-file trades unions:

"In the general strikes you had three meeting points. The first one, called by the Confederation of unions, was populated with no more than ten thousand people. The second one was convened by the Communist Party, which held demonstration by itself […]. And then there was the meeting point of all the others: anarchists, SYRIZA, all the parties of the extra-parliamentary left, the rank-and-file unions, the informal worker collectives, some NGOs occasionally, the student unions and collectives" (GR.Int.22).

While the KKE disapproved of the riots that often occurred during this type of mass event, "SYRIZA and the extra-parliamentary left did not participate in the riots, but not block them either" (GR.Int.22). This behaviour was consistent with the SYRIZA strategy of acting in the social movements like 'a fish in the water'. The activists saw this strategy as a form of discrete support which facilitated the processes of interaction, as is evident from the account of Markos, an activist in the 'Immigrants' Forum of Greece'. In his interview, Markos stressed the role of SYRIZA in supporting the 300 illegal immigrants who had sailed from Crete to Athens in 2011 to demand the unconditional legalization of all immigrants living in Greece. On January 25, they entered the historical building of the Law School and started a collective hunger strike. With the political establishment and media branding the immigrants' struggle as an illegal act, police forces encircled the occupied building just two days later, creating a dilemma for the activists:

"In that difficult night, with four thousand supporters from the anarchy area around the University, policemen ready to arrest them, and only 350 people in the Faculty of Law – me included – we had to take a big and difficult decision. The migrants […] said: 'Ok, let them get in and we will fight. We will die here' […]. But we, I mean the ten Greek activists […], were in a difficult position. We knew the Greek repressive habits, and we had the eyes of all the groups involved on us. We had to take a decision that respected the wills and feeling of the migrants but that was also close to reality, which in that moment was embodied in the police outside […]. I decided to call some politicians" (GR.Int.5).

While "The KKE said 'Stay away from me!' […], the former President of SYRIZA and MP, Alekos Alavanos, came there immediately and stood in front of the door of the university, saying to the chief of the police and the magistrate: 'If you want to get in, you will have to pass over me!'. […] Many rank-and-file party members also arrived and two well-known SYRIZA MPs were standing in front of the door. Let's say that our courage and determination together with their presence saved us!" (GR.Int.5).

Markos' decision 'in that difficult night' reflected a strategy that the movements had to adopt in order to obtain the desired outcomes in the context of political and economic and repression. Although the 'Immigrant Forum' was a radically independent organization, "Now I recognize

how much a political party can help in this struggle. The hunger strike was a big lesson for me". From this experience it emerged that:

"We need to link the best tradition of autonomous social movements with the best tradition of the political left. To give effectiveness to the movement struggles, everything around you pushes towards entering the institutional political sphere. Some doors only open that way! I collaborate with SYRIZA for strategic reasons. Since the repression of the state is very strong here in Greece, 'using' SYRIZA in order to win is a good strategy" (GR.Int.5).

Echoing these words, Maria, one of the founders of the Committee 'Save Greek Water' which fought against the privatization of water provision, illustrated the plan that her organization had articulated in order to reach its goal, also highlighting how political parties and social movements mutually needed each other:

"We have done a sort of strategic plan on how to win, how to obtain a result. We are movement people and we have a lot of help from grassroots groups. But we try to move this, let's say, to a broader level […]. In this move forward, SYRIZA showed they were interested in the struggle against the privatization of water. They need the movements, they need the people. From my point of view they were clever enough to understand that water is a very basic and key struggle and they agreed to play a role but without saying that this is a SYRIZA struggle" (GR.Int.9).

Also in this case, SYRIZA's discrete support was pivotal in convincing the movement activists to collaborate with party politics: "They have included this issue in their agenda, but without taking ownership. They have tried to keep an equilibrium. They didn't said 'the movement is nothing and we are here to decide […]. If you want massive participation, you cannot give it a party stamp! Because if you do that, then people don't react well. You have always to keep an equilibrium and collaborate" (GR.Int.9).

During the anti-austerity period, many other movement groups found themselves in need of rethinking their traditional strategy and looking for some connection with the emerging party. As we saw, this was due to the constant and respectful participation of SYRIZA members and leaders and was also linked to the political culture of the party. As a 'Diktyo' member highlighted, at the time: "We believe that SYRIZA is a radical party, it is the most radical left-wing party in Europe. The general perception diffused among the movement people in Europe is that, nowadays, a leftist party can be at most like the PSOE of Zapatero. When they refer to the left, they mainly mean centre-left politics. But SYRIZA is something different" (GR.Int.11).[96] Arising from this belief, an internal debate began within the group about the opportunity of collaborating with SYRIZA:

"Nowadays, we are building good relations with SYRIZA. We try to do something together, and also to keep up pressure on it […]. We decided this strategy through a long procedure: we asked

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[96] The same perception is expressed by another interviewee, a former activist in the 'anarchist space' and a trade unionist: "The SYRIZA party is indeed radically left in the perception it has of social and political rights. They have elaborated a discourse on this kind of things which is inconceivable for most European countries. They would never kick out rioters from their own blocks [in demonstrations …]. They would never attack a squat. They would defend the squat that is being evacuated. They would defend anarchists from being arrested. They send their lawyers to defend them" (GR.Int.22).

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ourselves the same questions many times, but often the answers were different and conflicting with each other […]. Then, when SYRIZA came into being, most people of 'Diktyo' thought: 'this is a historical moment for the left in Greece!', because for the first time a big part of the working class, the unemployed, the students decided to vote for the left […]. We decided, not without difficulties (because not all of us agreed), to try to have a connection with SYRIZA and do some things together, because we perceive what is happening in Greece as a historical opportunity for the movement and the whole left to gain power (GR.Int.11).

Finally, SYRIZA's firm independence from PASOK had been a crucial presupposition for any kind of cooperation with social movements (GR.Int.5; GR.Int.6; GR.Int.7; GR.Int.11). In this context, the proposal for a 'government of the left' sounded credible and was welcomed not only by the party's constituency, but also by the social movements:

"Before the May 2012 elections, Tsipras appeared in the square – at that point the polls were showing them at 8 to 10 per cent – and said: 'we are here to win the elections and the next day we will form the government of the left'. End of the story! The KKE was saying: 'we are not here to govern, the people are not ready'. The extra-parliamentary left said: 'we have to exit the euro […]'. They were saying nothing. The anarchists said: 'we will have autonomy and anarchy and everything will become better by itself'. The SYRIZA people came with a plan. They said: 'we'll stay in the EU and we'll make the government of the left'" (GR.Int.22). This proposal resonated so well with the aspirations of the activists that: "They won all the votes from all the people who participated in the movement. Everyone voted for them, even with half a heart if not with a full heart" (GR.Int.22).

After the sudden rise obtained in the double national elections of 2012, SYRIZA did not disengaged from street politics and committed to strengthen the social solidarity initiatives that were spreading throughout the country. The constitution of 'Solidarity for All' was meant to help the grassroots volunteers to coordinate their activities and was immediately perceived by movement activists as a positive support. For example, one of the doctors volunteering in the self-managed, social clinic of the peripheral neighborhood of Hellenikon in Athens, praised the 'Solidarity for All' militants for their contribution: "They help us out, from time to time they offer money and we tell them: we need medicines! They buy them. They are supporting our cause through the media also. They are engaged people" (GR.Int.16).

It is important to note that also in the period of greater interaction between the social movements and SYRIZA, critical voices within the social movements remained. Activists were skeptical for two different reasons. Some perceived a growing moderation in the party's public discourse, which was due to a strategy of maximization of votes, but which, in their vision, entailed the risk of a social-democratization of SYRIZA. Others advocated for a clear separation between social movements and political parties, mostly due their mistrust in the system of political representation (GR.Int.22). The missed opportunity to adopt an experimental, radical democratic party model described above has probably reinforced the feelings of those who saw SYRIZA as yet another vertical party embedded in a context of diminished capacity of citizens to make their voice count in public decisions. The course of SYRIZA history has probably contributed to spreading this skeptical vision well beyond the restricted circle of movement activists striving to achieve a radical democracy.

The activists interviewed in Italy also noted the effort that the PRC undertook to transform both its organization and political culture. However, compared with the Greek experience they expressed a far more negative judgment about the outcome of the process of party change as well as of the relationships they experienced with the party. The reasons are to be found in the 'weight of history', as the Italian PRC proved finally unable to renounce the habits inherited from the traditions of the PCI as regarded their connections with the social movements. Their habit was one of co-optation and a tendency to consider the party in a role of guiding the movements that had penetrated not only the 're-founded' communist party, but also the large organizations of the Italian left. When talking about her experience in the student movement in the 1990s, an activist in the Florence Social Forum recalled that, while looking for interactions with "The Youth of the PdS and the Communist Re-foundation, I never joined a party, I never identified with a party, I felt distant from both [PdS and PRC] and I found the stances of Rifondazione a bit unattractive back then. There was a rigidity in the transformation of the old PCI […]. I did not share some aspects: respect for the party line, usually imposed by a leader, and the ways these parties related to social movements, especially for Rifondazione (for which I voted), the modality of colonizing everything was moving and putting pressure on it" (IT.Int.5). The "rigidity" of the PRC in the 1990s is confirmed by another interviewee, who also stressed the presence within it of a "large Stalinist component" (IT.Int.2), with reference to the 'government-oriented' faction that left the party in 1998.

The 'movement turn' that Rifondazione embraced in the early years of the millennium clearly distanced this party from its past and differentiated it from the PdS/DS in the eyes of the movement activists. When the GJM mobilized in Italy, "The PdS (and later the DS) – that world acted as if nothing was happening in those years, even after Genoa". On the contrary, Rifondazione was constantly present and this triggered processes of positive contamination at the grassroots level. Compared with the Greek case, for the movement activists the choice of interacting with the party was less conscious and less problematic:

"In Florence there is a tradition of activism. There is a lively civil society involved in politics also from outside the organizations and yet are able to relate with them at the same level, due to a wealth of knowledge and experience […]. We met all together, we looked at each other with diffidence because each of us had to discover the other, there were complex dynamics […]. We influenced each other and we learned that not only do social rights matter, but also environmental issues, critical consumption and so on. There was a real moment of content exchange" (IT.Int.5). As another participant confirmed: "There were many members of Rifondazione who immersed themselves in the movement and really believed in it!" (IT.Int.2).

The same activist explained that the dialogic attitude of large sectors of the Italian GJM was rooted in the movement tradition, in a philosophical and political vision expressed in the work of important politicians and thinkers such as Pietro Ingrao. This vision considered that "The movements are the lively element of society, while political parties might be necessary for representing social claims, but if they lose their connection with the social movements they

become empty containers which have nothing to do with their task of social renewal and transformation" (IT.Int.2).

While this vision had facilitated interactions between movement activists and party members at the grassroots, the general rules of the international Forum and counter-events allowed large organizations to intervene without taking the lead of the movement. For the leader of the rank-and-file union COBAS, both this method of work and the political culture of the Rifondazione leadership prevented the typical conflictual interactions between the social movements and political parties:

"There were a convincing style and method of horizontal relations between the organizations […]. Neither the PCI nor the CGIL had participated in the '68 movement. Their logic was: either the movement is immediately available [to work with us], or I see it as an enemy […]. With the events of '77 it was even worse. The tradition of Italian communism is of hostility towards the independent movements […]. The situation of the 'Bertinottian' Rifondazione was different, also because he did not have a communist background. He and the young generation of leaders close to him were interested in the movement and from 2000 to 2004 they actually played a central role in the Italian and European movements. Objectively, they did not try to become hegemonic, they served as a part among the others […]. They put at our disposal their infrastructure that allowed us to construct something strong" (IT.Int.1).

The opinion of grassroots movement activists about the intervention of the national leadership of Rifondazione and other large organizations in movement decision-making is however more critical. An activist in Florence described it as "stifling" at the time of mass events (particularly the first European Social Forum):

"The movement was not a mere sum of the brands [the large organizations …]. There were the students (us), the teachers, young people, let's say people who were not members of any organization. In this context, there was a true movement dynamic, we spoke about things and took decisions in the assemblies. The aim of Rifondazione, but also of all the other large structures with a national leadership, such as ARCI and Legambiente, was to bypass the assemblies and take decisions around the usual national tables" (IT.Int.5).

Together with the criticism for the PRC leadership, movement activists stressed that the transformation of the party following its participation in alter-globalist movement was only partial, especially at the organizational and strategic levels. The party model remained substantially unaltered as the empirical analysis has also proved. In particular:

"The PRC has received almost nothing of the participatory modalities of the Social Forum, modalities which we had borrowed above all from the women's movement. We talked and decided all together, we did not vote in order to overcome the 'dictatorship of the majority', as the aim was always to find a mediation and to respect everybody […]. All this method of internal participation, the issues of democracy and inclusion were never applied in the large organizations, absolutely" (IT.Int.5).

Confirming this account, one interviewee affirmed: "In effect, the internal functioning of Rifondazione did not change in the wake the alter-globalist movement. Notwithstanding the openings, there was a minor organizational renewal" (IT.Int.2).

As far as content was concerned, "The participation in the alter-globalist movement modified the political culture of the party, and particularly that of the youth organization. All the issues of the European Social Forum, such as the need to curb globalized financial capitalism and dropping the debt of poor countries, were included in the Rifondazione party programme. The party members were present in all the movement meetings, it was an attempt for fusion" (IT.Int.6).

Nonetheless, the cultural renewal of the party is said to have suffered an involution in proximity to the 'institutional turn'. As some of the party members interviewed had also noted, the introduction of a non-violence doctrine, in particular, proved divisive for the social movements and was generally considered a turning point in the relationships between the PRC and large movement sectors, notably the social centres and rank-and-file trades unions. The national leader of the COBAS union understood: "The discourse about non-violence was instrumental to isolating us, the COBAS and the Disobedients [the social centres], right before the party's return within the centre-left. It was inconsistent with reality because if there was a movement that only had suffered nothing but repression it was precisely the alter-mondialist movement! That discourse had no sense especially if one considers that in the same period the PRC was defending the guerrilla movements. The truth is that it meant: ARCI, Legambiente, Catholic groups, Lilliput… they're all fine; the COBAS and the Disobedients are not. From tomorrow I don't want you all around! And everything just broke up" (IT.Int.1).

Movement activists also stigmatized the strategy of rapprochement toward the centre-left followed by the PRC from this point onward. For some of them this choice had heavy consequences not only in the relationship between the social movements and Rifondazione, but also in the development of the social movements themselves: "The alter-mondialist movement in Italy ends when unfortunately Rifondazione, after the referendum on labour issues which the leadership considered as a lost referendum while actually 10,000 people had voted in favour and therefore it was a good result, decided to 'close the match' and started working within the centre-left. Unlike SYRIZA and Podemos, the PRC did not bet on its independence" (IT.Int.1). This criticism applied to the PRC strategy both at national and local levels: "Let's say the whole story, the local apparatus of the PRC, not the movement-oriented people, had kept their links with the centre-left intact" (IT.Int.1).

The participation of the PRC in the national government had raised "some expectations" (IT.Int.2) in movement activists, but most of them soon became severely disappointed with the inability of the PRC to influence public policies. For instance, "They could not change the national law on immigration. The [PRC Minister] Paolo Ferrero would have changed it for sure, but he did not manage. This raised the protests of the anti-racist movement and conflicts emerged also with the ARCI, because we shouldn't target a 'friendly' government" (IT.Int.2). These contrasts caused divisions within the social movements and a decrease in the cases of double membership: "Only pure movement activists continued to bring forward social

opposition, while the ARCI, the RLPs and the major trades unions retreated. The period in government was very negative for both the social movements and Rifondazione – its decline starts there" (IT.Int.2).

Echoing the delusion of PRC members, for movement activists too the GJM appears to have been 'a lost opportunity' for the whole Italian left, because it contained the elements that could have reconstituted the left […]. The modalities and the missed opportunities of that phase are at the base of the weakness of the left in Italy today. I believe that this failed relationship between the political parties and the social movements had a crucial role in people's desertion of both" (IT.Int.5).

The history that follows is, in fact, that of mostly interrupted relationships. All the movement interviews lamented the inability of the Italian RLPs to renew and unite. Since the formation of the Rainbow Left in 2008 onwards, every attempt at a re-union of the RLPs has occurred at the time of elections and therefore has been perceived as "a deal between the top levels, the political class. We hoped for unity, but – with the very recent exception of the 'Other Europe' – there has never been a renewal of the candidatures, there was no involvement of social movement groups in the elaboration of the programmes and so on. All these attempts started out with the same limits" (IT.Int.2).

From the point of view of policy content, both the PRC and later SEL began to appear to external observers as mostly inward looking political parties, which lacked interesting proposals and seemingly were unable to incorporate the issues advanced by anti-austerity social movements. A young movement activist, for example, explained why student groups did not invite representatives of the Italian RLPs to speak in universities:

"We generally do not host MPs or famous party personalities. It's a conscious choice to avoid offering a stage for party propaganda, but there can be exceptions. We invited local representatives for instance […] but until now it never happened that the national leader of a left-wing party or one of their MPs took on one of our issues […]. Why should we invite them? In the university we do not organize events about the unity of the left! We talk about [real] issues" (IT.Int.12).

In addition to rejecting the self-referential behaviour of parties concerned only with their own survival, and therefore in a phase of retreat, Italian activists regret the lack of a mass movement that could renew politics: "It is a moment in which leftist parties in Italy are facing a profound crisis, they are almost moribund, and the movements are also weak. There never was a strong anti-austerity movement in Italy; the water movement created a new concern for the 'common goods' which, essentially, has been taken over by the Five-star movement, and other social movements are localised and fragmented" (IT.Int.6). While an organization that "promotes some issues that no one talks about in this country (the distribution of wealth, the need to work and to create a different type of humanity, in contrast to this anxiety-ridden, paranoid and competitive society)" is lacking, it will emerge only "if we see a large mass movement develop in the very near future" (IT.Int.14).

8.3.3 The relationship between RLPs and social movements: cooperation, indifference or tension?

At the beginning of this thesis, I traced the history of the relationships between leftist political parties and social movements since the emergence of the latter. Two main considerations were made. First, in the 1960s, the emergence of new social movements represented a challenge to the absolute primacy of political parties in the sphere of democratic representation. However, the relationships that developed between the two political subjects were characterised by an imbalance of power and resources in favour of the mass parties of the left; this has often produced a tendency towards co-optation and, in many cases, hostile relations. Second, the connections between progressive social movements and leftist parties evolved through time, in line with the profound transformation of social-democratic parties into catch-all organizations. The movements that had emerged by the end of the 1990s considered the centre-left parties more as targets than as potential allies, and developed new forms of interactions with other less powerful party families. Welcoming the proposal recently advanced by some party scholars (García Agustín and Bak Jørgensen 2016; March 2017), in this work I focused on the relation between the radical left party family and social movements.

When studying the strategies of the powerful social-democratic parties of the past towards new social movements, scholars considered that these were of three types: 'negotiation', 'hostility' and 'cooptation' (della Porta and Diani 2006). While this triad of concepts implies processes of bargaining between actors who hold different political views and goals, I wanted instead to verify the possibility for 'cooperation' between substantially weak political parties and social movements belonging to the same political area and with similar goals. Accordingly, 'hostility' was substituted with 'tension', and party 'cooptation' of social movements with the 'indifference' of movements towards parties thought to be too small or too diverse in their political culture to provide a chance of influencing the policy-making process.

It emerged that in the Italian case, there was a unique moment of 'cooperation' between the RLPs and the social movements, that is the relationship between the Italian PRC and the GJM in the years from 2000 to 2004. Collaborative processes, though not without problems, were subsequently followed by a tense relationship, until a true sentiment of indifference emerged towards RLPs on the side of the (fragmented) anti-austerity movements. Overall, the Italian experience represents a case of failure in the connection between the social movements and the RLPs.

In the Greek case, we observe a more prolonged process of collaboration between the two subjects, which began at the turn of the millennium and continued until the SYRIZA-ANEL government signed the third MoU. In the last decade, collaboration constituted the basis for a radical renewal of both the party left and the social left in Greece. It reached its apex during the anti-austerity mobilizations, when the SYRIZA coalition was able to provide a discrete support to social struggles. Overall the Greek case represents therefore a case of success in the connection between the social movements and the RLPs. A new dynamic of *hostility* emerged only in very recent times, the consequences of which are yet to be explored. I consciously chose to use the word 'hostility' because the old imbalance of power between RLPs and social movements re-emerged with the rise of SYRIZA in power.

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8.4 The crisis of representation and new forms of participation: what implications for democracy?

This study contributes to fill in the gaps in the literature on the connections between political parties and social movements and provides new insights to the debate on the quality of contemporary democracy. It has at its centre two forms of organized political action: political parties and social movements. If in the past, democratic theory and empirical analysis had assigned a role of absolute prominence to political parties within representative democracy, nowadays it is widely accepted that the collective actors that organize the citizens, connect their needs and voice their demands are multiple (Meyer and Tarrow 1998; Golstone 2003a). The social movements are no longer seen as 'strangers at the gate' of the system, but as an integral part of it. Precisely as the movements have become visible the crisis of political parties has become more acute. The major parties appear more and more to be empty organizations, with declining membership and lack of internal participation (Katz and Mair 1995; van Biezen and Poguntke 2014; Hooghe and Kern 2015). The 'challenger' parties are no better off: their electoral rise is to a growing extent linked to political communication and not to their ability to integrate the masses in public life (Heinisch and Mazzoleni 2016). The minor parties are mostly 'parties of cadres', preoccupied about their survival and clinging to public institutions.

In a similar context, I wanted to verify the possibility of a 'connective party', experimental and open to society. I hypothesised that such an organizational form could reside in the left, especially in the times around mass mobilizations when the active part of society meets (or should meet) the agents of representation. The picture that emerged from the analysis is less rosy than expected. If it is true that, in coincidence with large protest waves, this new organizational type may evolve from western political systems, we also saw that it tends to dissolve rapidly, so strong and contagious is the thrust to occupy institutions already lucidly identified by Katz and Mair in the 1990s. Nevertheless, for any leftist parties that are still concerned with the crucial problem of social change while remaining in a democratic ambit, some useful suggestions can be found: to open the local branches to the active part of society, to invite their adherents to become involved in movement initiatives, to promote assembly-based, participatory activities, to include external figures in their leadership and in the electoral lists, to let their political culture be influenced by new visions of the world and emerging issues, to firmly differentiate their policies from those of their (distant) social-democratic relatives, and present themselves as united and truly alternative to neoliberal parties.

However, there are also some indications insights for social movements. My work has shown that if they whish to do more than simply construct militant communities based on self-recognition, and prefer to count on the political stage, then they must make efforts to find a language that is more comprehensible and appealing to the part of society they intend to emancipate. And by adopting a multi-faceted and dialogic strategy, they must try to put halt the elitist drift of politics.

Finally, the last proposals concern the scientific community. Hybridizing different approaches is becoming increasingly problematic in an academic world which tends towards segmentation of knowledge and over-specialization. I believe that a study such as mine, despite any shortcomings, demonstrates the advantages that derive from observing the same problem from two different

perspectives. It reminds party scholars that political parties are embedded in a complex reality that is not exhausted in the electoral and institutional spheres, and that the dynamic processes in which they are involved can be examined with a qualitative approach. Similarly, movement scholars should bear in mind that social movements perform their eminently political role always in connection with other collective (including institutional) actors. This thesis has attempted to offer a framework for studying similar interactions between political parties and social movements, particularly since the explosion of the economic crisis in 2008, which shows no sign of abating. While much attention has been devoted to the influence of anti-austerity movements on the birth and rise of Podemos in Spain (Fernandez and Portos 2015; Chironi and Fittipaldi 2017; della Porta et al. 2017; Caruso 2017), my analysis could provide insights for analysing the relationships between the German 'Die Linke', the Irish 'Sinn Féin', the Portuguese 'Bloco d'Esquerda', the Spanish 'Izquierda Unida' and recent social movements. The dynamics that have united or estranged the Italian 'renewed' PRC and the GJM, as well as those linking SYRIZA and the anti-austerity movements, can be regarded as representative of a possible *fil rouge* linking the cycle of mobilization of the new millennium and the already existing, but innovative, RLPs in Europe.

Greek interviewees

Agathopoulou Irini, SYRIZA MP**,** Alter Summit 7-8 June 2013, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.1]**

Altiparmakis Argyrios, political scientist and key informant, 2015-2017, Athens and Florence, Greece and Italy **[GR.Int.2]**

Apostolaki Evi, Political Secretariat of the SYRIZA Youth, representative for the Attica Prefectural Council, July 2014, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.3]**

Bistis Alexandros, member of the Central Committee of SYRIZA and political scientist, July 2014 (updated March 2017), Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.4]**

Chatzisavvas Markos, movement activist in the immigrants' movement and associate of SYRIZA MP Irini Agathopoulou, Alter Summit 7-8 June 2013, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.5]**

Demosthenis Agrafiotis, movement activist and member of Red Notebook, July 2014, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.6]**

Diamantopoulos Vangelis, SYRIZA MP and former activist in the anarchist space, July 2014, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.7]**

Giannopoulos Yiannos, member of the Central Committee of the SYRIZA Youth, July 2014 (updated March 2017), Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.8]**

Kanellopoulou Maria, activist in the water movement and opera singer, Alter Summit 7-8 June 2013, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.9]**

Karitzis Andreas, member of the Central Committee and of the Political Secretariat of SYRIZA, July 2016 (updated March 2017), Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.10]**

Kiriaki Klokiti, movement activist in the left-libertarian area, member of Dyktio and associated of a SYRIZA MP, Alter Summit 7-8 June 2013, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.11]**

Konstantaos Charis, head of Environmental Department of SYRIZA, member of the SYRIZA Central Committee, July 2014 Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.12]**

Malamidis Theoharis, social scientist and key informant, 2015-2017, Athens and Florence, Greece and Italy **[GR.Int.13]**

Michalis Nikolakakis, member of the SYRIZA Youth, associate of the SYRIZA MP Stathakis Giorgos, July 2014, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.14]**

Panagiotidis Stavros, SYRIZA Youth, Department of Education of SYRIZA, researcher in the Nikos Poulatzas Institute, July 2014, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.15]**

Sideris Christos, doctor and activist in the Social Clinic of the Hellenikon Neighborhood, July 2014, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.16]**

Souvlis Giorgos, member of the SYRIZA Youth and historian, March 2016, Florence, Italy **[GR.Int.17]**

Spyropoulos Giorgos, member of the Central Committee of the SYRIZA Youth, associate of the SYRIZA MP Stefanos Samoilis from the Kerkyra region, July 2014, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.18]**

Stratoulis Dimitris, SYRIZA MP, responsible for issues regarding Labour and Labour movement, party minority, July 2014, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.19]**

Tirovolas Stefanos, member of the Central Committee of the SYRIZA Youth, July 2014, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.20]**

Vafeas Nikos, social scientist and key informant, 2013-2014, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.21]**

Vogiatzoglou Markos, movement activist (close to the anarchist space) and social scientist, January 2013 (updated March 2017), Florence, Italy **[GR.Int.22]**

Xanthos Andreas, SYRIZA MP, responsible for issues of Health, (Rethymno region), July 2014, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.23]**

Zachiotis Alexandros, member of the Political Secretariat of the SYRIZA Youth, July 2014, Athens, Greece **[GR.Int.24]**

Italian interviewees

Bernocchi Piero, activist in the World Social Forum and leader of the rank-and-file trades union COBAS, July 2016, Rome, Italy **[IT.Int.1]**

Biagioni Moreno, movement activist in both the GJM and the anti-austerity movement, retired librarian, July 2016, Florence, Italy **[IT.Int.2]**

Bolini Raffaella, activist in the World Social Forum and high rank official of ARCI, July 2016, Rome, Italy **[IT.Int.3]**

Braccaloni Duccio, environmentalist activist and local cadre of SEL, assistant MP in the Tuscan Regional Parliament, February 2017, Florence Italy **[IT.Int.4]**

Di Marco Francesca, activist in the Florence Social Forum and high school teacher, July 2016, Florence, Italy **[IT.Int.5]**

Fattori Tommaso, leftist MP in the Tuscan Regional Parliament, activist in the Water Movement and organizer of the European Social Forum, March 2016, Florence, Italy **[IT.Int.6]**

Gasparo Diletta, young member of PRC, January 2017, Florence, Italy **[IT.Int.7]**

Giudici Lorenzo, movement activist in the student movement and anti-austerity mobilization, social scientist, July 2016, Florence, Italy **[IT.Int.8]**

Grassi Claudio, former Organizational Manager of the PRC (2008-2011) and member of the 'l'Ernesto/Essere Comunisti' faction, July 2014, Rome, Italy **[IT.Int.9]**

Lupo Francesca, organizer of the Nichi's Factory in Florence, March 2015, Florence, Italy **[IT.Int.10]**

Malavolti Gregorio, former spokesperson of the Florence Social Forum and local cadre of SEL, July 2016, Florence, Italy **[IT.Int.11]**

Ndreu Enni, student activist in the 'Studenti di Sinistra' group, University of Florence, March 2015, Florence, Italy **[IT.Int.12]**

Palagi Dmitrij, provincial secretary of the PRC in Florence, January 2017, Florence, Italy **[IT.Int.13]**

Prinzi Salvatore, activist in the social centre 'Ex OPG Je So Pazzo', July 2016, Naples, Italy **[IT.Int.14]**

Romanelli Mauro, former SEL MP in the Tuscan Regional Parliament, February 2017, Florence, Italy **[IT.Int.15]**

Targetti Sandro, member of the National Political Committee of the PRC, July 2015, Florence Italy **[IT.Int.16]**

Tomasello Federico, former national spokesperson of the Young Communists and historian, January 2014, Florence, Italy **[IT.Int.17]**

Triggiano Giacomo, former member of the Young Communists and web developer, February 2015, Florence, Italy **[IT.Int.18]**

Vangieri Danielle, member of the National Political Committee of the PRC and assistant MP in the Tuscan Regional Parliament, February 2017, Florence, Italy **[IT.Int.19]**

Zamponi Lorenzo, activist in the student movement 'The Wave' and founder of the student union 'Link', social scientist, July 2016, Florence, Italy **[IT.Int.20]**

Appendix Two

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