The Problem of Democracy in Europe
Conflicting and Converging Conceptions of Democracy in France, West Germany, and Italy, 1945-1989

Democratie als probleem in Europa

Conflicterende en convergerende concepties van democratie in Frankrijk, West-Duitsland en Italië, 1945-1989

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

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Contents

List of abbreviations

CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union
CLN	Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale
CSU	Christlich-Soziale Union
DC	Democrazia Cristiana
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei
Front	Fronte dell'Uomo Qualunque
KDP	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands
MRP	Mouvement Républicain Populaire
MSI	Movimento Sociale Italiano
PCF	Parti Communiste Français
PCI	Partito Comunista Italiano
PSI	Partito Socialista Italiano
PSIUP	Partito Socialista Italiano di Unità Proletaria
PS	Parti Socialiste
PSU	Parti Socialiste Unifié
RPF	Rassemblement du Peuple Français
SDS	Sozialistischer Deutsche Studentenbund
SFIO	Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands
SRP	Sozialistische Reichspartei

Introduction. The history of democracy in postwar Western Europe

The problem of democracy in the postwar era

The first decades after the War are often seen as a 'golden age' of democracy. The period between the end of the War and the early 1970s seemed a peaceful interlude, during which democracy's stability and vitality contrasted sharply with the crisis of the Interwar era. It was a time in which civic commitment still seemed constructive, political parties were firmly rooted in society, and politicians shared a set of political principles which provided moral clarity and a base for fruitful collaboration. Nowadays, by contrast, democracy seems to be in crisis. The economic recession has raised doubts about the relationship between democracy and free market capitalism. Political parties face declining membership numbers, voter volatility, and changing modes of political participation. Politicians find it increasingly difficult to build coalitions in a fragmented and polarised political landscape. And citizens seem distrustful and dissatisfied with the way in which political elites run political affairs.[1]

Although it is tempting to see the contemporary history of democracy as the decline of the postwar consensus model, the principles of democracy were actually fiercely contested during the first decades after the War. Indeed, although democracy in the postwar era was certainly more stable than in the Interwar period,[2] the forging of a broad consensus among political elites on the meaning of democracy was the result of a long and contentious process. Concerns over the precarious democratisation process after years of dictatorship, suspicions inherited from the fascist era, and domestic tensions which reflected the antagonisms of the Cold War, all contributed to ideological differences between political parties on the question what democracy was, what it required in terms of social conditions and institutional design, and who qualified as a democrat. There was consequently not one dominant model of democracy which united politicians, but there existed various democratic paradigms of rival parties and ideologies

[1] See for instance: P. Rosanvallon, *Counter Democracy. Politics in an Age of Distrust* (Cambridge: Cambdridge University Press, 2008); J. Keane, *The Life and Death of Democracy* (London: Simon and Schuster, 2009); B. Manin, *The Principles of Representative Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[2] The only major institutional overhaul was in France in 1958, although some historians argue that also the events in Italy at the beginning of the 1990s qualify as such: D. Hine, 'Italian political reform in comparative perspective', in: S. Gundle and S. Parker eds., *The New Italian Republic. From the Fall of the Berlin Wall to Berlusconi* (London: Routledge 1996), pp. 311-325, at p. 315.

which competed for supremacy in an age in which being seen as the true democrat was the key to political power.

These different democratic paradigms, which were related to the major ideological families in Europe, clashed frequently, especially in the first fifteen years after the War. This not only counted for France and Italy, which harboured large communist parties which laid claim to the meaning of democracy as much as the Christian democrats there, but also for the more stable Federal Republic, which saw deep divisions between the SPD and Christian democrats on the question who embodied West Germany's democratic values. Such tensions were slowly overcome from the 1960s onwards, after which the 1968 protests and the 1973 economic crisis strengthened the consensus among political elites on the principles of democracy. The model of democracy which faced the Fall of the Berlin Wall was therefore not only the result of a long conceptual struggle between various understandings of democracy, but also harboured the seeds of growing discontent with the way in which political elites increasingly consensually defined the boundaries of the democratic – and delegitimised those who proposed political alternatives to how societies should be governed. The model which emerged from this long struggle was consequently no unequivocal success, and constitutes another example of a democratic paradigm which has come under attack.

Any understanding of the development of postwar democracy requires a comprehensive approach which analyses these competing democratic paradigms, relates them to political events, and compares changes across national borders. However, an account which contrives the political debates in France, Italy and West Germany in this crucial timeframe is still missing. This study provides a conceptual and comparative perspective on the formation of the postwar democratic order and investigates how leading politicians publically put forward their understanding of democracy and challenged that of others. It puts the discourse of politicians at the centre of this investigation, because it have been politicians who were in the first place able to shape the content of democracy and determine its practices and institutions. By comparing three national debates on the question what democracy meant and how it should be practiced, it becomes evident that democracy was an intensely contested concept, and that the conceptual struggle among politicians profoundly influenced political relationships. It thereby unveils the problems in the formation of the postwar democratic order, and

shows that the main political actors accepted each other as democratic only by the end of the 1970s.

Democracy since the Second World War

The fact that Western European states have been able to avoid the political abyss of the Interwar era, has generated a broad historiographical agreement that the democracies of the post-1945 era were 'transformed democracies' eager to avoid the fates of their predecessors.[3] Postwar democracy thereby responded to the crisis of democracy in Interwar Europe, when fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, and Stalinist Russia in the eyes of many offered sustainable ideological alternatives to liberal democracy, and deep divisions persisted on the question what democracy was.[4]

In contrast with the instability and crises of the Interwar era and the horrors of the War, the prolonged peace, economic prosperity, and political stability of post-1945 Western Europe are indeed remarkable.[5] The historiography on postwar Western Europe posits that consensus among political elites played an important role in this renaissance. Political elites not only agreed on socioeconomic issues, but also shared a basic understanding of how democracy should be conceived of and practiced. Politics were therefore mainly consensus politics, in which a broad and structural consent existed on the rules of the political game.[6] The major political parties of Western Europe 'chose to abandon ideological distinctiveness', because there were allegedly 'no matters of principle' which divided them.[7] 'Europe's democratic age', the 'golden age' of democracy

[3] The term was coined by Mark Mazower: M. Mazower, *Dark Continent. Europe's Twentieth Century* (London: Lane/Penguin Press, 1998), p. 287.
[4] T. Buchanan, 'Anti-fascism and Democracy in the 1930s', *European History Quarterly*, vol. 32 no. 1 (2002), pp. 39-57.
[5] See for an enigmatic example on the difficult conditions for this recovery: K. Lowe, *Savage Continent. Europe in the Aftermath of World War II* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2012).
[6] T. Judt, *Postwar. A History of Europe Since 1945* (London: Heinemann, 2005), ch. 11; G. Eley, *Forging Democracy*. *A History of the Left in Europe 1850-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), ch. 19; K.D. Bracher, *The Age of Ideologies. A History of Political Thought in the Twentieth Century* (London: Weinefield & Nicholson, 1984), p. 234; D. Stone, *Goodbye to all of that? A Story of Europe since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), ch. 1 and 3.
[7] D. Unwin, *A Political History of Western Europe since 1945* (London: Longman, 1997), p. 137; C.S. Maier, 'Democracy since the French Revolution', in: J. Dunn ed. *Democracy: the Unfinished Journey 508 BC-1993 AD* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 125-152, at p. 138. See also: D. Sassoon, 'Politics', in: M. Fulbrook ed., *Europe since 1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 14-52. Compare with the Marxist account of Canfora: L. Canfora, *Democracy in Europe. History of an Ideology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006).

between 1948 and 1973, was even characterised by an 'exceptional' agreement among major political actors on what constituted democracy.[8]

Over the past decades, scholars have increasingly come to an agreement on what these principles of postwar democracy were. These principles of postwar democracy can be captured under three main headers. First, postwar democracy was 'restrained democracy'.[9] 'Restrained' democracies were characterised most prominently by a limited influence of the people on the decision-making process, institutional mechanisms to safeguard the status quo against a potential radicalisation of the popular will, and a negative conception of liberty preoccupied with guaranteeing individual rights. The protests of 1968 are from this perspective often understood as a revolt against these limited possibilities for political participation – but their ultimate effect in changing these principles of postwar democracy is considered to have been limited.[10] In other words, democracy was finally 'made safe for the world', after the volatile will of the people had brought democracy to brink in the 1920s and 1930s.[11]

Second, the transformed postwar democracies were 'party democracies'. The first three decades after the War were the core of the age of 'party democracy' in the history of representative government.[12] Political parties were in Italy and West Germany even constitutionally recognised and an instrument to channel popular participation in the political process. Political parties in Western Europe existed in different kinds, there were 'voter oriented parties', 'notable parties', or 'militant parties'.[13] They also had varying degrees of mass support: the Italian communist party enjoyed over two million members at the end of the 1940s, while the West German CDU's membership only numbered

[8] M. Conway, 'The Rise and Fall of Europe's Democratic Age 1945-1973', *Contemporary European History*, vol. 13 no. 1 (2004), pp. 67-88, at p. 87. Conway later suggested that the year of 1973 not to be taken too literally, see: M. Conway, 'Reply to Jones', *Contemporary European History*, vol. 13 no. 1 (2004), pp. 96-99. See for the qualification of the 'golden age' of democracy: Maier, 'Democracy after the French Revolution', p. 145.

[9] See most notably: J.W. Müller, *Contesting Democracy. Political Thought in Twentieth Century Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), p. 128; T. Buchanan and M. Conway, 'The Politics of Democracy in Twentieth Century Europe: Introduction', *European History Quarterly*, vol. 32 no. 1 (2002), pp. 5-12; M. Conway, 'Democracy in Postwar Europe. The Triumph of a Political Model', *European History Quarterly*, vol. 32 no. 1 (2002), pp. 59-84.

[10] See for instance: G.R. Horn, *The Spirit of '68. Rebellion in Europe and North America 1956-1976* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 232; Mazower, *Dark Continent*, pp. 313-319.

[11] Maier, 'Democracy after the French Revolution', p. 126. This 'elitist' understanding of democracy was underpinned by simultaneous developments in political theory, see: R. Bellamy, 'The Advent of the Masses and the Making of the Modern Theory of Democracy', T. Ball and R. Bellamy eds., *The Cambridge History of Twentieth Century Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 70-103.

[12] Manin, *The Principles of Representative Government*, ch. 6.

[13] R. Vinen, *History in Fragments. Europe Twentieth Century* (London: Verso, 2005), p. 363.

around 200.000 in the early 1950s. But in any case, political parties determined the rules of the political game and channelled the popular will, and are as a result often cited as a crucial element of the political principles on which the political debates in postwar Western Europe concurred.

Third, political elites increasingly agreed that postwar democracy meant capitalist democracy and that capitalism and democracy were compatible. The American influence on the postwar debate in this regard is generally believed to have been large.[14] This embracing of capitalism does not negate the fact that many believed that in postwar Western Europe, capitalism should be 'coordinated', that corporatist structures were influential, and that governments should play an active role in the economy.[15] Nonetheless the free market and democracy became at least ideologically linked. This compatibility of capitalism and democracy allegedly also counted for the moderate European Left, while the Western European communist parties, who claimed to be both democratic and anti-capitalist, are sometimes excluded from studies to democratic discourse in the period.[16] This acceptance of capitalism not only distinguished the Western European democracies from the 'people's democracies' in the East, but also suited well with the postwar emphasis on negative freedom and individual liberties mentioned above.

In addition to the understanding of postwar democracies characterised by consensus on these three principles, a second noticeable characteristic of the dominant historiographical understanding of democracy in postwar Western Europe is the alleged uniformity of both its political culture and political institutions. Whereas Interwar Europe was characterised by different regime types which had evolved out of distinct political traditions, postwar states were not only all democratic, but they are believed to have been also essentially similar democracies.[17] This understanding suggests that Europeans in different countries came to have an essentially similar understanding of how democratic politics should work. Historians contend that 'Europe united around the values of

[14] See for instance: M. del Pero, 'The United States and "psychological warfare" in Italy, 1948-1955', *Journal of American History*, vol. 87 no. 4 (2001), pp. 1304-1334; I.M. Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); R. Pommerin ed., *The American Impact on Postwar Germany* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1997).
[15] J.B. Eichengreen, *The European Economy since 1945: Coordinated Capitalism* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007), ch. 2.
[16] M. Conway and V. Depkat, 'Towards a European History of the Discourse of Democracy: Discussing Democracy in Western Europe, 1945-60', in: M. Conway and K.K. Patel eds., *Europeanization in the Twentieth Century. Historical Approaches* (Basingstoke: Palgrave McMillan, 2010), pp. 132-156, at p. 149
[17] Conway, 'The Rise and Fall of Europe's Democratic Age 1945-1973', p. 69.

democracy' after the war, because there existed uniformity both between and within countries.[18] Even when it is assumed that this uniformity did not occur right away, the Western part of the continent was at least in a process of political convergence which ensured that it ended up with 'similar liberal democratic parliamentary systems' over the course of the following decades.[19]

However, this homogeneity of understandings and systems of democracy dissolves into dissimilar historiographical narratives once we look at the level of its three major states. The historiography of West Germany conforms best to the patterns discerned in the Anglo-Saxon studies discussed above. The guiding explanatory question of the historiography on postwar West German democracy is why the Bonn Republic succeeded while Weimar democracy failed.[20] Part of the answer lies in the fact that West Germany's institutional outline arguably epitomised the 'restrained' democracy of the post-1945 era, in which a broad party political consensus and an exclusion of the people ensured political stability.[21] This order was challenged during the 1960s and 1970s, but eventually West German democracy was deepened and strengthened and not solely became a mature democracy, but also, as in the title of Edgar Wolfrum's influential study, a 'successful' democracy.[22] Nonetheless, recent German historiography has emphasised that this picture might be too rosy, because West German democracy was far less consensual than it may have seemed.[23]

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Italian historiography paints the country's postwar democratic development in contrasting terms. In 1989, the historian Nicola Tranfaglia claimed that 'historians are not sufficiently concerned with republican Italy' as he underscored 'the scarce quantity of studies dedicated to the last forty years'.[24] As a result of the fall of the First Republic, much has changed and there currently is an overwhelming

[18] Vinen, *History in Fragments*, pp. 358-360.
[19] Sassoon, 'Politics', p. 17.
[20] This preoccupation was present already a decade after the War, see: F.R. Alleman, *Bonn ist nicht Weimar* (Cologne: Kiepenheurer & Witsch, 1956).
[21] K. Sontheimer, *Die Adenauer Ära: Grundlegung der Bundesrepublik* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2003); M. Roseman, 'Restoration and Stability: The Creation of a Stable Democracy in the Federal Republic of Germany', in: J. Garrard, V. Tolz and R. White eds., *European Democratization Since 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), pp. 141-160.
[22] E. Wolfrum, *Die geglückte Demokratie: Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland von ihren Anfang bis zur Gegenwart* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 2007).
[23] A. Bauerkämper, 'The Twisted Road to Democracy as a Quest for Security: Germany in the Twentieth Century', *German History*, vol. 32 no. 3 (2014), pp. 431-455.
[24] N. Tranfaglia, *Il labirinto italiano. Il fascismo, l'antifascismo, gli storici* (Florence: La nuova editrice, 1989), p. 13.

amount of literature which offers widely diverging explanations of how the events of the 1990s and beyond can be accounted for. Virtually all of these, however, trace the roots of these disruptive events back to the formative years of the Italian republic.[25] Whether explained by the Christian Democrat-communist dichotomy, American influence, working class militancy, the North-South divide, or the legacy of fascism, the implicit guiding questions of the historiography on postwar Italian democracy therefore continue to be what explains the lack of political consensus and what has caused democracy's structural deficits.

The historiography of postwar France makes yet another nuance to the image of Western European uniformity. First of all, France experienced institutional and constitutional overhaul at the end of the 1950s, when the Fifth Republic substituted the Fourth. The dozen years of the ill-fated Fourth Republic remain a comparatively scarcely researched epoch of French political history, yet its party strife, instability, and domestic tensions fit uneasily in the general pattern discerned from the historiography on Western European democracy discussed above.[26] Its successor has received more mixed reviews. For some, the Gaullist democracy finally established what Pierre Rosanvallon baptised a 'modified Jacobinism'; an equilibrium between the desire for popular influence and the necessity of executive power sought after ever since the French Revolution.[27] For others it created the preconditions for the populism of the Front National,[28] or confirmed the 'French exception' in which among broad segments of the citizenry a sentiment of democratic malaise reigns supreme.[29]

These disparate historiographical understandings of postwar democracy suggest that the uniformity of democracy in postwar Western Europe deserves reconsideration. Not every domestic debate on democracy was equally consensual or concerned similar issues. Many contemporary observers in Italy, France, and West Germany did not believe

[25] See for three leading examples: S. Lupo, *Partito e antipartito. Una storia politica della prima repubblica (1946-1978)* (Rome: Donzelli editore, 2004); P. Scoppola, *La repubblica dei partiti. Evoluzione e crisi di un sistema politico* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1997); G. Bedeschi, *La prima repubblica (1946-1993). Storia di una democrazia difficile* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino editore, 2013). For a study which traces the problems of Italian democracy back to the period before the Second World War, see for instance: G. Orsina, *Il Berlusconismo nella storia d'Italia (*Venice: Marsilio editori, 2013).
[26] P. Facon, *La IVe République. De la libération au 13 Mai* (Paris: Pygmalion, 1997).
[27] P. Rosanvallon, *Le modèle politique français. La société civile contre le jacobinisme de 1789 à nos jours* (Paris: Seuil, 2006), p. 416.
[28] C. Fieschi, *Fascism, Populism and the French Fifth Republic. In the Shadow of Democracy* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).
[29] N. Hewlett, *Democracy in Modern France* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2005).

to live through an age of consent on the principles democracy, let alone a 'democratic golden age', in the first decades after the War. Much valuable work to the problematic reconstitution of democratic government after the Second World War has been done, but these studies have been confined to national states and have refrained from reflecting on the relevance of their conclusions for the image of Europe's 'golden age' of democracy as a whole. A comparative investigation which weaves together thematically these national narratives and assesses both the claim of national *Sonderweg* trajectories and that of a continent-wide uniformity is essential for an enhanced understanding of the character of postwar Western European democracy. Democracy is not studied as the context in which political decisions were taken, but put at the foreground of this investigation, and studied from a conceptual perspective which analyses competing conceptions of democracy held by main political actors.

Comparing debates on democracy in postwar Western Europe

This study reconstructs the public debate among the major political actors in France, West Germany and Italy, and traces the formation of their increased consensus on the principles of democracy in the period between the liberation of the Second World War and the turn of the 1980s. These countries are the key examples of 'transformed democracies' in postwar Western Europe and can therefore reasonably be expected to provide most valuable insights in the specificities of postwar Western European democracy. They moreover share important features which make a comparison between these three countries not only historically relevant, but also feasible. In other words, there is, providing for some degree of conceptual homogenisation, a *tertium comparationis* between the three states.[30] The main trait the countries have in common is the continuing existence of representative democracy with a two Chamber system and universal suffrage, which provides for comparable contexts in which the debates on democracy took place. Moreover, these states have all been republics, or, in the case of Italy, proclaimed republics in the aftermath of the War. The selection of these particular case studies is finally also motivated on the grounds of interest in the particular cases.[31] Thanks to the

[30] See on conceptual homogenisation: M. Dogan, 'Strategies in Comparative Sociology', in: M.S. Sasaki ed., *New Frontiers in Comparative Sociology* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 11-44.

[31] This genre of comparisons is known as an interpretive case study comparison, based on interest in particular cases. See: A. Lijphart, 'Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method', *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 65 no. 3 (1971), pp. 682-693.

political, economic and intellectual clout of these three states, it have been actors from these three countries who have contributed significantly to the debate on democracy in postwar Western Europe.

A comparative approach contributes to an understanding of how specific political contexts have shaped competing conceptions of democracy and vice versa. It clarifies how differences in contexts, in particular political institutions, political power constellations, effects of international circumstances, and historical legacies, affected the conceptualisation of democracy. It therefore allows to balance between the mutually exclusive claims of the history of postwar democracy as a series of national exceptions on the one hand, and Western European uniformity on the other. It explores instead how domestic processes of convergence of conceptions of democracy were long, problematic and in some cases unfinished, and to what extent they reflected more general Western European developments and saw similarities across borders.

This study is a 'narrative comparison', which aims to give causal and ideographic insight in the relation between conceptions of democracy and political power relations.[32] All national cases are given equal weight, and the comparison is a diachronic comparison that tracks changes over time. Different conceptions of democracy competed with each other primarily in national arenas. This does not entail that local or pan-European levels of democracy were totally absent in the debate. Conceptions of democracy, most notably those of different political families, certainly also crossed national borders.[33] But for the first decades after the war the nation state remained the most important level on which democracy functioned, because politicians expressed their conceptions of democracy primarily in national contexts and aimed to take power of national political institutions.

France, West Germany and Italy are labelled 'transformed democracies' because of the failure of their democratic institutions in the Interwar era and their subsequent widely varying experiences with dictatorship. The democratic experiences of these three countries before 1945 varied widely, and continued to inform the postwar debate on democracy. France was the first country on the European continent that experienced a

[32] M. Lange, *Comparative Historical Methods* (London: Sage, 2013), pp. 96-99. This method has also been defined as 'causal narrative', see: J. Mahoney, 'Strategies of Causal Interference in Small-N Analysis', *Sociological Methods and Research*, vol. 28 no. 4 (2000), pp. 387-424.

[33] See for instance: M. Siegel, 'Beyond Compare', *Radical History Review*, vol. 91 (2005), pp. 62-90. More recently, however, historians have argued that the differences between comparative and transfer history are not as large as often suggested: J. Kocka and H-H. Haupt, 'Comparison and Beyond. Traditions, Scope and Perspectives of Comparative History', in: H-G. Haupt and J. Kocka eds., *Comparative and Transnational History. Central European Approaches and New Perspectives* (New York: Berghahn, 2010), pp. 1-31.

democratic revolution, but the legacy of the revolution haunted the French during the nineteenth century and deeply divided them on the question of how popular sovereignty and state authority could be reconciled.[34] This resulted not only in three republics, but also in experiences with dictatorship. In particular the reign of Napoleon III, which rested on both authoritarian rule and a direct appeal to the will of the people, bred fear of a dictator with popular support.[35] This contributed directly to the institutional outline of the Third Republic, under which France was officially governed until 1946, which valued a highly powerful parliament at the expense of powers for the executive. France's experiences with democracy remained troubled. The Popular Front governments in which Radicals, socialists and communists collaborated could not prevent the victory of Nazi-Germany over France in May 1940 and faced strong internal resistance from the radical Right. Both the French resistance and the resulting Vichy dictatorship in the South-East of the country blamed the military loss on the supposed weakness of the Third Republic's democracy.[36] The fact that the Vichy dictatorship was at least partially home-grown and until 1942 not occupied by the Nazis was a source of many tensions which lasted for decades after the war.[37]

The establishment of democracy in West Germany after 1945 had been preceded by even more troubled experiences with this form of government after German unification in 1871. The loss in the Great War and the escape of the emperor resulted in the establishment of the Weimar Republic. There has been a heated historiographical debate on the question whether the Weimar democracy was doomed from the outset or brought down by the Nazis and the economic crisis of the early 1930s.[38] In any case, Weimar proved that demagogues could use democratic freedoms to establish dictatorial rule. The Nazis criticised political divisions created by ostensibly inapt political parties by appealing to the people, and were thereby aided by maximalist claims of the communists

[34] R. Gildea, *Children of the Revolution. The French 1799-1914* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2010).
[35] S. Hazareesingh, 'Bonapartism as the Progenitor of Democracy. The Paradoxical Case of the French Second Empire', in P. Baehr en M. Richter eds., *Dictatorship in History. Bonapartism, Caesarism, and Totalitarianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 129-152.
[36] N. Atkin, 'Between Democracy and Autocracy: France 1918-1945', in: P. Hayes ed., *Themes in Modern European History 1890-1945* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 205-226.
[37] J. Jackson, *France. The Dark Years 1940-1944* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); H. Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome. History and Memory in France since 1944* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1991).
[38] P. Fritzsche, 'Did Weimar Fail?', *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 68 no. 3 (1996), pp. 629-656; W. Brustein and M. Bernston, 'Interwar Fascist Popularity and the Default of the Left', *European Sociological Review*, vol. 15 no. 2 (1999), pp. 159-178; H. Mommsen, *The Rise and Fall of Weimar Democracy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

and the strategic choice of 'border parties' willing to cooperate with the NSDAP.[39] The viciousness of the Nazi dictatorship in the subsequent dozen years meant that the failures of the Weimar system were studied extensively in order to make the second German experiment with democracy a success, rendering governmental instability, critique on political parties, and direct influence of the people over the decision-making process all sensitive topics.[40]

Also Italy developed into a modern mass democracy after World War I with the establishment of universal male suffrage and the system of proportional representation.[41] The experience with democratic government was ill-fated and Mussolini came to power in 1922. Also here, answers to the question of what had caused the failure of democracy and the rise to power of fascism vary widely, with some explanations pointing to deeper rooted problems in Italy's unified state and others to the outcome of the First World War and class antagonisms in an age of mass politics.[42] Fascist belligerence brought further destitution on Italy, with the Second World War dividing the peninsula in a Kingdom of the South which fought the Italian Social Republic on the side of the Allies and the Italian resistance. Many fault lines, between communists and anti-communists, North and South, fascist and anti-fascist, consequently run through the history of the Italian republic.[43]

One of the most important consequences of these failures of Interwar democracies was that France, West Germany and Italy adopted new postwar constitutions in the wake of the Second World War. These constitutional projects expressed the intention to develop new, transformed, models of democracy and give these countries a common frame of reference regarding the debate of democracy. The fact that these three states expressed the desire to force a rupture with their Interwar predecessors, makes a study of these three states essential if we want to understand more about how the political debate on democracy developed in postwar Western Europe.

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[39] G. Capoccia, *Defending Democracy. Reactions to Extremism in Interwar Europe* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2005).
[40] S. Ullrich, *Der Weimar-Komplex. Das Scheitern der ersten deutschen Demokratie und die politische Kultur in der frühen Bundesrepublik* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2009).
[41] R. Vivarelli, *Storia delle origini del fascismo. L'Italia dalla grande guerra alla marcia su Roma. Volume II* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991), p. 26.
[42] M. Knox, *To the Threshold of Power, 1922/1933. Origins and dynamics of the Fascist and National Socialist Dictatorships. Volume I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); R. Bosworth, *The Italian Dictatorship. Problems and Perspectives in the Interpretation of Mussolini and Fascism* (New York and London: Open University Press, 1998).
[43] P. Cooke, *The Legacy of the Italian Resistance* (Basingstoke: Palgrave McMillan, 2011).

Needless to say, there are also important differences between the contexts in which this debate took place. Institutionally, France has been a strongly centralised state, with a strong government in Paris considered traditionally a necessity. West Germany, by contrast, is a federal state in which many political debates also occurred at state level, because federalism was seen as an instrument to make Bonn democracy a success. Italy's constitution has been referred to as a hybrid constitution and takes up a middle position between the two.[44] Its constitution foresaw at decentralisation, but the laws realising in this were not enacted until the 1970s, while the topic remains heavily debated even nowadays.[45]

Equally important in shaping the contexts of the respective national debates on democracy and the way in which this concept was contested were differences in party political landscape. West Germany has developed from a ten party Bundestag in 1949 into a stable three-party system, which was in 1983 complemented by the Greens. A sizable communist party lacked in the Federal Republic from 1956 onwards, whereas both France and Italy had large and powerful communist parties next to socialists parties. After 1958, France's party system evolved into 'something resembling a two-party system',[46] with a Left-wing and a Gaullist pole, also as a result of electoral reform which ended the system of proportional representation. It has been remarked that instead of political parties it would be more accurate to talk of political families which repeatedly changed names, alliances and identity.[47] Whereas the presence of communism provides a common feature of France's and Italy's party systems, the lack, after 1958, of a large Christian democrat force as opposite pole in France in turn contrasts both. Indeed, this is an aspect which West Germany and Italy had in common, although the fact that the Italian Christian democrats governed uninterrupted from 1946 onwards made the party much more powerful within state institutions than its West-German counterpart. This leads to the final major difference between the states, namely the exceptionally large role political parties played in Italy under the country's First Republic, which set the country's *partitocrazia* qualitatively apart from the party democracies elsewhere.[48]

[44] M.J. Bull and J.L. Newell, *Italian Politics. Adjustment under Duress* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), p. 116.
[45] T.W. Gold, *The Lega Nord and Contemporary Politics in Italy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave McMillan, 2003).
[46] R. Vinen, 'The Fifth Republic as Parenthesis? Politics since 1945', in: J. McMillan ed., *Modern France 1880-2002* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 74-102, at p. 85.
[47] A. Knapp, *Parties and the Party System in France: A Disconnected Democracy?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).
[48] The literature on this topic is abundant, see for instance: E. Capozzi, *Partitocrazia: il regime Italiano e suoi critici* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2009).

Analysing conceptions of democracy

A study of competing conceptions of democracy is based on the assumption that political concepts are by nature contested. The contestation of political concepts carries particular relevance in the case of democracy– even though the concept was universally endorsed in postwar Western Europe.[49] In his seminal article on the essential contestability of political concepts, Walter Bryce Gallie analysed what it actually means that political concepts are contested. He also discussed the concept of democracy.[50] Two of the reasons for the essential contestability of political concepts are of particular relevance here.

First of all, Gallie noted that democracy is an internally complex concept, because it aims to reconcile its diverse and sometimes mutually exclusive composing aspects, such as full popular participation with the idea of majority rule. In his work on political concepts, Michael Freeden builds upon this observation. Although he does not single out democracy in particular, he highlights an important feature of political concepts' internal complexity significant for this study. Freeden denotes the different aspects of a certain concept as the 'building blocks' of a political ideology – with which he means the distinctive configurations of political concepts.[51] These building blocks are in the case of democracy the conceptions which are in political science literature often associated with democracy, such as social or political equality, the separation of powers, individual freedom, and free and fair elections.[52] These building blocks cannot provide a check list of what democracy is, because their meaning and hierarchy stand at the centre of the debate between political actors on the valid conceptualisation of democracy. Even when political actors all claimed to conceptualise democracy in terms of, for instance, individual freedom, they connect this conception to different other aspects of their conception of democracy, and thereby reconfigure democracy's meaning, or could simply give this conception another hierarchical position in their democratic vocabulary, and thereby augment or diminish its relative importance, with consequences for the meaning of democracy.

Apart from the fact that they are internally complex, there is a second reason why the concept of democracy remains open to conflicting conceptualisations with relevance

[49] Müller, *Contesting Democracy*, p. 3; Dunn, *Setting the People Free*, p. 14.
[50] W.B. Gallie, 'Essentially Contested Concepts', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, vol. 56 (1955-1956), pp. 167-198, at pp. 183-187.
[51] M. Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory. A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 55.
[52] R.A. Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 220.

for this study. Democracy is for Gallie not only an internally complex concept, but 'steadily established itself as the appraisive political concept *par excellence*'.[53] He notes that there were 'dog-fights' over the right meaning of democracy, because virtually every political actor claimed to be democratic. This moral and political imperative to be a democrat was related to the fact that democracy was the key to political legitimacy and political power after 1945. Precisely in an age in which everyone claimed to be a democrat, the meaning of democracy therefore remained far from settled.

Freeden expounds upon Gallie's notion of 'appraisive' concepts and demonstrates that a concept's 'appraisiveness' affects how it is conceptualised. Freeden argues that although reason organises thinking about politics, the conceptualisation of political concepts is also defined by its context.[54] Political concepts might consequently be organised in a way that 'is rationally flawed but emotionally appealing', because political actors have to convey their rhetoric in language accessible to the masses to which their message is addressed.[55] The conceptualisation of democracy is thus not only shaped by culture, history and other relevant contexts, but also by the 'moves' actors make with language. This results in a semantic power struggle in which political actors have a relative freedom to settle, or, in Freeden's words, 'decontest' the meaning of essentially contested and 'appraisive' political concepts and put forward their interpretation of this concept as the only one valid.[56] This approach to the study of the concept of democracy presumes a certain agency of political actors in the conceptualisation of political concepts. Democracy's meaning, like that of other concepts, is not fully historically determined, but should instead, 'be historicized and contextualized through an analytical focus on the speech act situations where power positions are established through the appropriation of key concepts and their ensuing interpretative power'.[57]

Democracy has been so 'appraisive' in postwar history that it influenced the struggle for political power. 'Democracy' was the key to political legitimacy, which meant that the questioning of the democratic credentials of political antagonists was connected to the delegitimation of the political legitimacy and their claim to political power. So

[53] Gallie, 'Essentially Contested Concepts', p. 184. This is aided by the fact that the concept after the War became an 'empty formula', see: W. Conze, H. Maier, C. Meier and H.L. Reimann, 'Demokratie', in: O. Brunner, W. Conze and R. Koselleck eds., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (7 vols., Stuttgart, 1972-1992), Volume I, pp. 821-899, at p. 898.
[54] Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, p. 100
[55] G.F. Gaus, *Political Concepts and Political Theories* (Oxford: Westview Press, 2000), p. 35.
[56] Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, p. 5.
[57] B. Strath, 'Ideology and History', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, vol. 13 no.1 (2006), pp. 23-42, at p. 40.

political actors in postwar Europe not only had the freedom, but also a clear incentive to engage in a conceptual struggle over democracy's meaning, because the outcome of this semantic struggle was related to the question of political power. They consequently rhetorically used the wide range of possible connotations of democracy to challenge their adversaries' democratic credentials and, by implication, their legitimacy to rule. This meant that, in the words of Jan Werner Müller, historians should 'carefully analyse attempts to create new conceptual meanings by recontextualizing ostensibly democratic values'.[58]

This study on the conceptualisation of democracy thereby builds upon these two contributions to the study of political concepts, their 'appraisiveness' and their internal complexity, and explains how and why political actors conceptualised democracy, and how their conceptions related to the context in which political actors operated. This approach is explanatory and refrains from 'clearing up' different interpretations or engaging in the quest of the valid usage of this concept.[59] It studies both the meaning and usage of democracy and the building blocks with which this term was associated, such as equality and liberty, and studies how the concept of democracy featured in notions of institutional reform, foreign policy and the economic system. By focussing on the way in which political actors conceptualised democracy and contested the conceptualisations of others in the strife for political power, this study investigates those conceptions of democracy in relation to each other and is consequently able to assess if and how different conceptions of democracy converged. The key indicator of convergence and divergence of understandings of democracy is obviously the question to what extent political actors accepted each other's conceptions of democracy, and by implication also each other, as democratic.

This conceptual approach to democracy, grounded upon the agency of political actors to 'decontest' the meaning of democracy, also defines the source material. Because the study investigates conceptions of democracy in their political context, only sources which commented on contemporary political events, written by political actors who influenced those events and/or how people thought about those events are studied, because these sources elucidate how the relationship between conceptualisation, context

[58] J.W. Müller, 'European Intellectual History as Contemporary History', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 46 no. 3 (2011), pp. 574-590, at p. 589.
[59] Gaus, *Political Concepts and Political Theories*, p. 36.

and power actually worked. This means that this study is limited to the public political debate between major political actors, and does therefore not study publications intended exclusively for internal political party audiences, government meeting minutes, memoires or private correspondence.

The study centres on those political actors who exercised most influence on this debate, because their 'speech acts' are the most relevant for the way in which the concept of democracy was contested. These actors were in the first place political parties. The first decades after the War were the core of the age of 'party democracy'. Political parties were crucial in the democratic process, not only as recruiters of political representatives, but also as bearers of ideologies and engines of the political debate.[60] This means that the source material includes largely publications circulated by political parties in the public arena, and only published material such as party programmes, election campaign manifestoes, and articles in party newspapers are included. This study focuses on the communist, socialist, Radical, Christian democrat, Poujadist and Gaullist parties of France; the Christian democrat, socialist, communist, liberal and the emerging Green party in the case of West Germany; and the communist, socialist, social-democratic, Christian democrat, and neo-fascist party in the case of Italy, as well as the short-lived antiparty-party *Fronte dell'Uomo Qualunque*. This entails that all major actors who claimed to be democrats are included in this analysis, which in turn means that his study departs from a historiography that often excludes parties at the fringes of the political spectrum, most notably the communist parties of France and Italy.[61] In a conceptual history, these forces deserve to be included, because also these parties claimed to be democratic and are essential to understand how certain conceptions of democracy gained ground at the expense of others.

The most politically sensitive, heated and relevant debate on democracy in postwar Europe was undertaken by people who were actively involved not only in debating, but also in practicing democracy. The study of party sources therefore also includes the publications of their major politicians. They are studied here as actors who put forward their conceptions of democracy and challenged those of others. Their discourse is guiding in explaining the problematic and contested nature of democracy in

[60] R. Gunter and L. Diamond, 'Types and Functions of Parties', in: R. Gunter and L.Diamond eds., *Political Parties and Democracy* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2001), pp. 3-39.
[61] See for instance: Conway and Depkat, 'Towards a European History of the Discourse of Democracy', p. 149.

postwar Western Europe. This focus on politicians is concomitant on the specific nature of the 'appraisive' concept democracy as the key to political power discussed above. Again, the sources that are studied from these politicians are solely sources written to reflect on contemporary politics: pamphlets, essays, published speeches and articles.

Despite their dominance, the compatibility between political parties and democracy was not taken for granted. Anti-party political movements such as the French Gaullists or the Italian *Fronte dell'Uomo Qualunque*, and prominent social movements challenged the importance of political parties in postwar democracies. Although small but significant social movements also existed throughout the 1940s and 1950s – think only of the Catholic Action organisation in Italy or the anti-rearmament movement in West Germany – movements which entered the debate on the conceptualisation of democracy and put forward a distinct conception of democracy emerged more prominently during the 1960s and 1970s. The relevant chapters dealing with this timeframe therefore also build upon publications from these movements and their leaders. The sources studied in this category include newspaper articles, pamphlets, books and, eventually during the 1970s, also election campaign material.

All these actors share the important feature that they were both subject and object in the debate on democracy in postwar Western Europe. Jointly, these sources provide the empirical base of this study: they give a comprehensive, albeit not exhaustive, impression of the public political debate on democracy in three countries by those actors who left the deepest imprint on this debate and therefore most clearly affected the meaning of the concept of democracy.

Outline

This study is structured roughly chronologically in five chapters dealing with the period between the end of the Second World War and the 1980s, followed by a general conclusion. The following chapter discusses the political debate in the period between liberation and constitution signing, roughly from 1943 to 1949. It argues that Western Europe witnessed a 'democratic moment' which coincided with national liberations and demonstrates the link between the semantic confusion that existed over democracy's meaning and the strife for political power. It subsequently demonstrates how the explanations that political actors gave for the failure of Interwar democracies intersected

with postwar power constellations and shows how different notions of democracy were reflected in the countries' postwar constitutions.

The second chapter centres around the iciest phase of the Cold War in Western Europe, and argues that seen from the perspective of the debate on democracy, this period was at the time not considered a stable era of reconstruction and economic growth, but a period of tensions, and (perceived) threats of communism, neo-fascism, Gaullism, and authoritarianism, related to the question who enjoyed democratic legitimacy. Around the turn of the 1960s, these stark divisions were partially overcome and the third chapter unveils how in West Germany and Italy socialist and social democratic parties and Christian democrats converged over the rules of the democratic game. The chapter compares these developments with the fall of the Fourth Republic in France in which there was an alternation of power relations in which the Gaullists institutionalised their conception of democracy and encountered continuing challenges of their democratic legitimacy. The fourth chapter addresses the sense of a crisis of democratic government which was partially a response to the increased agreement among political elites on the principles on democracy, and was expressed by extra-parliamentary forces at the end of the 1960s. The chapter highlights the similarities between the conceptions of democracy aired inside and outside parliament. It also pays extensive attention to the parliamentary reactions to the extra-parliamentary challenge to their political legitimacy.

The final chapter discusses the major transformation in the debate on democracy in all states from the second half of the 1970s onwards, which saw a further convergence of conceptions of democracy. This convergence consisted of an acceptance of the institutions of representative democracy by the extra-parliamentary Left, the changing conceptions of democracy among the Left in France and Italy in a period of international détente, and a changing appreciation of the role of civic participation and the market economy in times of economic hardship. It argues that these developments left France and West Germany with a broad consensus on the rules of the democratic game among political elites, but that this consensus between major political parties worsened the problems of Italian democracy and contributed to the fall of the First Republic in the early 1990s. The study concludes with an analysis of the major themes which characterised the postwar debate on democracy and connects these to the contemporary discussion about the state of democracy.

I. The transformation of democracy in the aftermath of the War

Political reconstruction as a democratic moment

In the phase of political reconstruction after the devastation of the War, one political concept reigned supreme. 'The whole world talks about democracy', noted the future West German President Theodor Heuss in 1947, as he captured the overwhelming support which this concept enjoyed.[1] However, even though virtually every politician claimed to be a democrat, the concept did not have a single meaning. In the postwar window of 'radical openness' in which the scope of political reform seemed unlimited,[2] democracy was a concept which was both universally cheered upon and deeply contested. This resulted in fierce disputes about the direction which the transformation of democracy should take.

The political reconstruction was dominated by Christian democrats and socialists, in France joined by the Gaullists, but also, in France and Italy, by the communists, who, thanks to their contribution to the resistance enjoyed their 'finest hour'.[3] This meant that widely disparate forces and ideologies claimed to be democratic. A few examples illustrate the way in which democracy forced itself upon politicians of widely disparate ideological convictions. The head of the French provisional government, General Charles de Gaulle, was allegedly a late convert as he started referring to the 'republic' only during the War.[4] Nonetheless, he claimed in front of the consultative assembly that he would 'return democracy' to France.[5] Maurice Thorez, the leader of the French communist party (PCF), claimed at the party's congress in 1945 that the PCF embodied a 'renewed democracy'. Yet, he also asserted that the Soviet Union was 'the most complete form of democracy', and thereby exposed the wide range of different connotations of this concept.[6] The Italian *Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale* (CLN) was equally composed of parties whose discourse was permeated with references to democracy. In terms of personnel, the Italian

[1] T. Heuss, 'Das deutsche Schicksal und unsere Aufgabe' (1947), in: T. Heuss, *Politiker und Publizist. Aufsätze und Reden* (Tübingen: Wunderlich, 1984), pp. 337-346, at p. 340.
[2] See on this moment of antifascist unity also: Eley, *Forging Democracy*, pp. 283-298.
[3] D. Sassoon, 'The Rise and Fall of West European Communism 1939-48', *Contemporary European History*, vol. 1 no. 2 (1992), pp. 139-169, at p. 149.
[4] Facon, *La IVe République*, p. 21.
[5] C. de Gaulle, 'Discours prononcé à l'assemblée consultative provisoire' (9 novembre 1944) in: C. de Gaulle, *Discours et Messages. Pendant la guerre juin 1940-janvier 1946* (Paris: Plon, 1970), pp. 471-474, at p. 472.
[6] M. Thorez, 'Une politique française. Renaissance – démocratie – unité. Rapport au Xe congrès du Parti communiste français' (1945), in: M. Thorez, *Une politique du grandeur française* (Paris: Editions Sociales Paris, 1945), pp. 263-366, at p. 338.

Christian Democratic Party (*Democrazia cristiana*, DC) displayed a remarkable continuity with its predecessor, the Popular Party, but not only its programmes, but also its name explicitly expressed the aspiration to mark a new, democratic beginning for Catholic-inspired politics.[7] The Italian communist party (PCI), claimed, like its French counterpart, to stand for a new, and 'progressive democracy',[8] while the socialists called upon its supporters to go 'from the palace revolution of 25 July to the popular democratic revolution, struggle for a socialist republic of workers, affirming the postulates of liberty, of democracy and of social equality'.[9]

The opportunities to contest the key principles and actors of the political transition were more limited in the Western zones of Germany, where the Allies controlled political life and closely monitored all political activities.[10] They were doubtful whether the supposed authoritarian mentality of the German people allowed them to become democrats, and they discriminated against political initiatives which were fostered extremism or nationalism.[11] Yet, also here the liberation from Nazi-rule coincided with a surge in tributes to democracy. Kurt Schumacher, leader of the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (SPD) was somewhat sceptical about this sudden dedication to the democratic ideal. He remarked that 'For the rest of the world it is both astonishing and bitter that in this country of hostility against democracy, suddenly all people want to be democrats'.[12]

Even though all these parties were antifascist in conviction, 'democracy' did not simply mean antifascism. Typical for the universal appeal of democracy was the fact that it not solely appealed to the antifascist parties, but to those who questioned the equation between antifascism and democracy as well. The CLN's attempts to democratise Italy were contested by forces who were anti-antifascist, but still claimed to be democratic. The *Fronte dell'Uomo Qualunque* (Common Man's Front), founded in Naples in 1945, rejected

[7] P. Scoppola, *La democrazia cristiana in Italia dal 1943 al 1947* (Milan: Dott. A. Giuffrè editore, 1975), pp. 177-180.
[8] A. Agosti, 'Partito Nuovo e democrazia progressiva nell'elaborazione dei comunisti', in: C. Franceschini, S. Guerrieri and G. Monina eds., *Le idee costituzionali della resistenza. Atti del Convegno di studi Roma 19, 20 e 21 ottobre 1995* (Rome: Presidenza del Consiglio dei ministri, 1995), pp. 235-248.
[9] Quoted by: G. Scilanga, *Le Due Italie dalla Resistenza alla Repubblica* (Bari: Laterza, 2010), p. 112.
[10] R.L. Merrit, *Democracy Imposed. U.S. Occupation Policy and the German Public 1945-1949* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).
[11] D.E. Rogers, 'Transforming the German Party System: The United States and the Origins of Political Moderation 1945-1949', *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 65 no. 3 (1993), pp. 512-541.
[12] K. Schumacher, 'Konsequenzen deutscher Politik' (1945), in: K. Schumacher, *Turmwächter der Demokratie. Ein Lebensbild von Kurt Schumacher. II. Reden und Schriften* (Berlin: GMBH Verlags, 1953), pp. 25-50, at p. 32.

the CLN as an elitist clique acting in authoritarian fashion.[13] With their objective to 'incalculate genuine democratic values' in the average Italian,[14] the CLN-parties had a conception of political leadership that was very hierarchical and therefore antidemocratic.[15] Indeed, the Front stated that 'even fascism was progressive in its kind' and that the progressive democracy of the resistance was yet another form of elite domination by professional politicians, while Italy really needed a 'democracy without adjectives' based upon a de-politicisation of civil society.[16] More exemplary still for the universal appeal of democracy was the fact that even the Italian Social Movement (*Movimento Sociale Italiano*, MSI), the main heir to the fascist party, claimed 'to represent the forces of law and order and thus of unity, and thus of democracy'.[17]

It is obvious that the imperative to assert the democratic credentials of any political ideology was arguably one of the major consequence of the War. This pervasive embracing of democracy was concomitant on the specific geopolitical situation, which made a moment of 'radical openness' possible. Different notions of democracy therefore preceded the coming of the Cold War, and the immediate aftermath of the War witnessed the expression of some of the most crucial political differences between the Left and conservatives regarding the transformation of democracy. Their clashes centred on three main themes, namely the reform of representative institutions, the relationship between capitalism and democracy, and the compatibility between political parties and democracy. The disparate views which they expressed on these issues developed partially out of different readings of the events of the Interwar era. They were ultimately reflected in the postwar constitutions, which consequently mirrored the preoccupations of the reformers in the immediate aftermath of the War. The debates in the era of constitution signing therefore had a lasting influence on the shape of postwar democracy.

[13] A.M. Imbriani, *Vento del Sud. Moderati, Reazionari, Qualunquisti 1943-1948* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1996).
[14] R.A. Ventresca, 'Mussolini's Ghost: Italy's *Duce* in History and Memory', *History and Memory*, vol. 18 no. 1 (2006), pp. 86-119, at p. 91.
[15] See, for instance: G. Orsina, 'L'antipolitica dei moderati: dal qualunquismo al berlusconismo', *Ventunesimo secolo*, vol. 30 no. 1 (2013), pp. 91-111.
[16] 'Due Democrazie', *Fronte dell'Uomo Qualunque*, 13 February 1946, p. 1. Fondazione Ugo Spirito e Renzo di Felice, Archivi della Destra, Rome.
[17] Movimento Sociale Italiano, *Situazione politica e blocchi* (1946), Fondazione Ugo Spirito e Renzo di Felice, Archivio del Movimento Sociale Italiano, Serie 2, busta 19, 56.

The lessons of Interwar democracy

The disparate understandings of what the transformation of democracy required in terms of institutions and socioeconomic conditions related to different lessons which politicians drew from the failure of Interwar democracies. Politicians had an instrumentalist conception of the past, in which history was used to assert democratic legitimacy in the present. Schumacher, for instance, considered his party a judge with the moral authority to rule on the democratic credentials of others. Based upon their behaviour in the past, he stated that 'all enemies of democracy sit in the dock of the courtroom'.[18] The communists 'should plead guilty', because 'without their obstruction the death of parliamentarianism in Germany would have been impossible'.[19] The same counted for the 'bourgeois' parties, which, as protectors of German capitalism were also responsible for the failure of Weimar.[20] Konrad Adenauer, leader of the nascent Christian Democratic Union (CDU) responded by stating that Hitler could come to power because the SPD prime minister of Prussia and the SPD-interior minister 'refused to do anything'.[21]

Such direct accusations were certainly political rhetoric, but they demonstrated how important it was to delegitimise the democratic credentials of political opponents. They also unveiled deeper-lying concerns with the fate of Interwar democracy. For the major Left-wing parties, the causes of its troubles lay partially in the failed integration of the masses in the state. Especially in Germany and Italy, the Left argued that the average citizen lacked a sufficient level of political development which could have enabled this integration. Its absence paved the way for the rise of fascism and Nazism. The Italian resistance hero Ferrucio Parri stated that fascism had accentuated the lack of civic education of the average Italian.[22] Similarly, Germans had according to Schumacher remained subjects rather than citizens.[23] Schumacher believed that 'the longing for democracy is alive in large parts of the population',[24] but the 'problem for democracy

[18] Schumacher, 'Konsequenzen deutscher Politik', p. 26.
[19] *Ibid*., p. 30.
[20] See also: Ullrich, *Der Weimar-Komplex*, p. 129.
[21] K. Adenauer, 'Zeigt daß Ihr auf dem Wege der politische Reife seid. Wahlkampfrede in Pulheim bei Köln' (1946), in: K. Adenauer, *Die Demokratie ist für uns eine Weltanschauung. Reden und Gespräche 1946-1967* (Bonn: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 1998), pp. 10-26, at p. 17.
[22] F. Parri, 'Per la chiarezza democratica' (1946), in: F. Parri, *Scritti 1915-1975* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1976), pp. 207-221, at p. 207.
[23] K. Schumacher, 'Aufgaben und Ziele der deutsche Sozialdemokratie' (1946), in: Schumacher, *Turmwächter der Demokratie. II*, pp. 75-101, at p. 77.
[24] Schumacher, 'Konsequenzen deutscher Politik', p. 30.

currently is that the masses should first be taught to ability to judge'.[25] This lack of a democratic spirit had offered elites the opportunity to mobilise against the people and thwart democratic government. This also pointed to progressive concerns over the intentions of those elites and revealed a latent confidence in the political abilities of the people – once they had been taught how to behave like democrats. The democratic inclinations of the socioeconomic elites, however, were questionable, and this also casted a shadow over the democratic credentials of their political rivals, the bourgeois parties, both in the past and in the present. When Schumacher stated that the Catholic *Zentrum* party had displayed an 'authoritarian capitalism' that paved the way for Nazism,[26] he simultaneously launched an assault on the Christian democrats, because 'the leaders of the bourgeois parties still live in the world before 1932'.[27]

Elites were able to mobilise against the people thanks to the capitalist system, which was by the Left considered the biggest contributor to democracy's troubles in the 1920s and 1930s. The Italian communists stated that the rise of fascism had exposed 'the true reactionary nature of the Italian state', which was not democratic, but 'a ruthless and inept economic dictatorship exercised by plutocratic and privileged groups responsible for the establishment of fascism'.[28] The German communist party (KPD) stated that in its first major postwar declaration that the 'catastrophe' of Germany was caused by 'big capital such as Krupp and Siemens'.[29] Yet the rejection of capitalism was not the monopoly of the communists, but broadly shared in progressive circles. Pietro Nenni, leader of the Italian socialists (PSI) claimed that after the Great War, while fascism was still weak, the working class could have come to power. 'But then it [fascism] turned to the bourgeoisie and started to gain support. Under the mask of nationalists and imperialists, fascism has always been a movement of the most corrupt and most reactionary guardians of capitalism'.[30] Also for Schumacher, 'big capital has been an enemy of democracy'.[31]

[25] *Ibid*., p. 45.
[26] K. Schumacher, 'Von der Freiheit zur sozialen Gerechtigkeit' (1948), in: Schumacher, *Turmwächter der Demokratie. II*, pp. 111-138, at p. 137.
[27] Schumacher, 'Aufgaben und Ziele der deutsche Sozialdemokratie', p. 77.
[28] F. Onori, *Democrazia progressiva* (Rome: l'Unità, 1945), p. 13.
[29] K.P.D., *Aufruf zum des Zentralkomitees der KPD vom. 11 Juni 1945 an das deutsche Volk zum Aufbau eines antifaschistisch-demokratischen Deutschland* (1945), in: M. Reimann ed., *Dokumente der Kommunistische Partei Deutschland 1945-1956* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1965), pp. 1-8, at p. 1.
[30] P. Nenni, *Che cosa vuole il Partito Socialista? Discorso pronunciato alla Sala Roma di Napoli il 3 Settembre 1944* (Roma: Consiglio Nazionale del PSI, 1944), p. 6.
[31] K. Schumacher, 'Sozialismus – Eine Gegenwartsaufgabe' (1947), in: Schumacher, *Turmwächter der Demokratie. II*, pp. 102-108, at p. 106.

Capitalism and democracy were incompatible, because for capitalists democracy only had an instrumental value and ultimately capitalism wanted 'democracy out of this world'.[32]

The major problem with free market capitalism was that it harmed social equality, a core notion of the Left-wing understanding of democracy. Léon Blum, leader of the French socialists until 1946, argued that democracy's difficulties were caused by the absence of true equality, which denoted something more profound than mere equality before the law and harboured also a socioeconomic notion of democracy. 'To recognise popular sovereignty, only majority rule is acceptable, or even the only one conceivable, and, for the composition of the majority, all citizens are necessarily considered equal'.[33] Yet mere political equality was for Blum a 'false' equality. Capitalism forced citizens to compete with each other and egoism, rather than a healthy individualism, ruled modern societies. So whereas pre-war democracy theoretically offered equality, 'democracy' remained a hollow phrase for most citizens. Only when the state intervened actively to foster not solely political, but also social equality, 'true equality takes the place of false equality', and the weaknesses of democracy could be overcome.[34]

So generally, the Left saw capitalism as the major threat to democracy, because it had stood at the cradle of fascism. PCI-leader Palmiro Togliatti expressed the concerns of many on the Left when he stated that 'the roots of fascism still exist. If we do not eradicate these roots, fascism can return'.[35] This eradication required an activist state which intervened in the economy to foster social equality, and which emancipated citizens and taught them how to become democrats. Yet the lessons drawn by the Left from the evens of the Interwar era were not everywhere the same, especially when it came to the relationship between communism and democracy. For the Italian Left, the *Biennio rosso* and the rise of fascism were the 'proof' that it would be impossible to secure democracy 'without the unity of the working class'.[36] This resulted in the formation of a Popular Front in which the communists quickly gained the upper hand, and which lasted until the mid-1950s.[37] The collaboration between socialists and communists led to the rupture with

[32] Schumacher, 'Von der Freiheit zur sozialen Gerechtigkeit', p. 137.
[33] L. Blum, 'Notes d'Allemagne (1943-1945)', in: L. Blum, *L'Œuvre de Léon Blum V. 1940-1945 Mémoires de la prison et le procès: À l'échelle humaine* (Paris: Éditions Albin Michel, 1955), pp. 500-514, at p. 505.
[34] *Ibid*., p. 506.
[35] P. Togliatti, *Avanti verso la democrazia. Discorso pronunciato 21 settembre 1944 a Roma* (Rome: l'Unità, 1944), p. 5.
[36] Onori, *Democrazia progressiva*, p. 17.
[37] N. Tranfaglia, 'Socialisti e comunisti nell'Italia repubblicana: Un dialogo sempre difficile', *Studi Storici*, vol. 33 no. 2/3 (1992), pp. 499-511.

those who mistrusted the communists and Giuseppe Saragat founded his own social democratic party.[38] In France, the strained collaboration between socialists and communists continued for a while. Their eventual rupture was less definitive than in Germany, where the antagonism between the SPD and the German Communist party (KPD) was inherited from the 1930s and impossible to bridge in the aftermath of the War, and met resistance from the Allies, Schumacher, and rank-and-file members, while the communist party in the Soviet occupation zone quickly established dominance over the KPD.[39]

Even though hardly anyone disputed the necessity of far-reaching socioeconomic reforms, conservatives and liberals challenged the Left-wing notion that the failures of democracy were mainly related to the economic system. Instead, democracy had failed, they argued, because representative institutions had been unable to meet the challenge of the entrance of the masses into the political arena – whether in the form of the rise of fascism or left-wing militancy. Seen from this perspective, the democracies of Interwar Europe had not been limited democracies constrained by civic immaturity, social inequalities, and elite sabotage, but rather what French resistance groups close to De Gaulle named an 'excess of democracy' in which the masses, often by means of militant parties, had been in the position to dominate the political game.[40] The force of universal suffrage required therefore a clever balance between elected and unelected institutions which prevented party strife, governmental instability, and the electoral rise of parties on the fringes of the political spectrum.

So for conservatives, the institutional outlines of the Italian liberal state, the Weimar Republic, and the French Third Republic had failed to provide stability and secure individual liberties. The rise of movements which either successfully or unsuccessfully challenged Interwar democratic regimes, and the entrance of the masses into politics by means of mass parties, had proven that democracy needed solid and rigid mechanisms to defend itself and the freedoms of its citizens. For obvious reasons, the concerns about the

[38] R. Di Scala, *Renewing Italian Socialism. Nenni to Craxi* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 53.
[39] P. Major, *The Death of the KPD. Communism and Anti-Communism in West Germany 1945-1956* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), ch. 2. The embracing of parliamentary democracy and distancing from the Soviet Union by the SPD in the 1930s was however a slow, and also in some respects, unfinished process, see for instance: C. Bailey, 'The Continuities of West German History. Conceptions of Europe, Democracy and the West in Interwar and Postwar Germany', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, vol. 36 no. 4 (2010), pp. 567-596, at pp. 586-587.
[40] Comité Général d'Étude, 'Le problème constitutionnel français' (1944), in: H. Michel and B. Mirkine-Geutzévitch eds., *Les Idées politiques et sociales de la Résistance* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1954), p. 288; S. Berstein, *Histoire du Gaullisme* (Paris, 2001), p. 61.

radicalisation of the popular will were most profoundly felt in the Western zones of Germany. When the delegates of the Parliamentary Council wrote the Basic Law in 1948, they did so by the explicit agreement that German democracy needed to be made 'militant' in order to avoid the abyss of Weimar. This militancy of democracy, inspired upon Karl Loewenstein's notion of democratic self-defence,[41] was also shared by the SPD, and comprised the commitment to the strictly representative nature of democracy, the willingness to display intolerance against those opposing democratic values or making only instrumental use of them, and institutional mechanisms to provide governmental stability.[42]

In France and Italy, however, this concern for institutional reform which centred on increasing governmental stability was much more dominant among conservatives than among the Left. Already in one of the first drafts of its programme, written in March 1943, the DC stated that the 'state should be constructed on the basis of liberty', with guarantees for the stability of government, the force of the executive, and an effective independence of the judiciary.[43] Political liberties, often also explained in terms of religious liberties, had been insufficiently protected under the liberal regime and should in the future be constitutionally secured. Christian democrat leader Alcide de Gasperi claimed that 'we have to learn from the mistakes of the past, from 1919'.[44] Reformed institutions should guard Italy from the danger that 'thanks to a *piazza* coup, a coup by the Head of State, or both, we will lose our constitutional liberty, something that may never happen again'.[45] This explanation of the rise of fascism emphasised the lack of institutional mechanisms to prevent antidemocratic mass movements from abusing democratic freedoms.

Again, the way in which politicians looked at the past was influenced by political relations in the present. De Gasperi obviously had the Italian socialists and communist in

[41] K. Loewenstein, 'Militant democracy and fundamental rights I', *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 31 no. 3 (1937), pp. 417-432; K. Loewenstein, 'Militant democracy and fundamental rights II', *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 31 no. 4 (1937), pp. 638-658.
[42] Ullrich, *Der Weimar-Komplex*, pp. 272-302.
[43] D.C., 'Linee di ricostruzione (redatto da De Gasperi, marzo 1943), in: F. Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana. Vol. I 1943-1948. Le origini: La DC dalla resistenza alla repubblica* (Rome: Edizione Cinque Lune, 1987), pp. 377-379, at p. 377.
[44] A. de Gasperi, 'La democrazia cristiana e il momento politico (1944)', in: Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana. Vol. I*, pp. 453-462, at p. 460. See for an overview of the programmatic development of the DC: C. Campanini, 'I programmi del partito democratico cristiana', in: Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana. Vol. I*, pp. 205-229.
[45] De Gasperi, 'La democrazia cristiana e il momento politico (1944)', p. 460.

mind when he envisioned dangers to Italian democracy, and stated that 'the parties to which we refer here are totalitarian complexities […] Their party is a philosophical system, a creed, a teaching of a doctrine, […] a surrogate of religion and it assumes the doctrinal functions of a Church'.[46] At the party's first congress in 1946, the DC stated that the communist notion of a 'progressive democracy' was 'fake' and a cover to install the dictatorship of the proletariat.[47] Aided by the fact that the party obtained the relative majority in the 1946 elections for the constituent assembly, the conviction that the DC was the only truly democratic Italian mass party gained ground and ensured that the party considered itself responsible for the development of Italian democracy.[48]

Whereas the failures of Italy's liberal regime deeply influenced debates there, the French past casted a shadow over debates about the Fourth Republic as well. For the Left, history taught that the dangers for French democracy lay in a too powerful executive and a Bonapartist leader who derived his political authority on direct ties with the people and as such undermined the principles of representative democracy. Unsurprisingly, both De Gaulle's constitutional ideas and his popularity aroused such fears, and the Left rejected the direct election of the president by universal suffrage, at least in the current circumstances, because history had taught that the 'passage from presidential power to personal power […] is a known danger and proves to menace democracy […], the attribution of executive power to a man elected by universal suffrage is called plebiscite'.[49] The Gaullists, in turn, read history in their own particular way and were deeply influenced by the instability of the Third Republic in the formulation of their ideas on democracy's transformation. For them, the major problem of the Third Republic was that it had an over-powerful parliament with omnipotent political parties. 'The embarrassment' of France was 'indivisibly connected to the old parties, to the men who led them',[50] and 'the infection of the system by political parties is the first sign of decadence'.[51] De Gaulle, who

[46] A. de Gasperi, 'Il programma della Democrazia Cristiana' (1944), in: A. de Gasperi, *Scritti politici di Alcide de Gasperi* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1979), pp. 274-287, at p. 279.
[47] D.C., '24-27 Aprile 1946. Roma. I Congresso Nazionale della DC. Il programma della DC per la nuova costituzione', in: A. Damiliano ed., *Atti e documenti della democrazia Cristiana 1943-1967. Vol I* (Rome: Edizione Cinque Lune, 1968), pp. 233-251, at p. 233.
[48] G. Galli, *Storia della DC 1943-1993: mezzo secolo di Democrazia cristiana* (Rome: Kaos editore, 2007), pp. 73-74.
[49] L. Blum, 'Les problèmes constitutionnels' (1946), in: Blum, *L'œuvre de Léon Blum VI*, pp. 217-224, at p. 218.
[50] Résistance, 'Des partis, oui, mais d'autres' (1943), in: Michel and Mirkine-Geutzévitch eds., *Les Idées politiques et sociales de la Résistance*, pp. 115-116, at p. 115.
[51] Comité Général d'Étude, 'Le problème constitutionnelle français', p. 295.

voiced these concerns most eloquently, was personally first of all concerned with re-establishing national grandeur.[52] Yet the prevention of party strife and the establishment of a strong and stable executive were essential to achieve this aim and these were exactly the aspects in which the Third Republic had failed most visibly, and which should be the key objectives of institutional reform. The 1875 constitution resembled a 'dictatorship' of the assembly with too much power. This caused difficulties 'above all in the difficult period in which we find ourselves. We have known several experiences with a unique and omnipotent assembly. These experiences almost always finished badly'.[53]

The recent past was consequently very present in the debates about democracy. It served as an instrument to question the democratic credentials of opponents, but also as a way to elaborate on the requirements of democracy's success in the future. Obviously, this debate was characterised by sometimes rather pompous rhetoric. The SPD, of which it has been argued that was the 'only party' that debated the question of National Socialism intensively in the immediate aftermath of the War,[54] argued that 'all the other parties needed the Anglo-Saxons to discover democracy. We would have been democrats even if the Anglo-Saxons had been fascists'.[55] Yet below the surface of this rhetoric, the ideological differences between parties were very real and pointed to four different notions which guided the debate on democracy during the era of constitution signing. Based on their understanding of the rise of fascism, the Left aimed to render postwar democracy more inclusive by fostering integration between citizen and state which required that institutions should be representative, but also directly responsive to popular sovereignty. It also explained democracy in terms of social equality, which required the extension of the state's influence over the economy. These were the components of a transformed democracy endorsed by the Left in France and Italy, but also visible among the more cautious SPD, which claimed, in the word of Willy Brandt, that the difference between postwar and Weimar democracy 'does not lie in the foundation or non-foundation of parties and political parliaments, but [must lie] in the adaption of parliamentarianism to the requirements of a modern democracy. It should in the first

[52] M. Agulhon, 'De Gaulle et l'histoire de France', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, vol. 53 no. 1 (1997), pp. 3-12, at p. 9.
[53] C. de Gaulle, 'Discours radiodiffusé (12th July 1945)', in: De Gaulle, *Pendant la Guerre*, pp. 581-585, at p. 583.
[54] E. Wolgast, *Die Wahrnehmung des Dritten Reiches in der unmittelbaren Nachkriegszeit (1945-1946)* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2001), p. 112.
[55] Schumacher, 'Aufgaben und Ziele der deutsche Sozialdemokratie', p. 80.

place be connected with a truly democratic redesign of the social relationships'.[56] The first priority of the Gaullists and West German and Italian Christian democrats, by contrast, was institutional reform which provided stability and a firm guarantee of individual freedom, which accordingly protected democracy against potential radicalisations of the popular will by the installation of checks-and-balances.

The agreement between Christian democrats and the SPD in West Germany on institutional causes of the failure of Interwar democracy was larger than in France and Italy. All major parties had to face the questions of the electoral successes of the National Socialists in the early 1930s. They agreed that part of the absence of a successful democracy in German history lay in the relationship between citizen and state in post-Unification Germany. For the SPD, the masses 'accepted their fates dumbly' when Hitler was came to power.[57] Heuss argued that democracy had never been 'nationalised' in Germany. Citizens had consequently either reverted into political apathy or embraced a romantic notion of the state.[58] Adenauer agreed that Germans enjoyed a wrong understanding about the role of the state and its relation to the individual. Germans had 'put the State on the altar' and consequently 'degraded' individual liberties.[59] As a consequence of this distrust in the people, politicians concurred that institutional innovation was necessary to stem the possible rise of antidemocratic forces and ensure stability, and that this reform should take the character of a 'militant' democracy with strong means to defend itself against antidemocratic forces.

In Italy, different readings of the past created two political divides which ran through the history of the First Republic. On the one hand, the divide ran between the major parties, the PSI, the PCI, and the DC, and the antagonists of the emerging party state. All the major parties displayed a certain pedagogic stance towards the civic education of citizens and held that the integration of the masses in the state was an exclusive mission of political parties.[60] Yet parties had in Italy been traditionally already been parties of the

[56] W. Brandt, 'Zur Nachkriegspolitik der deutschen Sozialisten' (1944), in: W. Brandt, *Berliner Ausgabe. Band 2. Zwei Vaterländer. Deutsch-Norweger im swedischen Exil – Rückkehr nach Deutschland 1940-1947* (Berlin: Willy Brandt Stiftung, 2000), pp. 154-205, at p. 196.
[57] Schumacher, 'Konsequenzen deutscher Politik' (1945), p. 25.
[58] T. Heuss, *Die deutsche Nationalidee im Wandel der Geschichte* (Stuttgart: Mittelbach Verlag, 1946), p. 28.
[59] K. Adenauer, 'Die Demokratie ist für uns eine Weltanschauung. Grundsatzrede im Nordwestdeutschen Rundfunk über das Programm der CDU' (1946), in: K. Adenauer, *Die Demokratie ist für uns eine Weltanschauung*, pp. 1-9, at p. 2.
[60] Orsina, *Il Berlusconismo nella storia d'Italia*, esp. ch. 2 and 3.

state and had failed in this regard.[61] Their dominance was therefore contested from the outset, and the first reference to parties as homogeneous and elitist *partitocrazia* already stemmed from during the War.[62] However, this cleavage between party and antiparty was, at least for the time, concealed by the rising tensions between the parties, most notably between the DC and the Left. These centred partially, as in Germany and France, on the running of the economy, but also on their international alliances.[63]

Also the contours of the French debate on democracy in the postwar era became discernible in the respective analyses offered for the fate of the Third Republic. On the one side stood the Left, which argued that the Third Republic should be replaced, but which remained committed to ideals of the supremacy of parliament and parties. Thorez claimed that it was 'normal' that in a pluralist society large parties existed which represented different interests. 'Only reactionaries' argued in his eyes that there had been an 'excessive' role for political parties under the Third Republic.[64] On the other side stood the Gaullists, who advocated large scale institutional reform which should diminish the role of parliament and parties and establish a strong executive led by a powerful Head of State. Although both sides came to a consensual arrangement concerning the role of state interference in the economy, the issues of the institutional outline of France and the role political parties remained divisive for decades to come.

The construction of party democracies

It was obvious that the transformation of democracy could only be successful if it was accompanied by a new institutional outline. In West Germany, the decision to write a new constitution was taken by the Allies, who moved decisively to construct the future West German state comprising the three Western occupation zones in June 1948 and who declared that its constitution should be federalist and guarantee individual rights.[65] In Italy, the decision to hold elections for a constituent assembly was taken by decree as part of the agreements in the formation of the government of national unity during the War.

[61] M.S Piretti, 'Continuità e rottura alla nascita del sistema dei partiti', in: Franceschini, Guerrieri and Monina eds., *Le idee costituzionali della resistenza*, pp. 206-212, at p. 209.
[62] E. Capozzi, 'La polemica antipartitocratica', in: G. Orsina ed., *Storia delle destra nell'Italia repubblicana* (Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino editore, 2009), pp. 179-206, at p. 184.
[63] See for instance: R. Ventresca, *Fascism and Democracy. Culture and Politics in the Italian Election of 1948* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2004).
[64] Thorez, 'Une politique française', p. 340.
[65] M. F. Feldkamp, *Der parlamentarische Rat 1948-1949* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), pp. 18-19.

Only in France, the electorate decided by means of referenda that the assembly it elected in the first postwar elections should be a constituent assembly.

The imperative to write new constitutions made the question of the balance between popular sovereignty and checks-and-balances which could tame it of uttermost importance. After the experiences with authoritarian rule, popular sovereignty was the only legitimate source of government and it naturally inspired postwar institutions. Yet politicians also confronted the fact that the Nazi, Vichy and fascist dictatorships had ruled in the name of the people and had rested at least on some measure of popular consent. For understandable reasons, the German debate displayed most features of the consequent distrust of popular sovereignty. Adenauer even held that the German people 'should be remade in their entire being'.[66] These reservations resonated among the Allied occupiers of Germany, who were concerned that Germans were not 'ready' to become democrats and which led to doubts whether the democratisation of Germany could be successful.[67] But also in France and Italy politicians were doubtful whether they could reconcile their aim to found political institutions on the notion of popular sovereignty with the imperative to protect these institutions against the potentially destabilising effects of the expression of the popular will. Political elites were consequently united in their rejection of direct democracy and believed that the expression of the popular will should be managed. Democracy equalled representation, and this counted even for those on the Left most supportive of popular sovereignty.

Reforming party democracy

The unconditional embracement of representation and the emphasis on the importance of a certain distance between politicians and the people almost naturally implied the supremacy of political parties. From the outset, the transformation of postwar democracy therefore centred on their prominence. Typical for opinions among the Christian democrats, the French *Mouvement Républicain Populaire* (MRP) held that parties should act as intermediaries between the people and the state and take care of civic political

[66] K. Adenauer, 'Rede in der Aula der Universität zu Köln' (1946), in: K. Adenauer, *Reden 1917-1967. Eine Auswahl* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1986), pp. 82-106, at p. 89.
[67] H-J. Rupieper, 'Peacemaking with Germany. Grundlinien amerikanischer Demokratisierungspolitik 1945-1954', in: A. Bauerkämper, K.H. Jarausch and M. Payk eds., *Demokratiewunder. Transatlantische Mittler und die kulturelle Öffnung Westdeutschlands 1945-1970* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht GmbH, 2005), pp. 41-56, at p. 46.

education.[68] For the DC, political parties aided in the formulation of political views, because 'ideas do not move by themselves, but need actual stimulation'.[69] Adenauer even stated that it was crucial for the success of German democracy that 'people should be involved in politics', but on the condition that 'all political activities should go through the parties'.[70]

The strongest advocates of party democracy were, however, found on the Left. For the Left, the party was not only a vehicle for political emancipation, but also the pivotal platform for the expression of certain socioeconomic interests. For Blum, there was 'no viable and stable democracy outside a parliamentary regime, and there is no viable and stable parliamentary regime without the organisation of parties'.[71] Following from his understanding of the Third Republic as a 'limited' democracy, PCF-leader Maurice Thorez stated that parliament should be more powerful. Parties were essential, because they voiced the interests of different classes. His acceptance of party political pluralism was still provisional, because the PCF assumed that when class antagonisms eventually subsided, different parties would become obsolete. Nonetheless, it demonstrates that parties were central in the conception of democracy of the French communists.[72]

Whereas in France the supremacy of parties and parliaments was part of the republican tradition, the tribute to party democracy in the Western zones of Germany and in Italy was a consequence of their totalitarian pasts.[73] In Italy, the role of political parties was particularly critical, because the parties had led the armed resistance against fascism. If antifascism was 'the original and historical connotation of Italian democracy', the parties, as embodiments of antifascism, were an intrinsic part of Italian democracy.[74] Political parties facilitated popular participation, expressed the interests of different sections of society, and articulated popular sovereignty. The socialist Lelio Basso was one of the most zealous supporters of party democracy and epitomised the way in which the

[68] E.F. Callot, *Le mouvement républicain populaire. Un parti politique de la démocratie chrétienne en France. Origine, structure, doctrine, programme et action politique* (Paris: Éditions Marcel Rivière, 1978), p. 141.
[69] Democrazia cristiana, 'Il programma della Democrazia Cristiana (Vicenza, 1944)', in: Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana*. *Vol. I*, pp. 419-428, at p. 419.
[70] Adenauer, 'Die Demokratie ist für uns eine Weltanschauung', p. 1.
[71] L. Blum, 'La démission du général De Gaulle et le gouvernement Félix Gouin' (1946), in: Blum, *L'œuvre de Léon Blum. VI*, pp. 158-173, at p. 166.
[72] S. Courtois and M. Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste français* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1995), p. 220.
[73] V. Otto, *Das Staatsverständnis des Parlamentarischen Rates. Ein Beitrag zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Grundgesetzes für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Düsseldorf: Rheinisch-Bergische Druckerei und Verlagsgesellschaft, 1971), pp. 150-151.
[74] Scoppola, *La repubblica dei partiti*, p. 131.

three Italian mass parties conceived of the link between parties and democracy.[75] Basso stated that 'The citizen who has to be politically involved nowadays, who genuinely wants to participate in the exercise of popular sovereignty, can do this every day, […] he is able to control day by day, to influence day by day, the political orientation of his party, and as such the political orientation of parliament and government'. Party democracy was therefore the 'highest form of democracy'.[76]

The pivotal position of parties required a break with the malfunctioning of party democracy in the Interwar era. This reform of party democracy was guided by a few key principles, first of all regarding the behaviour of parties in a democracy. There was a widespread agreement, particularly in West Germany, that parties should avoid harmful political polarisation.[77] Indeed, SPD-prominent Carlo Schmid argued that what defined a party as democratic was whether it gave priority to a sense of responsibility rather than to its particular ideology or the desire to challenge political opponents.[78] Increased party discipline was another way in which party democracy could be reformed, because it contributed to governmental stability. Additionally, only 'democratic' parties should be allowed join the political process. The system should be guarded against what Willy Brandt called 'camouflaged anti-democratic parties. Party programmes should be submitted to public control to ensure this'.[79] In West Germany, this not only led to the delegitimation of the extreme Right, but also to that of the communist party. For Schumacher, the 'communists use methods discernible in any dictatorship. They speculate on the fear for violence among the masses. They are not even impressed when they know that nothing damages democracy as much as the abuse of the word democracy. For them democracy is only the opportunity to assault democracy with the means of democracy'.[80] This immediate rejection of the link between communism and democracy set the West German debate apart from France and Italy, where the compatibility between democracy and the communist parties remained a contested issue.

[75] M. Salvati, 'Il partito nell'elaborazioni dei socialisti', in: Franceschini, Guerrieri and Monina eds., *Le idee costituzionali della resistenza*, pp. 249-267.
[76] L. Basso, 'Sul progetto di Costituzione della Repubblica' (1947), in: L. Basso, *In difesa della democrazia e della costituzione. Scritti scelti* (Milan: Edizioni punto rosso, 2009), pp. 19-24, at p. 24.
[77] P. Brandt, 'Germany after 1945: Revolution by Defeat?', in: R. Rürup ed., *The Problem of Revolution in Germany 1789-1989* (Oxford: Berg, 2002), pp. 129-160, at p. 132.
[78] C. Schmid, 'Weg und Ziel der Sozialdemokratie' (1945), in: C. Schmid, *Politik als geistige Aufgabe. Gesammelte Werkte I* (Munich: Scherz Verlag 1973), pp. 12-33, at p. 17.
[79] Brandt, 'Zur Nachkriegspolitik der deutschen Sozialisten', p. 204.
[80] Schumacher, 'Von der Freiheit zur sozialen Gerechtigkeit', p. 133.

Second, the reform of party democracy was visible in the attempts of parties to reform themselves. This became most obvious in the formation of the Christian democrat parties.[81] In West Germany the formation of the CDU signified the birth of a Christian democrat party which united Catholics and Protestants politically for the first time.[82] In France and Italy, the Christian democrats intended to disconnect politics more clearly from clerical influence and establish parties with a clear interclass appeal.[83] But this kind of renewal was also visible on the Left. The SPD claimed that it was important to reach out to 'all classes that depend on labour' and thereby aimed to broaden its base beyond its traditional working class constituency.[84] Also, the French and Italian communist parties aimed to re-invent themselves. They claimed that they were 'new' parties willing to share governmental responsibility, and had a 'progressive' conception of democracy in which there was place for political pluralism. The PCI's transformation into a *partito nuovo*, most illustrative in this regard, found its symbol in the return of Togliatti on Italian soil, in Salerno in April 1944. The PCI gave absolute priority to defeating fascism in Italy, was open to collaboration in a government of national unity, and should for Togliatti become a more inclusive party which took responsibility. He stated that 'the working class should give up its politics of opposition […]. The new party should also be a national Italian party, incorporating all the progressive traditions of the country'.[85] Yet even though its transformation was very real, the party remained marked by its 'dual loyalty' to the Italian constitution and the Soviet Union. The party was 'democratic and constitutional on the outside', while it had a rigid internal hierarchy and remained tied to Moscow.[86]

[81] A. Pelinka, 'Die Christdemokraten als europäische Parteifamilie', in: M. Gehler, W. Kaiser and W. Wohnout eds., *Christdemokraten in Europa in 20. Jahrhundert* (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2001), pp. 537-555, at p. 544.
[82] W. Becker, 'Der Einfluβ der Unionsparteien auf der politische Ordnung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland', in: E. Lamberts ed., *Christian Democracy in the European Union 1945-1995. Proceedings of the Leuven Colloquium* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997), pp. 224-241, at p. 225.
[83] J-M. Mayeur, 'La Démocratie d'inspiration Chrétienne en France', in: Lamberts ed., *Christian Democracy in the European Union*, pp. 79-92; Scoppola, *La democrazia cristiana in Italia dal 1943 al 1947*.
[84] K. Schumacher, 'Die Wandlungen um den Klassenkampf' (1946), in: Schumacher, *Turmwächter der Demokratie. II*, pp. 292-298, at p. 297.
[85] Togliatti, *Avanti verso la democrazia*, p. 5. See also: A. Vittoria, *Storia del PCI 1921-1991* (Rome: Carocci editore, 2006), p. 64.
[86] P. di Loreto, *Togliatti e la "Doppiezza". Il PCI tra democrazia e insurrezione. 1944-1949* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991), p. 350. The 'svolta' was orchestrated by Stalin: S. Pons, *L'impossibile egemonia. L'USSR, il PCI e le origine della guerra fredda (1943-1947)* (Rome: Carocci editore, 1999), p. 157.

Contesting party democracy

The parties made an effort to improve the functioning of party democracy, while they remained committed to their conviction that democracy required mass parties. This opinion was hardly contested, at least not on the political level, in Germany.[87] In France and Italy, however, the contestation of the principle of party democracy determined their postwar history. In France, the question of party democracy became the main divisive issue between the Gaullists and the 'republican' parties. If for the Left, the party was the key to political emancipation and the instrument which most efficiently expressed diverse socioeconomic interests in a powerful parliament, De Gaulle considered it as the source of political divisions and instability. Democracy centred not on particular interests, but on the general interest and parties were therefore a danger to democracy.[88] In his last major speech as prime minister on 31 December 1945, De Gaulle denounced the principles of party democracy in firm language and opposed it with a plea for a limited role for the assembly, the separation of powers, and the denunciation of party politics. If parties failed to acknowledge that democracy was about the general interest, history could repeat itself, De Gaulle concluded. 'I believe I can tell you here, that if you act without drawing lessons from our political history of the last shocking years, and in particular, of what happened in 1940, if you do not realise the absolute necessity of the authority, dignity and responsibility of government, you err in a situation in which one day or another, I predict, you will bitterly regret to have taken the road which you have taken'.[89] De Gaulle's challenge to party democracy was rebuffed and he stepped down in January 1946. He re-entered the debate about the drafts of the constitution with speeches in Bayeux and Épinal that spring. Again, the construction of the Fourth Republic as a *régime de partis* was the main objective of his critique. De Gaulle argued that the Fourth Republic's constitutional draft ensured 'that these parties have at their discretion directly and without counterweight all the powers of the Republic'.[90] He expected that this would lead to

[87] Even though intellectuals advocated a more participatory form of democracy: S.A. Forner, 'Das Sprachrohr keiner Besatzungsmacht oder Partei. Deutsche Publizisten, die Vereinigten Staaten und die demokratische Erneuerung in Westdeutschland 1945-1949', in: Bauerkämper, Jarausch and Payk eds., *Demokratiewunder*, pp. 159-189; S.A. Forner, *German Intellectuals and the Challenge of Democratic Renewal. Culture and Politics after 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), esp. pp. 86-103.

[88] V. Alibert-Fabre, 'La pensée constitutionnelle du général de Gaulle à « l'épreuve des circonstances »', *Revue française de science politique*, vol. 40 no. 5 (1990), pp. 699-713.

[89] C. de Gaulle, 'Déclaration à l'assemblée constituante' (1945) in: De Gaulle, *Pendant la guerre*, pp. 661-664, at p. 662.

[90] C. De Gaulle, 'Discours prononcé à 'Épinal' (1946): C. De Gaulle, *Discours et Messages. Dans l'attente 1946-1958* (Paris: Plon, 1970), pp. 26-33, at p. 31.

'anarchy' and 'tyranny'.[91] It was therefore 'indispensable for the future of the country and democracy' that the new institutions guarded themselves against the threat that parties posed to democratic government.[92]

A similar contestation of the ideals of party democracy existed in Italy, even if no opponent of party democracy could match De Gaulle's stature and the legacy of fascism casted a doubt over the democratic credentials of any anti-party vision view.[93] The rejection of the emerging *partitocrazia* was expressed most notably by the *Fronte dell'Uomo Qualunque*, whose brief electoral surge was an early sign that the dominance of political parties in Italy was contested from the start.[94] Indeed, the Front rejected political parties from the perspective of democracy and claimed that parties in general, and the CLN-parties in particular, jeopardised democratic government in Italy. The antifascist forces, like fascism itself, allegedly held that without leadership of an aristocratic class of politicians there could be no political progress in the country, which put their efforts to emancipate citizens in a completely different light. Like fascism, the CLN was still in favour of an 'ethical state' that told people how to live their lives and a politicised civil society characterised by the managing for state-citizen relations by the mass parties.[95] Seen from this perspective, the 'democratic' political parties behaved in an authoritarian fashion, telling ordinary Italian how to live and displayed worrying continuities with the fascist party in how they used state institutions and interfered in civil society.

The Front's electoral success was eclipsed by the coming of the Cold War, and many of its former supporters fled to the Christian democrats in order to prevent a Left-wing electoral victory. The demise of the Front ensured that the neo-fascist Italian Social Movement (MSI) as the only political party of any size left which denounced the emerging *partitocrazia*.[96] For the MSI, the *partitocrazia* governed by means of compromise and horse trading and thereby contributed to divisions in Italian society. Whereas the former

[91] De Gaulle, 'Discours prononcé à 'Épinal', p. 29.
[92] C. De Gaulle, 'Discours prononcé à Bayeux' (1946), in: C. De Gaulle, *Discours et Messages. Dans l'attente 1946-1958* (Paris, 1970), pp. 5-11, at p. 7.
[93] See, for instance: R. Chiarini, 'La fortuna del gollismo in Italia. L'attacco della destra alla "Repubblica dei partiti', *Storia Contemporanea*, vol. 23 no. 3 (1992), pp. 385-424.
[94] See for instance: C.M. Lomartire, *Il Qualunquista. Guglielmo Giannini e l'antipolitica* (Milan: Mondadori, 2008); M. Tarchi, *L'Italia populista. Da qualunquismo ai girotondi* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2003); Orsina, *Il Berlusconismo nella storia dell'Italia*.
[95] 'Due milioni di voti per l'Uomo Qualunque', *Fronte dell'Uomo Qualunque*, 30 June 1946, p. 1. Fondo Fronte dell'Uomo Qualunque, Fondazione Ugo Spirito e Renzo di Felice, Archivi delle Destre, Rome.
[96] *Elezioni politici 1948. Il M.S.I. agli Italiani* (1948), Fondazione Ugo Spirito e Renzo di Felice, Archivio del Movimento Sociale Italiano, Serie 2, busta 19, 114.

CLN-parties claimed to present the Italian nation in its entirety and provide a constitution for all, this constitution was in fact no more than a political compromise of a deeply divided political class turned with its back towards society – and had as such little to do with democracy. Their political power moreover also jeopardised the 'neutrality' of the state: 'We cannot allow that the parties violate or betray popular sovereignty, that they take over the public administration and reduce it to impotence, exhaustion, disorder and anarchy'.[97]

The political parties everywhere dealt effectively with such anti-party sentiments. They challenged the democratic legitimacy of any kind of anti-party critique, by portraying it as dictatorial. Any system which not centred on the mediation of political parties was a system which centred necessarily either on a direct bond between the executive and the people, which could only lead to a dictatorship, or a system which jeopardised political pluralism by simply adhering to the principle of majority rule. SPD-prominent Carlo Schmid captured these two objections. He understood that the prevalent *Zeitgeist* worked against parties, thanks to the failures of Weimar, but also because of 'the evil tyranny that for twelve years has been carried out in the name of the word "party"'.[98] But parties were an indispensable part of democracy, because 'groups that form around the same interests, advocate these interests through political parties. If one criticises the party, this means that one criticises the possibility to voice their concerns and interest politically. Even if one wants, one could not bypass parties, because this leads to career politicians, bureaucracy and dictatorship'.[99] The attack on parties was therefore considered an assault on democracy as such. Blum claimed that De Gaulle's speech in Bayeux 'scared every republican'.[100] His attack on the parties 'opposed the democratic system' and underscored 'the danger of a personal conception of power in a democracy'.[101] In Italy, the *Fronte dell'Uomo Qualunque* was attacked as a remnant of fascism, and according to a young Aldo Moro 'ready to accept any dictatorship'.[102]

[97] Movimento Sociale Italiano, *Primo Congresso Nazionale* (1948), Fondazione Ugo Spirito, Archivi della Destra, Fondo Mario Cassiano, Busta 5, 57.
[98] Schmid, 'Weg und Ziel der Sozialdemokratie', pp. 13-14.
[99] *Ibid*.
[100] L. Blum, 'La constitution de 1946' (1946), in: L. Blum, *L'Œuvre de Léon Blum. VI. Naissance de la Quatrième République. La vie du parti et la doctrine socialiste 1945-1947* (Paris: Éditions Albin Michel, 1958), pp. 295-332, at p. 305.
[101] Blum, 'La constitution de 1946', p. 313.
[102] A. Moro, 'La politica dell'uomo qualunque' (1945), in: Moro, *Scritti e discorsi*, pp. 254-255, at p. 255.

Shielding democracy against popular involvement

Notwithstanding this agreement on the prominence of political parties and the limitation of direct popular involvement, politicians still disagreed on the direction of the reform of the major institutions of representative democracy. Based upon their notion that Interwar democracies had been limited democracies, the Left argued that institutions should be representative of the popular will in its entirety and should be elected directly by universal suffrage. This fitted their position as traditional defenders of popular sovereignty.[103] Blum stated that the 'people are the source of all sovereignty'; whereas PCI-leader Palmiro Togliatti stated that 'the people will be recognised as the sole guarantee of sovereignty'. [104] This tribute to the people was also expressed by the Left in Germany, even though it was accompanied by preoccupations about their political abilities and any plebiscitary elements were considered highly controversial.[105] For the SPD, democracy was 'something that requires commitment', which entailed that the people should be made clear that 'democracy is the only and last chance of life for the German people'.[106] In contrast to the Left in France and Italy, the SPD endorsed unelected intermediate institutions, because they were a key component of the 'strong and militant democracy' which the party desired.[107]

In France and Italy, the Left saw such intermediate institutions often as a jeopardy for the integration of the masses in the state, because they did not directly reflect the will of the people. At the centre of their ideas for institutional reform stood a powerful and preferably unicameral assembly in which the representatives of the people made laws directly. This meant that political powers were united in parliament, which should not only enact legislation, but also form a government which enjoyed executive power, and guaranteed that also the executive was a mirror of popular sovereignty. The danger for democracy lay not in an omnipotent assembly, but in a too powerful executive. In France, this preference was part of the republican tradition, which for Blum entailed that the unicameral assembly 'represents national sovereignty. Only she votes on laws. Only she

[103] D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism. A History of the European Left in the Twentieth Century* (London: Tauris,1996), p. 131.
[104] Blum, 'Les problèmes constitutionnels', p. 218. P. Togliatti, *La nostra lotta per la democrazia e per il socialismo: discorso pronunciato alla Conferenza nazionale d'organizzazione, Firenze 10 gennaio* (Rome: UESISA, 1947), p. 29.
[105] G. Rittger, *Der Streit um die direkte Demokratie in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Bonn: Universität Bonn, 1991), p. 36; Otto, *Das Staatsverständnis des Parlamentarischen Rates*, pp. 159-164.
[106] Schumacher, 'Konsequenzen deutscher Politik', p. 46.
[107] SPD, *Politische Leitsätze* (1946). Found on: http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/deu/Parties%20WZ%202%20GER.pdf accessed on 28 May 2015.

nominates the government'.[108] That is why the republic should be founded upon the principle of the sovereignty of the assembly and the responsibility of the government before the assembly.[109] Blum also rejected a constitutional court as undemocratic, because it could only exist 'under a constitution which is systematically founded on the separation of powers, which is not and will not be the case for us'.[110] Such preferences for a strong unicameral parliament at the centre of the postwar outline were supported by the PCF and PCI.[111] Togliatti stated that he was opposed to constitutional guarantees of the judiciary, because popular sovereignty 'should not be harnessed by the creation of organisations which would thwart the supreme decision of all, by creating a system which would have nothing to do with democracy'.[112] From the same perspective, the Left contested the installation of a second chamber based on principles of the representation of organised interests, because 'men cannot be separated from these [socioeconomic] interests. When one votes, one votes for the entire aspect politics. And it is always along this road […] in which we feel and intend the progress of democracy, as an always more active, more effective and more concrete participation, of all in public life'.[113]

The emphasis on the inclusion of all citizens in public life, even if only by means of representation in an empowered national parliament, was deeply distrusted by conservatives. The Interwar problems were at least partially the result of the failure of representative institutions to secure democracy against the volatility of the popular will, and the successful transformation of democracy depended on an elaborate system to protect democratic government. This meant that representative institutions should not solely be universally elected, but comprise a balance between elected and unelected elements. Although the Gaullists and Christian democrats shared this outlook, and in these aspects jointly opposed the preference for a powerful parliament by the Left, they started from a different premise. The Gaullists stood in a French plebiscitary tradition of democracy, in which not representation, but a direct expression of popular sovereignty by means of referenda or the ties between a president and the people featured

[108] L. Blum, 'La constitution' (1945), in: Blum, *L'œuvre de Léon Blum. VI*, pp. 144-157, at p. 144. See for the republican tradition for instance: S. Berstein, 'La modèle républicaine: une modèle politique syncrétique', in: S. Berstein ed., *Les cultures politiques en France* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1999), pp. 119-151.
[109] Blum, 'Les problèmes constitutionnels', p. 219.
[110] *Ibid*., p. 223.
[111] M. Guerrieri, 'Le idee costituzionali del Pcf e del Pci all'indomani della Liberazione', *Studi Storici*, vol. 36 no. 3 (1995), pp. 863-882.
[112] Togliatti, *La nostra lotta per la democrazia*, p. 29.
[113] Basso, 'Sul progetto di Costituzione della Repubblica'. p. 22.

prominently. This model of democracy was, in concurrence to the Left, presented as particularly 'republican' and democratic, but advocated a limited role of parliament and direct ties between the Head of State and the people.[114] The Christian democrats in both West Germany and Italy, by contrast, started from the assumption that the people's will was volatile and were traditionally more reluctant of any plebiscitary elements. In any case, these visions clashed with the Left-wing preference for a strong parliament as cornerstone of the new institutional outline, and they opposed this principle with three objectives for institutional reform.

First, they advocated a firm entrenchment of the principle of the separation of powers, which protected the democratic order against the volatile will of representatives in parliament and centred on the protection of individual liberties. This emphasis on institutional checks-and-balances was visible with the Christian democrats from their earliest publications onwards. In its first major publication in June 1945, the CDU stated that 'justice is the fundament of the state. The *Rechtstaat* will be reinstated. The judiciary is free and independent, its only guiding star it the law, before which all are equal'.[115] Also the Italian Christian democrats embraced this principle even during their very first political programmes.[116] Moro emphasised that 'after the fascist experience', not the 'sovereignty of the people', but the 'sovereignty of the law', should be leading.[117] The DC called for a 'Court of Guarantee' to protect the spirit and letter of the Constitution and for the Head of State to play a role in the guarantee and protection of the constitution. In this way, the DC aimed to reconcile popular sovereignty with stability, because 'permanent democracy means anti-revolution'.[118] Also De Gaulle stated that 'all the principles and all the experiences which require government, legislative, executive, judicial, will be neatly separated', and they should be accompanied by 'the establishment of a national

[114] S. Berstein, 'De la démocratie plébiscitaire au Gaullisme: naissance d'une nouvelle culture politique républicain', in: Berstein ed., *Les cultures politiques en France*, pp. 153-187.
[115] C.D.U., *Kölner Leitsätze. Vorläufiger Entwurf zu einem Programm der Christlicher Demokraten Deutschlands* (1945), found on: http://www.kas.de/upload/bilder/cdu_goslar1950/koelner_leitsaetze.pdf accessed on 8 June 2015.
[116] S. Tramontin, 'La Democrazia cristiana dalla Resistenza alla Repubblica', in: Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana. Vol. I Le origine*, pp. 13-177, at p. 125.
[117] A. Moro, 'Tre pilastri della democrazia' (1947), in: A. Moro, *Scritti e discorsi I. 1943-1947* (Rome: Edizione Cinque Lune, 1982), pp. 453-463, at p. 457.
[118] A. de Gasperi, 'Le basi dello stato democratico e la battaglia di domani' (1945), in: Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana*. *Vol. I*, pp. 463-469, at p. 468.

arbitration', even though it was the French president, rather than the judiciary, which judged on the constitutionality of laws here in the first place.[119]

Second, both Gaullists and the Christian democrats aimed to limit the power of the directly elected chamber of parliament, and embraced the establishment of a second chamber of parliament composed of organised interest or regional representation. Its task was to diminish the risk that instability and quick fluctuations in popular opinion affected political decision-making, because enacting laws was not only a question of articulating the will of the people, 'but also of reflection'.[120] The French Christian democrat party argued that organised interest should be represented in a second chamber, because this would contribute to a 'more democratic republic'.[121] Similarly, De Gaulle advocated a second chamber based on representatives of families, intellectuals and economic life, whose task it was to 'complement' parliament and debate legislation that the first chamber 'neglects'.[122] In West Germany, this tendency was visible in the way the Christian democrats emphasised the federal character of the state, and the way the Upper Chamber should be composed of representatives of the regions rather than being directly elected.

Finally, Christian democrats and Gaullists were concerned that the direct expression of the popular sovereignty in representative institutions would lead to a weak executive. Guido Gonella, one of the prominent politicians of the DC, stated that parliament should 'not govern but legislate', and that a successful democracy required 'stability and homogeneity of government'.[123] For De Gaulle, the fear of what he called an 'omnipotent' assembly dominated his political vision. More than with the Christian democrats, this was connected to establishing national grandeur.[124] But the ultimate effect on his vision of the transformation of democracy was the same: democracy required stability and a strong executive and could not primarily be determined by the force of parliament, because it was subordinate to the divisions and changing opinions of the people and its MP's.

In France, the question of institutional reform dominated the debate on democracy, because it was the issue which divided Gaullists and anti-Gaullists most

[119] De Gaulle, 'Discours prononcé à Bayeux', p. 8.
[120] L. Gonella, 'La DC per la nuova costituzione' (1946) in: Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana*. *Vol. I*, pp. 485-519: 513.
[121] Mouvement Républicain Populaire, *Le M.R.P. parti de la Quatrième République* (1946), pp. 7-10.
[122] De Gaulle, 'Discours prononcé à Épinal', p. 30.
[123] Gonella, 'La DC per la nuova costituzione', p. 514. See for the CDU for instance: Becker, 'Der Einfluβ der Unionsparteien, p. 229.
[124] Agulhon, 'De Gaulle et l'histoire de France', p. 8.

deeply at the time. In Italy and West Germany, the political spectrum was divided between the Left and Christian democrats, which ensured that it was the economy, rather than institutional reform, which was the most divisive issue and the major actors were much closer to each other on institutional principles. In West Germany, this consisted of the imperative to stress the representative character of the postwar West German state and shelter it from civic involvement.[125] The liberal party even stated that the objective of elections in a democracy should be about the election of the 'most suitable' persons into political office, rather than establishing an accurate representation of the people.[126] In Italy, the Left eventually agreed with essential features of the DC's outline of postwar Italian democracy. The Italian constitution should for instance also for the PCI be a 'rigid' constitution not easy to change by fluctuating majorities, which made it ultimately also accept a constitutional court.[127] These national differences were reflective of the different degrees of trust which political elites had in their citizens. Whereas the distrust of popular involvement was the *Leitmotiv* of the German transition, it counted less for Italy, where even more cautious Christian democrats complemented the representation of organised interest and a constitutional court, by pleas for referenda and other means of direct citizen involvement.[128]

The divisive issue of capitalism

As political elites were by and large equally reluctant to endorse a form of government which directly involved the people or provided alternatives to party democracy, the socioeconomic dimension of democracy turned into the most divisive issue in the transformation of democracy. As said, this counted much less for France, where the public debate was dominated by the clash between Gaullists and anti-Gaullists on the balance between the executive and legislative power. The main political actors settled on the nationalisation of key industrial and financial sectors and agreed on the principle of a planned economy in the framework of the free market.[129] Plans on the Left to establish a

[125] A. Bauerkämper, 'The Twisted Road to Democracy as a Quest for Security: Germany in the Twentieth Century', *German History*, vol. 32 no. 3 (2014), pp. 431-455, at p. 446.
[126] F.D.P., *Bremerplatform*(1949). Retrieved from: http://ia700405.us.archive.org/10/items/BremerPlattform/1949_Bremer_Plattform.pdf, accessed on 24 April 2013.
[127] Guerrieri, 'Le idee costituzionali del Pcf e del Pci', p. 878.
[128] Gonella, 'La DC per la nuova costituzione', p. 513; Democrazia cristiana, 'Il programma della Democrazia Cristiana (Vicenza, 1944), in: Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana*. *Vol. I*, pp. 419-428, at p. 421.
[129] P.V. Dutton, *Origins of the French Welfare State. The Struggle for social reform in France 1914-1947* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 202-219; R.F. Kuisel, *Capitalism and the State in Modern*

'new republic' combining political liberalism with socialist economics were widely supported, also by De Gaulle.[130] To capture this consensus, Blum noted that 'the word socialism has entered in the vocabulary of all parties', because 'everyone sees the necessity of collectivisation of production and the sharing of wealth',[131] whereas De Gaulle called it 'banal to say that economic and social renewal are the first prerequisite' for national renewal.[132] The West German and Italian constitutional debates, by contrast, lasted longer, increasingly intertwined with the Cold War, and were moreover divided between a Left-wing and a Christian democrat camp. This rendered the question of the economy the most divisive issue in the debate on the reform of democracy there.

Capitalism as a threat to democracy

Social equality featured prominently in the democratic discourse of all Left-wing parties. Thorez was perhaps most explicit in the equation of democracy with the interest of the working class. He stated that 'we have a conception of democracy as defined by Condorcet, a democracy in which all social institutions aim for social, intellectual and physical amelioration of the most numerous and poorest class'.[133] The socialists, by contrast, aimed to distinguish their interpretation of Marxism from that of the communists. They endeavoured to unite political liberties with social equality, or, following Schumacher, to render democracy 'in its economy socialist and in its politics democratic'.[134]

Nonetheless, also the socialists strongly emphasised that any transformation of democracy depended on social equality, and their notion of democracy was strongly class centred. It entails that all the major Left-wing parties aimed to reconcile their attempt to establish themselves as 'new' parties with a continued commitment to structural economic reform with sometimes revolutionary pretensions. In Germany, Schumacher called Marxism far from old-fashioned in its conception of history and he accepted the

France. Renovation and Economic Management in the Twentieth Century (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); P. Nord, *France's New Deal. From the Thirties to the Postwar Era* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010) ch. 3.

[130] J.P. Rioux, *The Fourth Republic 1944-1958* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 48.

[131] L. Blum, 'Les devoirs et les tâches du socialisme' (1945), in: Blum, *L'œuvre de Léon Blum*, pp. 5-11, at p. 8.

[132] C. de Gaulle, 'Discours prononcé à l'assemblée consultative' (1945), in: De Gaulle, *Pendant la guerre*, pp. 521-532, at p. 531.

[133] M. Thorez, 'Une politique française', p. 340.

[134] Schumacher, 'Aufgaben und Ziele der deutsche Sozialdemokratie', p. 86.

Marxist notion of the class struggle as a reality.[135] In France, the relative militancy of the socialists was epitomised by the replacement of Blum by the more combative Guy Mollet as leader of the SFIO in 1946.[136] Mollet claimed that 'The actual situation proves that this struggle [the class struggle] is more real than ever and it is a fact that we will endeavour to establish a society without classes. […] It is for this reason that it belongs to our party to take, on all terrains, the initiative to strive for revolution'.[137] The socialists and the PCF diverged over methods, but not over the ultimate aims of socioeconomic reforms: a socialist society.[138]

So the link between democracy and capitalism was ferociously contested by all parties on the Left. The SPD disputed the link between capitalism and democracy, because capitalism jeopardised social and ultimately also political equality. A party programme of 1946 proclaimed that socialism was necessarily revolutionary and contended that 'there is no socialism without democracy, without freedom of criticism. But while socialism without democracy is impossible, democracy is endangered by capitalism. Because of the special history and spiritual development of Germany, German democracy needs socialism […] German democracy must be socialist, otherwise the anti-revolutionary forces will jeopardise it again'.[139] Social equality and state-led planning were presented by Schumacher presented as the 'democratisation' of the economy,[140] because he held that 'democracy should be socialist or it will not be'.[141] The Left considered sweeping socioeconomic reforms an intrinsic component of democracy's transformation, because without social equality, political equality was rendered meaningless. Schumacher stated that 'there are no constitutional guarantees for democracy, except for the change of social structure that renders it impossible to mobilise the average person against the ideas of

[135] D. Orlow, 'Delayed Reaction: Democracy, Nationalism and the SPD 1945-1966', *German Studies Review*, vol. 16 no. 1 (1997), pp. 77-102; Tranfaglia, 'Socialisti e comunisti'.
[136] F. Lafon, 'Structures idéologiques et nécessités pratiques au congrès de la S.F.I.O. en 1946', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, vol. 36 no. 4 (1989), pp. 672-694.
[137] G. Mollet, 'Démocratie et révolution' (1946), in: G. Mollet, *Textes choisis. Le socialiste et le républicain 1945-1975* (Paris: Bruno Leprince éditeur, 1975), pp. 44-47, at pp. 45-46.
[138] A. Bergenounioux, 'Socialisme Français et social-démocratie européenne', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, vol. 65 no. 1 (2000), pp. 97-108, at p. 99; A. Bergounioux and G. Grunberg, *Le long remords du pouvoir. Le Parti socialiste français 1905-1992* (Paris: Fayard, 1992), p. 172.
[139] SPD, *Politische Leitsätze* (1946). Found on: http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/deu/Parties%20WZ%202%20GER.pdf accessed on 28 May 2015.
[140] Schumacher, 'Von der Freiheit zur sozialen Gerechtigkeit' , p. 127.
[141] K. Schumacher, 'Kontinentale Demokratie' (1946), in: K. Schumacher, *Turmwächter der Demokratie. II*, pp. 410-423, at p. 422.

democracy and socialism'.[142] Nenni similarly claimed that 'if the republic does not have a social content, it will be dominated by the old reactionary interests' and held that it was impossible to change Italy 'on the current bases of relationships in ownership and production'.[143]

The Left therefore almost universally talked about an 'expansion' of democracy in the postwar era, which denoted that postwar democracy should go beyond the traditional boundaries of 'liberal' or 'formal' democracy. Saragat captured this Left-wing differentiation between different kinds of democracy and stated that 'political democracy is limited, because it is bourgeois democracy. It is weak. Fascism proved this by speculating against bourgeois democracy'.[144] Following this argument, the Left largely concurred that the postwar constitutions should be 'programmatic' constitutions that also declared socioeconomic rights and elaborated on the state's imperative to realise them in the future.[145] The most notable achievement of this aspiration remains the Italian constitution which proclaims Italy a republic 'founded on labour', and which carries particular relevance from the perspective of the distinction between a 'political' and a 'true' democracy which included all people in the state and guaranteed them a right to work and education which promoted citizenship. In order to create such a regime, the people should be integrated in the state. Basso stated that 'we want to make the republic, the state in which everyone participates actively […]. And this participation, this activity, this collective function, made in the interests of all, is in fact labour, and in this respect, I think, labour is the fundamental base of the Italian Republic. […] We believe that if democracy defends itself we should not diminish the powers of the state, we should not aim to impede or put obstacles for the activities of the powers of the state, but, on the contrary, we should make all citizens participate in the life of the state. […] We only really realise a democracy if everyone effectively participates in collective political and economic life'.[146]

[142] K. Schumacher, 'Demokratie und Sozialismus' (1948), in: Schumacher, *Turmwächter der Demokratie. II*, pp. 51-74, at p. 66.
[143] Nenni, *Che cosa vuole il Partito Socialista?*, p. 15.
[144] G. Saragat, 'Il discorso di Firenze' (1946), in: G. Saragat, *Quaranta anni di lotta per la democrazia. Scritti e discorsi 1925-1965* (Rome: U. Mursia, 1966), pp. 285-316, at p. 301.
[145] With the notable exception of the PCF, see: Guerrieri, 'Le idee costituzionali del Pcf e del Pci', p. 867; p. 874.
[146] Basso, 'Sul progetto di Costituzione della Repubblica', p. 20.

Capitalism as the precondition of democracy

The Left started from the premise that postwar democracy not only required the nationalisation of banks, insurance, big industry, and the energy sector, but most of all the 'protection of people by the state'.[147] The Christian democrats, by contrast, started from the premise that people should be protected in the first instance from, rather than by, the state. Indeed, as Adenauer remarked, it was in personal 'freedom and independence [that] the state finds both its limits and its orientation'.[148] This does not exclude that the postwar conservatives were more committed to socioeconomic reform than their Interwar predecessors.[149] Initially, Christian democrats seemed to concur at least partially with the Left-wing rejection of capitalism. In its role as resistance party, the DC claimed that that 'democracy without social justice would be illusionary and misleading. Next to the "formal" democracy we should construct a "substantial" democracy, which means reforming the social structure'.[150] The West German Christian democrats similarly expressed serious reservations towards capitalism, epitomised by its *Ahlener Programm* which posited that the 'capitalist economic system has not been in the political or social interest of the German people'.[151] However, even though the Christian democrats aspired to be inter-class parties,[152] they were always committed to the defence of private property. They consequently contested the Left-wing commitment to the 'expansion' of democracy and held that democracy centred on individual liberty rather than social equality, and that only capitalism, albeit reformed, could ensure these individual freedoms.

As a result, individual liberty increasingly became the core of the DC's conception of democracy, and in economic terms followed deflationary policies and limited state

[147] SPD, *Aufruf zum Neuaufbau der Organisation* (1945), found on: http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/deu/Parties%20WZ%201%20GER.pdf accessed on 8 June 2015.
[148] K. Adenauer, 'Grundsatzrede des 1. Vorsitzenden der Christlich-Demokratischen Union für die Britische Zone in der Aula der Kölner Universität' (1946), in: Adenauer, *Reden*, pp. 82-106, at p. 86.
[149] M. Dumoulin, 'The socio-economic impact of Christian Democracy in Western Europe', in: Lamberts ed., *Christian Democracy in the European Union 1945-1995*, pp. 369-374; Judt, *Postwar*, ch. 3.
[150] D.C., 'Linee di ricostruzione', p. 378.
[151] C.D.U., *Ahlener Programm der CDU für die Britische Zone* (1947). Found on: http://www.kas.de/upload/themen/programmatik_der_cdu/programme/1947_Ahlener-Programm.pdf, accessed on 25 April 2013.
[152] Or, to be more precise, the bourgeois-farmer alliance, see: M. Conway, 'The Age of Christian Democracy: the Frontiers of Success and Failure', in: T. Kselman and J.A. Buttigieg eds., *European Christian Democracy. Historical Legacies and Comparative Perspectives* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), pp. 43-67.

intervention and socioeconomic reforms.[153] The CDU explicitly challenged the SPD's conception of democracy and its critique on capitalism, which ensured that by the end of the 1940s, two 'fundamentally different economic concepts confronted each other'.[154] The Christian democrats emphasised the similarities between the SPD and communism and stated that 'Now every voter has to decide whether it belongs to the Christian or the Marxist Front'.[155] Adenauer stated that 'to ensure political freedom, property rights should be guaranteed', whereas for Ludwig Erhard, the 'strife for more democratic freedom', was inextricably linked with 'unalienable rights' such as consumer freedom, which made the market economy contingent on democracy.[156] So when it came to the position which socioeconomic reforms occupied in their democratic ideology, the Christian democrats translated their mistrust of extensive state power not in the 'democratisation' of the state, but in the emphasis on individual freedoms and strong guarantees against the possible dangers for democracy that were concomitant on the excessive extension of state interference in the economy. Indeed, Adenauer remarked that 'personal liberty is the most important right of Man', and he therefore warned for excessive state intervention.[157] De Gasperi claimed that the socialists and communists advocated a 'radical democracy', and that Italy therefore required a strong 'stabilisation of the rights of Italians' akin to the declarations in France and the United States at the end of the eighteenth century.[158]

Christian democrats in West Germany and Italy, where this debate was most divisive, consequently made no distinction between a 'political' democracy in which these rights were guaranteed, and a more inclusive form of democracy in which state interference over the economy was considered an intrinsic part of what democracy was. This continued to be a topic which divided them and the Left throughout the following decade, especially because in those two states the constitutions were not unequivocal on

[153] V. Zamagni, 'Evolution of the Economy', in: P. McCarthy ed., *Italy since 1945* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 42-68, at p. 48. Campanini, 'Le programmi della Democrazia Cristiana', p. 227.
[154] G.L. Glossner, *The Making of the German Post-War Economy. Political Communication and Public Reception of the Social Market Economy after World War II* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2010), p. 79.
[155] Adenauer, 'Zeigt daβ Ihr auf dem Wege der politische Reife seid', p. 13.
[156] L. Erhard, 'Marktwirtschaft im Streit der Meinungen' (1948), in: L. Erhard, *Gedanken aus fünf Jahrzehnten* (Düsseldorf: Ludwig Erhard Stiftung, 1988), pp. 134-152, at p. 133; K. Adenauer, 'Rede zum Programm der CDU' (1946), p. 2. Found on: http://www.kas.de/upload/ACDP/CDU/Reden/1946-03-06-Rede-Neheim-Huesten.pdf . Accessed on 30 July 2014.
[157] K. Adenauer, 'Eine Hoffnung für Europa. Eröffnungsrede zum 2. Parteitag der CDU der Britischen Zone in Recklinghausen' (1948), in: Adenauer, *Reden*, pp. 122-133, at p. 124
[158] De Gasperi, 'Le basi dello stato democratico', at p. 467.

the character and extent of the socioeconomic reforms which should be undertaken. In France, by contrast, it was the constitution itself, rather than its interpretation, which dominated the debates and overshadowed the question of socioeconomic reform.

Competing narratives of democracy in the era of constitution signing

The constitutions were a response to specific challenges of the time, but had a long-lasting impact on the development of democracy in the three states. The postwar constitutions and their commitment to socioeconomic reform and distrust in direct popular involvement arguably provided the ingredients for the political stability of 'Europe's democratic age'.[159] Yet at times they also proved to be deeply divisive and they were the vehicle for a long debate on the value of the constitution in France, or its interpretation in Italy and West Germany. Despite important differences along borders in the constitutions and their legacy, a few transnational principles of the way in which democracy was conceived in the aftermath of the War stand out.

The most notable of these common features was that constitutions united the securing of individual freedoms with a commitment to socioeconomic reform and thereby endorsed a more positive conception of liberty in which democracy was conceived of in socioeconomic as well as purely political terms. The Basic Law declared Germany a 'social' state and it paid explicit tribute to the SPD programme by declaring 'socialisation' a 'purpose' in itself, for which 'land, natural resources and the means of production' could be 'transferred into public ownership'. Italy's postwar democracy was established as a 'republic founded on work' which had a 'duty to remove those obstacles of economic and social nature which in fact limit the freedom and equality of citizens'. Yet, at the same time, the constitutions also paid extensive tribute to the importance of a firm guarantee of individual liberties. Additionally, the constitutions either implicitly or explicitly paid tribute to political parties and parliaments as corner stones of democracy. Parliaments were directly or indirectly elected by universal suffrage, and the Left succeeded in impeding the installation of a corporatist chamber of parliament.[160] Popular involvement should not be direct, but managed through intermediate institutions. Nonetheless, even if all regimes became representative democracies, the promise of popular sovereignty, at

[159] Conway, 'The Rise and Fall'; Stone, *Goodbye to all that?*, ch. 3.
[160] See on the 'supremacy of parliaments' as a constitutive element of postwar democracy also: Conway, 'Democracy in Postwar Europe', p. 64.

least in France and Italy, deeply inspired the composition of postwar constitutions and this resulted in strong parliaments and weak executives, and enabled popular referenda.[161] In that respect, West Germany proved the exception: the distrust of the people was much more institutionalised in strong intermediate and unelected institutions, and it was the only state to have a strong and stable executive.[162]

Despite these common notions, the way in which constitutions determined the postwar debates in the three states differed. In West Germany and Italy, the constitutions reflected the different notions of democracy held by the Christian democrats and the Left. Contemporaries were conscious that the constitutions were the result of political compromises, and Togliatti noted that there were deep tensions between the constitution's progressive and conservative elements.[163] The progressive character of the Italian constitution was moreover undermined by a court ruling which distinguished between articles which took immediate effect and those which could also be realised in the future.[164] The fact that the constitutions were the result of cross-party collaboration in West Germany and Italy was highly significant. As a consequence, they not only cleverly balanced between social equality and individual rights, but in the long run the collaboration which underpinned the constitutions also contributed to their stability and resilience, because the disputes took always place by implication of the acceptance of the constitution, rather than about the constitution. This not only fostered a joint commitment to the Basic Law in West Germany, but, more importantly, also tied the Italian communists to Italian democracy and drew them into the 'constitutional arch'.[165]

By contrast, the major fault line in France ran between Gaullists and anti-Gaullists, and the constitution had not been a compromise between their conceptions of democracy. The 1946 constitution was a victory for the parties over the General, and the republic therefore took off without the support of the major resistance force from which it should have drawn its legitimacy.[166] Their traditional fear of Bonapartism became entangled with a distrust of De Gaulle, who was portrayed as an antidemocrat.[167] De Gaulle had no formal

[161] Cf: Mazower, *Dark Continent*, pp. 287-291, who states that a strong executive was a distinctive feature of the transformation of postwar democracy in Western Europe.
[162] Ullrich, *Der Weimar-Komplex*, pp. 269-280.
[163] P. Togliatti, *Tre minacce alla democrazia italiana. Rapporto al 6 Congresso del P.C.I.* (Rome: Centro diffusione stampa del PCI, 1948).
[164] Lupo, *Partito e antipartito*, p. 56.
[165] Di Loreto, *Togliatti e la "Doppiezza"*.
[166] It has been remarked therefore that the constitutions was 'condemned at its birth', see: J.P. Rioux, *La France de la Quatrième République. 2. L'expansion et l'impuissance 1952-1958* (Paris, 1983), p. 344.
[167] F. Broche, *Une histoire des antigaullismes des origines à nos jours* (Paris: Bartillat, 2007), p. 289.

powers to influence the constitution, because he was not represented in the constitutional assembly, and presented his own alternative to the constitutional drafts relatively late.[168] The Gaullist challenge was successfully met by the 'republican' forces that formed the majority in the constitutive assembly and composed the constitutional drafts. Partially thanks to its anti-Gaullist inspiration, the Fourth Republic has been referred to as a 'negative constitution'.[169] The major divisions in the conceptualisation of democracy in France were thus not reflected in the constitution, which made the constitution itself the topic of the debate on democracy. Indeed, when he returned to power in 1958, De Gaulle lamented with some justification that the Fourth Republic's constitution had been 'written against me'.[170]

The contestation of democratic credentials in the era of constitution signing reflected deeper-lying concerns with the instability of recently won democratic freedoms and suspicions among political antagonists. These concerns even existed in West Germany. Adenauer stated about Schumacher that 'It seems to me that the essence of democracy is not yet clear to him. He does not respect other parties and believes that only the socialist world view is a right world view'. He added, 'It is not the first time I hear this conviction', to stress the alleged similarities between Marxist and Nazi totalitarianism.[171] The SPD similarly questioned the democratic credentials of the CDU. The party repeatedly stated that democracy in Germany was not much stronger than the SPD, which was 'the only truly democratic force',[172] whereas the CDU was a 'hiding place for reactionaries and Nazis' and used Nazi-like 'methods and slogans', such as 'Christianity or Bolshevism', akin to 'Nazism or Bolshevism'.[173] In reference to Adenauer, Schumacher stated that 'I believe that in Germany many have to learn what democracy means in spirit and practice'.[174]

Such mutual mistrust related to real differences in opinion about what democracy was and how its principles should be established. The debate on the transformation of democracy in the aftermath of the Second World War captures the essence of the various conceptions of democracy in the first fifteen years of postwar history. Accounting for

[168] J. Conwans, 'French Public Opinion and the Founding of the Fourth Republic', *French Historical Studies*, vol. 17 no. 1 (1991), pp. 62-95.
[169] P. Coutier, *La Quatrième République* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1986), p. 12.
[170] C. de Gaulle, 'Conférence de presse tenu au Palais d'Orsay' (1958), in: C. de Gaulle, *Discours et Messages. Avec le renouveau 1958-1962* (Paris: Plon, 1970), pp. 4-10, at p. 6.
[171] Adenauer, 'Rede in der Aula der Universität zu Köln', p. 101.
[172] Schumacher, 'Aufgaben und Ziele der deutsche Sozialdemokratie', p. 80.
[173] Schumacher, 'Konsequenzen deutscher Politik', p. 34.
[174] Schumacher, 'Aufgaben und Ziele der deutsche Sozialdemokratie', p. 78.

some degree of generalisation, at least four different narratives can be distinguished. The most dominant one was arguably the Christian democrat narrative of democracy, which centred on the distance between people and professional politicians, checks-and-balances against the power of parliament, individual freedom in the framework of a reformed capitalism, and anti-Marxism. On the Left, there were two narratives. The communists clearly valued social equality over individual liberty in their conception of democracy. Even if they, particularly in Italy, were committed to the postwar constitution and the institutions of representative democracy, this commitment to social equality, and the conception of democracy in terms of the interests of the working class, ensured a somewhat ambiguous stance towards individual freedoms and unconditional support of representative democracy as an aim in itself. To a lesser extent, the socialist Left also battled with these questions, because the SFIO, SPD, and PSI had not abandoned their Marxist legacy and remained committed to a class-centred notion of democracy. Yet, especially the French and West German socialists aimed to reconcile the overthrow of the capitalist system with the protection of individual liberties. Concerning the topic of the reform of representative institutions, the Left was, with the exception of the SPD, positive about more popular involvement in representative democracy, and it aimed to limit the influence of intermediate institutions that could block the popular will. It also cherished the principles of party democracy most strongly. The final narrative, the Gaullist, contested this principle fiercely, and opposed party pluralism with the general interest, a less powerful and 'rationalised' parliament, and a powerful head of state. Below these four dominant visions, there existed less politically powerful conceptions of democracy, such as the one articulated by the *Fronte* in Italy which centred on a rejection of party democracy and a de-politicisation of civil society.

So during the era of constitution signing, the major fault lines emerged along which the debate on democracy took place in the coming fifteen years – and in some cases even longer. Outside a joint commitment to the principles of representation and limited popular involvement, there existed little consensus on the meaning of democracy in the immediate aftermath of the War. Whereas the era laid the groundwork of a form of democracy which centred on party political dominance, capitalism, and limited possibilities of civic participation, politicians were divided among the trade-off between these principles and other issues such as social equality, the general interest, and civic

commitment. The parties consequently often contested each other's understandings of democracy, and accused each other of being anti-democrats.

II. Contesting democratic legitimacy in the Cold War

The 1950s as a decade of divisions

The Cold War brought the tensions that had dominated the era of constitution signing fully to the surface. Political actors aimed to delegitimise conceptions of democracy of their antagonists by referring to the international constellation. The Cold War also changed the frame of reference in the debate and shifted democracy's enemy image. For Christian democrats in West Germany and Italy, democracy increasingly, although not exclusively, came to be understood as anti-Marxism.[1] The Left, however, viewed democratic legitimacy largely through the prism of antifascism. These divisions not only led to heated debates in times of elections, but also to a deep division on the question who could legitimately run the country, who could claim to embody the 'militancy' of postwar democracies, and who could claim to defend recently won democratic freedoms against antidemocratic forces. Contrasting ideas on the orientation of foreign policy and the organisation of the economy reflected these divisions and naturally followed from competing understandings of democracy and the question against whom it should be defended. Because all political actors claimed to be democrats, 'democracy' thereby became the political concept *par excellence* with which political legitimacy was asserted and contested in the face of stark political divisions.

So in the decade between the late 1940s and late 1950s, the question of democratic legitimacy deeply divided political parties. As a result, the democratisation of Western Europe often seemed precarious and threatened by setbacks. Political actors claimed that 'democracy' had to be defended against antidemocratic forces without agreeing who these antidemocratic forces actually were, and frequently accused each other of breaching democratic norms. In this way, the lack of a consensus on the principles of postwar democracy also structured political power relations. Indeed, the lack of power alternations between government and opposition in all three states reflected how deeply political actors mistrusted each other's democratic credentials during the decade following the first postwar parliamentary elections. Instead of building broader coalitions, the major democratic paradigms which had evolved out of the debate in the immediate aftermath of the War on the most pressing questions of democracy's

[1] Judt, *Postwar*, p. 197.

transformation, now stood opposite each other in a strife for political power. The question of the economy and the way in which Christian democrats monopolised the postwar democratisation in West Germany and Italy deeply divided the Left and Christian democrats there, while in France the 1946 constitution continued to divide Gaullists and anti-Gaullists.

Democracy in the strife for political power in the late 1940s

The first postwar elections in West Germany and Italy, and the rise of the Gaullist movement *Rassemblement du Peuple Français* contributed to the ossification of the political divisions on the principles of democracy. In Italy and West Germany, the major fault line in this debate ran between the Christian democrats and the Left. In West Germany, the elections were harshly polarised and by times, it seemed as if the friend-enemy thinking so dominant during the Third Reich had returned: voters allegedly faced the choice between a 'socialist' and a 'Christian' future.[2] Italy was even in 'a state of ideological war'.[3] The possibility of a victory of the Popular Front made the elections there an event of enormous international significance. Whereas the Marxist Left enjoyed the support of the Soviet Union, the US supplied the 'bourgeois' parties with cash, threatened to withdraw Marshall Funds in case of a Left-wing victory, and organised covert support for the Christian democrats and their allies by means of the CIA.[4] Also the Vatican intervened on the DC's side, and the Pope suggested that those who voted for the Marxist parties 'place themselves outside God's law'.[5]

During the elections in both states, the Christian democrats endorsed three key principles with which they challenged the democratic credentials of their antagonists. Concomitant on the international situation, the first was the Christian democrat allegiance to the West, and for them it was impossible to contest the Western alliance while simultaneously claiming to be democratic. Although the SPD's anticommunism distinguished it from the socialists in Italy, the CDU deliberately blurred the division between the communists and the SPD in order to question the SPD's democratic

[2] Wolfrum, *Die geglückte Demokratie*, p. 46.
[3] F. Barbagallo, *Dal '43 a '48. La formazione del Italia democratica* (Turin: Einaudi, 1996), p. 149.
[4] Ventresca, *From Fascism to Democracy*, p. 88; Del Pero, 'The United States and Psychological Warfare in Italy'.
[5] Bedeschi, *La prima repubblica*, p. 62.

credentials.[6] Following this logic, the SPD was an antidemocratic party, because it had not foresworn its Marxist principles and was critical of the Western Allies.[7] The Italian Christian democrats endorsed the United States as the country of democratic freedoms, while they simply asserted that the PSI and PCI were totalitarian forces under Stalin's control.

The second characteristic was a commitment to the market economy. Christian democrats were not in favour of unbridled capitalism, but instead advocated a social market economy, which united capitalism with social policies and freedom with social justice. However, the free market was for them not merely an economic, but also a democratic principle, because it guaranteed individual liberty. Based on this assumption, the CDU stressed that there was no difference between socialism and communism, and that the SPD's plans for far-reaching economic reforms pointed back to a totalitarian past.[8] In what can be considered a characteristic election campaign speech, Adenauer argued in Heidelberg in July 1949 that it was 'terrifying' to see how dogmatic the SPD was, because the party had not formulated a new agenda after the War, and still adhered to its 1925 programme. 'Socialism', Adenauer assured his audience, 'will lead to a total state. It is against human nature to have such a planned economic life. The main aim of the election campaign is to prevent it; we do not want to go *back* to a planned and oppressed community'.[9] In an address to voters, Ludwig Erhard made similar suggestions linking the SPD to the end of a free and democratic order. 'Based on historical experience', Erhard stated, 'we reject any form of a bureaucratic state and a centralised plan economy. We consider job and consumer freedom inalienable rights of human freedom which should lead to a real democracy'.[10]

The final preposition followed from this endorsement of the market economy and was the emphasis on individual freedoms, and the consequent assertion that any form of Marxist inspired politics would lead to totalitarianism. As early as 1947, Adenauer instructed his party members to emphasise that the SPD's alleged hunger for power was

[6] Eley posits that the SPD's 'strong doctrinal traditions and Marxist orientation also hampered its reformist reorientation': Eley, *Forging Democracy*, p. 314.
[7] H-O. Kleinmann, *Geschichte der CDU. 1945-1982* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1993), p. 150.
[8] M.E. Spicka, *Selling the Economic Miracle. Economic Reconstruction and Politics in West Germany 1949-1957* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2007), p. 59.
[9] K. Adenauer, 'Wahlrede bei einer CDU/CSU Kundgebung am Heidelberger Scloβ' (1949), in: Adenauer, *Reden*, pp. 137-149, at p. 145. My emphasis.
[10] L. Erhard, 'Wahlaufruf zum ersten Bundestag' (1949), in: Erhard, *Gedanken aus fünf Jahrzenten*, pp. 214-215, at p. 214.

akin to that of the Nazi party,[11] while he also stated that extensive planning killed individual liberties. De Gasperi held that the DC prevented a potential abuse of democratic freedoms by those aiming to overthrow democracy, because the communists allegedly preferred 'the politics of action' above parliamentary procedures.[12] In the DC's famous 'Appeal to the people' for the elections the difference was even more starkly put. The party claimed that 'On the 18th of April, you can save or destroy your freedom […]. The choice is between an inhuman totalitarianism that concentrates and suffocates everything in the state, and a human concept of politics, in which citizens, associations, parties collaborate freely for the common good, […] between bolshevist totalitarianism that hides between the mask of the Popular Front and the sincerely democratic parties'.[13]

Whereas the present situation across the Iron Curtain served as a scaremonger to question the democratic credentials of the Left, the totalitarian past was used as an instrument by the Left to challenge the political legitimacy of the Christian democrats. Schumacher did not hold the CDU for a genuinely democratic party and saw many parallels between the CDU and the conservatives of the Weimar Republic.[14] According to the SPD, the social market economy was yet another version of the free market capitalism that had sowed the seeds of Nazism. It consequently aimed to expose the 'lie of the free market economy'.[15] For the Popular Front, the 1948 elections centred on unveiling the true nature of the DC as a party that defended the same interests as fascism. By abandoning the antifascist unity, 'excluding' the working class and pursuing the politics of economic 'privileges', the DC ostensibly proved to be a major threat to Italian democracy.[16] Indeed, Togliatti argued, the DC was itself, like the fascist party a totalitarian party, because with its slogan '"for or against Christ, it has commenced a sharply antidemocratic and totalitarian politics'.[17] The PCI stated that the DC 'does not want a true

[11] F. Bösch, *Die Adenauer-CDU. Gründung, Aufstieg und Krise eine Erfolgspartei 1945-1969* (Munich: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2001), p. 85.
[12] A. de Gasperi, 'Non serviamo l'America, non osteggiamo la Russia, difendiamo l'Italia' (1948), in: F. Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana. Vol II. De Gasperi e l'età del centrismo, 1948-1954* (Rome: Edizione Cinque Lune, 1987), pp. 444-456, at p. 445.
[13] D.C., 'L'appello al Paese per le elezioni politiche' (1948), in: Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana. Vol II*, pp. 442-443, at p. 442.
[14] Orlow, 'Delayed Reaction', p. 81.
[15] SPD, *Wahlaufruf der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschland. Für ein freies Deutschland in ein neues Europa* (1949), p. 6. Found on: http://library.fes.de/spdpd/1949/490801-sondervers.pdf , accessed on 18 August 2015.
[16] P. Togliatti, *Tre minacce alla democrazia Italiana. Rapporto al 6 Congresso del PCI* (Rome: Centro diffusione stampa del PCI, 1948), p. 12.
[17] *Ibid*., p. 51.

democracy. The DC does not want structural reforms that would deprive the groups to which the party is connected of their economic dominance'.[18] The conclusion could only be that 'the DC is a totalitarian party',[19] and that the communists and socialists had to be 'united in their duty to save Italian democracy'.[20]

If democracy depended on the overcoming of capitalism, it naturally followed that the support for capitalism by the Christian democrats raised doubts about their democratic credentials. The SPD argued that the 'socialisation' of key industries and financial institutions should be seen as democratisation, because it ensured that the control of these organisations came into the hands of the German people. 'Socialisation is the best protection of democracy', the party claimed, and social equality, rather than individual liberty was its most defining concept.[21] The Marxist parties in Italy linked democracy to antifascism, social equality and structural economic reforms – all within the context of the Italian constitution which, according to this interpretation, allowed for wide-sweeping socioeconomic restructuring. At the PCI's Congress in January 1948, Togliatti stated that 'the true guarantee [of democracy] remains in the strength and development of the democratic movement of the masses, which, starting from the constitution, reaches for the principles of social justice and economic renewal that the constitution provides for'.[22]

Finally, the contestation of the democratic credentials of the Christian democrats also concerned their foreign policy preferences. Despite obvious and very fundamental differences between the SPD and the Popular Front, they contested the equation between the Western alliance and democracy which was put forward by the Christian democrats. Whereas the SPD firmly denounced the Soviet Union, the party also rejected the close ties between the CDU and the Allies.[23] The communists and socialists in Italy obviously went much further than that. They were most of all held together by their so-called

[18] P.C.I., *Chi sono i nemici della patria e dell'indipendenza nazionale, i nemici della libertà e della democrazia?* (PCI, supplemento al numero 6-7 di *Propaganda*, 1948), p. 21. Istituto Gramsci Rome, F.D. PCI Op. 2861 134170.
[19] *Ibid*., p. 23.
[20] Togliatti, *Tre minacce alla democrazia Italiana*, p. 65.
[21] SPD, *Wahlaufruf der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschland. Für ein freies Deutschland in ein neues Europa* (1949), p. 3. Found on: http://library.fes.de/spdpd/1949/490801-sondervers.pdf , accessed on 18 August 2015.
[22] Togliatti, *Tre minacce alla democrazia Italiana*, p. 49.
[23] SPD, *Wahlaufruf der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschland. Für ein freies Deutschland in ein neues Europa* (1949), p. 1-2. Found on: http://library.fes.de/spdpd/1949/490801-sondervers.pdf , accessed on 18 August 2015.

'internationalism' in foreign policy, which effectively meant a defence and legitimation of the Soviet Union.[24]

In France, the major fault lines between Gaullists and anti-Gaullists came again fully to the surface about half a year after the first parliamentary elections, when the communists were expelled from government and De Gaulle's RPF made a surge in local elections. According to Raymond Aron, they jointly formed the 'double opposition' of the Fourth Republic,[25] but this analysis was only partially accurate, because of the ambiguous position of the communists. Because the question of institutional reform was the most important aspect of the French debate on democracy,[26] it led to the PCF's 'ambiguous republicanism' in which they supported the Fourth Republic's institutional outline, but attacked its governments.

De Gaulle was the true structural opposition to the Fourth Republic and he was motivated most of all by his denouncement of party politics and his desire the reverse the outcome of the lost referendum on the Fourth Republic's constitution.[27] De Gaulle toured the country to discredit the democratic credentials of the parties as defenders of the values of the Republic. The true democrats and republicans gathered in the RPF, which 'reforms the republican state in order to render it in the service of the national interest'.[28] The 'separatists' of the parties, on the other hand, created a country 'in disorder' and 'under threat'. Whereas they claimed to be the 'champions of democracy' they in fact wanted to 'destroy' it.[29] The RPF emphasised that the constitution was democratically illegitimate, because it was only supported by a 'faction of the people' and was 'a compromise between anarchy and dictatorship'.[30] Finally, the RPF denounced communism. At a rally in Rennes De Gaulle famously described the Soviet threat to be at

[24] F. Barbagallo, 'Classe, nazione, democrazia: La sinistra in Italia dal 1944 al 1956', *Studi Storici*, vol. 33 no. 2/3 (1992), pp. 479-498, at p. 492. Within the Italian Left as a whole, the stark domestic division on the question of foreign policy were contested by the minor Left-wing parties throughout the 1950s, see: L.P. Renaggi, *La democrazia divisa. Cultura politica della sinistra democratica della dopoguerra alle origine del centro-sinistra* (Milan: Edizioni UNI colpi, 2011).
[25] R. Aron, *Le grand schisme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1948), pp. 199-200.
[26] Bergounioux and Grunberg, *Le long remords du pouvoir*, p. 203.
[27] See, for instance: C. d'Abzac-Épezy et al., *Charles de Gaulle et le Rassemblement du Peuple Français 1947-1955* (Paris: Colin, 1998), pp. 849-851.
[28] C. de Gaulle, 'Déclaration' (1947), in: De Gaulle, *Dans l'attente*, pp. 109-110.
[29] C. de Gaulle, 'Discours prononcé à Vincennes' (1947), in: De Gaulle, *Dans l'attente*, pp. 122-128, at p. 126.
[30] Rassemblement du Peuple Français, *La Constitution* (N.P., 1947), p. 4. International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam. IISG Bro F 270/33.

the distance 'of two stages of the tour de France', and suggested that the divided parties could never protect French freedoms against Cold War threats.[31]

The formation of the 'double opposition' of communists and Gaullists led to the creation of the 'Third Force', the coalition composed of Christian democrats, Socialists and Radicals which claimed to defend the Fourth Republic.[32] Of these, the socialist party identified most strongly with the Republic's institutional outline.[33] At the SFIO's 1947 congress, Blum presented the SFIO as the natural defender of democracy in France. The PCF was denounced as an assembly of 'foreign agents who want to install a dictatorship';[34] whereas De Gaulle's plans for constitutional revision, if realised, meant that 'there would be no more democracy in France, no longer the reality of a republic'.[35] De Gaulle's rejection of political parties entailed 'the end of the parliamentary regime'.[36] According to Blum, 'everything' De Gaulle did 'contradicts the republican tradition'.[37] Even though he was 'no Louis Napoleon', De Gaulle's 'personality' allegedly illustrated the danger of a 'personal conception of power in a democracy'.[38]

In France, the constitutional question gained prevalence in the debate on democracy. In West Germany and Italy, the first parliamentary elections were characterised by the division between the 'bourgeois' parties and the Left in the atmosphere of the Cold War. Other than the Marxist Left in Italy, the SPD distanced itself from Moscow. However, like the PSI and PCI, the SPD contested the equation of capitalism and the West with democracy, and consequently contested two basic principles of the CDU's conception of democracy. Crucial ideological differences between Christian democrats and the Left ranging from foreign policy to the organisation of the economy were connected to democracy, making it a term that both sides aimed to monopolise, but understood in conflicting ways. Both sides suggested that democracy had only an

[31] C. de Gaulle, 'Discours prononcé à Rennes' (1947) in: De Gaulle, *Dans l'attente*, pp. 97-104, at p. 102.
[32] J. Charlot, *Le gaullisme d'opposition 1946-1958. Histoire du gaullisme* (Paris: Fayard, 1983), p. 114 ; Broche, *Une histoire des antigaullismes*, p. 295.
[33] Bergounioux and Grunberg, *Le long remords du pouvoir*, p. 162.
[34] L. Blum, 'Communisme et Gaullisme' (1948), in: L. Blum, *L'œuvre de Léon Blum VII. (1947-1950) La fin des alliances, la troisième force, politique Européenne, pour la justice* (Paris, 1963), pp. 239-244.
[35] L. Blum, 'Motion pour un congrès extraordinaire de la S.F.I.O.' (1947), in: Blum, *L'œuvre de Léon Blum VII,* pp. 109-113, at p. 111.
[36] L. Blum, 'La formation de la double opposition' (1947), in: Blum, *L'œuvre de Léon Blum VII*, pp. 395-415, at p. 401.
[37] L. Blum, 'L'intervention de De Gaulle et le referendum du 1946' (1946), in: Blum, *L'œuvre de Léon Blum. VI*, pp. 305-319, at p. 315.
[38] *Ibid*., p. 313.

instrumental value for the opponent, and served for them as a stepping stone to a totalitarian regime – whether of Bolshevik or cleric-fascist nature.

As the division between those in government and opposition became established at the end of the 1940s, the mutual contestation of democratic credentials had another consequence. It contributed to the tendency of those in government to equate democracy, or, to be more precise, democratic legitimacy, increasingly with the politics of the parliamentary majority. This not only limited the possibilities for extra-parliamentary action, but also served to legitimise controversial decisions on foreign policy or the economy throughout the decade. The most enlightening example of this conceptualisation of democracy remains the justification of the expulsion of the Left from government in Italy in May 1947. De Gasperi justified this by claiming that a government without the Marxist parties meant a return to 'regular parliamentary politics' and was a means of 'guaranteeing liberty'.[39] The Marxist parties claimed, on the other hand, that the Christian democrats jeopardised the transition from fascism to democracy in Italy. A normal vote of confidence in the constitutional assembly, with which De Gasperi legitimised his decision to ditch the Left, allegedly not sufficed in this exceptional situation, because the government's democratic legitimacy was not based on its parliamentary support, but on the struggle to eradicate fascism. The ditching of the Left demonstrated that, in the words of Togliatti, Italy had 'not yet returned to the practices of a democratic regime'.[40] De Gasperi, however, stated that: 'I do not accept the argument of Togliatti relating to the democratic method: the true essence of the democratic method is the responsibility of the [parliamentary] majority'.[41]

Capitalism in the Cold War

The socioeconomic reforms of the 1950s are widely considered to have laid the groundwork for sustained economic growth and the expansion of the welfare state.[42]

[39] A. De Gasperi, 'Le ragioni del "governo di emergenza"'(1947), in: De Gasperi, *Scritti politici*, pp. 316-339, at p. 338.
[40] P. Togliatti, *Per l'unità di tutto il popolo contro il governo della discordia* (Rome: Superstampa, 1947), p. 4.
[41] De Gasperi, 'Le ragione del governo "di emergenza"', p. 338. See also: A. Agosti, 'Il Partito comunista italiano e la svolta del 1947', *Studi Storici*, vol. 31 no. 1 (1990), pp. 53-88, at pp. 83-86.
[42] Eichengreen, *The European Economy*, pp. 86-99; F. Nullmeier and F-X. Kaufmann, 'Post-war Welfare State Development', in: F. Castles et al eds., *The Oxford Handbook of the Welfare State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 81-101; Mazower, *Dark Continent*, p. 288; Judt, *Postwar*, p. 330; Eley, *Forging Democracy*, p. 315; I. de Haan, 'The Western European Welfare State beyond Christian and Social Democratic Ideology', in: D. Stone ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 299-318; M. Hanagan, 'Changing Margins in Post-war European Politics', in: R. Wakeman ed., *Themes in Modern European History since 1945* (London/New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 120-141.

Although concrete socioeconomic measures and proposals of various parties were not always that far apart, essential differences existed concerning the democratic function and objective of these reforms, which are easy to underestimate with the benefit of hindsight. In the years of postwar reconstruction, the Left was caught up in a long and slow process of programmatic revision.[43] Schumacher's SPD had not yet shed its Marxist legacy, the PSI and the PCI were still allied and in frontal opposition to the Christian democrats, and the French socialists under Mollet combined a defence of the Fourth Republic against Gaullism with a revolutionary discourse in order to carve out electoral space against the communists. All these parties were committed to structural economic reform and contested the capitalist system, even in 'social market economy' variant that was adopted in some form across the continent.[44] Even the SPD, arguably the most moderate major party on the Left, assumed that the contradictions of capitalism in the Federal Republic would result in economic collapse.[45] The Christian democrats, on the other hand, connected democracy primarily to individual liberty and held that a capitalist market economy was the best guarantee of individual freedoms and therefore of democracy. Reforms were seen as instrumental to promote stability and alleviate poverty, rather than an intrinsic component of democracy in which equality featured prominently.

Thanks to the way in which government and opposition were divided along ideological lines, these differences came most clearly to the surface in Italy and West Germany. Especially in the early 1950s, the Christian democratic governments there were reluctant to undertake massive socioeconomic reforms that depended on state interference in the economy and redistribution.[46] In the years of postwar reconstruction that preceded the true economic miracle years, the most notable reform in Italy was arguably the establishment of the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* with which Rome supplied large sums of money to develop the South. Large-scale nationalisations or welfare state provisions were absent from such reforms in both countries in the 1950s, and if they were undertaken, Christian democrats saw those reforms hardly as an intrinsic component of

[43] C.C. Hodge, 'The Long Fifties: The Politics of Socialist Programmatic Revision in Britain, France and Germany', *Contemporary European History*, vol. 2 no. 1 (1993), pp. 17-34.
[44] Dumoulin, 'The socio-economic impact of Christian Democracy in Western Europe', p. 371.
[45] Hodge, 'The Long Fifties', p. 21.
[46] See for De Gasperi's and Fanfani's rejection of Keynesianism: L. Avagliano, 'Democrazia cristiana e politiche economiche', in: Lamberts ed., *Christian Democracy in the European Union*, pp. 363-368, at p. 371. For the liberal roots of the social market economy, see: F.J. Stegmann, 'Sozio-ökonomische Vorstellungen der Unionsparteien CDU/CSU', in: Lamberts ed., *Christian Democracy in the European Union*, pp. 295-312, at pp. 299-301.

the transformation of democracy. In an illustrative pamphlet published in 1954, Amintore Fanfani, one of the more progressive Christian democrats and five times prime minster, defended the DC's socioeconomic track record by listening the DC's achievements in this regard, but he omitted connecting these to the development of Italian democracy.[47] Socioeconomic reforms mostly had a pragmatic character and were connected to the aim of social justice and stability rather than to democracy.

The CDU's notion of the social market economy, and the way in which it contrasted it with the programmes of the SPD, captures the way in which the relationship between democracy and the economic system was conceptualised by Christian democrats. The social market economy was based on four principles, including the endorsement of the free market principle of supply and demand and a rejection of central state planning. Negative effects of the market economy should be countered by the redistribution of the profits of the free market economy to the benefit of society as a whole.[48] In the view of the Christian democrats, a free economy was therefore the precondition of individual liberty, which was in turn a distinctive characteristic of a democratic society.[49] Indeed, Erhard argued that 'the social market economy is the economic foundation of a democratic state, which has human freedom as its sacrosanct value. It is therefore self-evident, that a free market economy is founded on the principle of freedom […]'.[50] Increasing income redistribution and state planning of the economy led to what Erhard called 'the disempowerment of individuals and growing dependence on either collective or on the state' as a consequence of 'this dangerous road to the welfare state, with at its end the social subject and the patronising guarantee of material security by an omnipotent state'.[51] It was for this reason that SPD plans failed to conform to the standards of democracy, because its 'seemingly benevolent paternalism creates dependency, can only create subjects, and necessarily kills a free civic attitude', and 'is the cause of the abandonment of human responsibility'.[52]

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[47] A. Fanfani, 'L'azione DC per le zone depresse' (1954), in: A. Fanfani, P. Campilli and E. Colombo, *La Democrazia cristiana per le zone depresse. Documenti* (Rome: Edizione Cinque Lune, 1954), pp. 9-21.
[48] Stegmann, 'Sozio-ökonomische Vorstellungen der Unionsparteien CDU/CSU', at p. 299.
[49] See about this broad conception of the market economy as both a political and economy concept also: H. F. Wünsche, *Ludwig Erhards Konzept der Sozialen Marktwirtschaft. Erläuterungen und Interpretationen auf der Grundlage von wissenschaftlichen Schriften Erhards* (Freiburg, 1985), pp. 90-111.
[50] L. Erhard, 'Die Ziele des Gesetz gegen Wettbewerbsbeschränkungen' (1955), in: Erhard, *Deutsche Wirtschaftspolitik*, pp. 267-275, at p. 267.
[51] L. Erhard, *Wohlstand für Alle* (Düsseldorf: ECON Verlag, 1957), p. 264.
[52] L. Erhard, 'Wohlstand für Alle' (1957), in: L. Erhard, *Wirken und Reden. 19 Reden aus die Jahre 1952-1965* (Ludwigsburg: Martin Hoch Druckerei, 1965), pp. 343-360, at p. 348.

Despite the obvious economic progress, the Left was reluctant to embrace this form of capitalism and held that without massive state intervention, nationalisations, and economic planning not only the economy, but also the development of democracy was in danger. This rejection of capitalism led to four main common features of the Left's conception of democracy, which displayed continuity with their ideas on this topic of the 1940s. First of all, democracy required social equality. Nenni claimed in 1954 that '[t]he problems of today of our country are not different from those in which we found ourselves after the end of the First World War. They are characterised by the inadequacy of the Italian political centre to confront and resolve the social question. […] When eleven million Italians live in dire social circumstances, the process of development of national democratic life is being troubled and undermined at every step and at every moment'.[53] In similar tones, Schumacher told the SPD-Congress that 'the foundation of democracy as an economic principle more strongly than has been the case so far' was necessary to 'strengthen West German democracy'.[54] The current 'social passivity motivated by class politics' of the government, planted 'the germ of fascism and dictatorship'. The SPD's struggle to reform the social structure of society was in the first place part of the 'struggle for democracy in Germany'.[55]

Secondly, democracy was only secure with the integration of the working class in the state. For Schumacher, the composition of the CDU-led government, comprised of merely 'bourgeois' parties, harboured 'the large danger that this new state becomes an authoritarian, property-protecting state […] which in turns leads to the danger of the alienation of the working people from the state'.[56] The integration of the workers in the state had special importance in Italy, where collaboration between state and workers organisations was weaker than in the FRG and France, labour unions were divided in the 1950s, and small firms made collective wage negotiations more difficult.[57] The DC-interior minister Mario Scelba initiated a policy of 'exceptional laws' to oppress workers and

[53] P. Nenni, *Dialogo con la sinistra cattolica* (Milan: Avanti, 1954), p. 22; p. 24.
[54] K. Schumacher, 'Der Parteitag der SPD vom 21 bis 25 Mai 1950 in Hamburg. Grundsatzreferat Schumachers: Die Sozialdemokratie im Kampf um Deutschland und Europa' (1950), in: Schumacher, *Reden – Schriften – Korrespondenzen* , pp. 746-780, at p. 746.
[55] *Ibid*., p. 770
[56] K. Schumacher, 'Die Aufgabe der Opposition' (1949), in: Schumacher, *Turmwächter der Demokratie. II*, pp. 166-185, at p. 168.
[57] Eichengreen, *The European Economy*, p. 96; p. 114; P. Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy. Society and Politics 1943-1980* (London: Penguin Press, 2003), p. 189; Zamagni, 'Evolution of the Economy', p. 56

protesters.[58] Figures of the extent of state repression contrast sharply with those of France and the FRG: between 1948 and 1952, the police in Italy killed 65 protesters, against three in France and six in West Germany.[59] The Left perceived this as a classic example of the use of the state apparatus to protect capitalist interests and in the face of it, the Left advocated a renewed commitment to the resistance ideal of the integration of the people in the state so that the state would no longer be seen as 'the enemy of the masses'.[60] The first priority was therefore 'the democratisation of the state'.[61]

Consequently, the Left emphasised the importance of agricultural and industrial reforms and massive economic planning. These were no reform objectives in themselves, but served to 'democratise' society and were therefore an integral part of the parties' conception of democracy. In France and West Germany, these reforms centred next to 'socialisation' and the integration of workers in the state, on the co-decision of workers in the economy, both on micro and macro level.[62] In Italy, the PCI adopted the economic plans of the communist trade union that comprised the nationalisation of the electricity industry, agricultural reform and investment in housing, schools and hospitals.[63] The PCI called at its 1951 congress accordingly for state investment in industry, land reform to the benefit of landless sharecroppers and peasants, nationalisation of the mining and electrical industries, and support of small- and medium sized businesses.[64] Also the PSI stressed that agrarian reform and state control of key industries was merely the fulfilment of democratic promises made in the Italian constitution.[65]

Finally, the organisation of the economy could not be separated from the institutions of political democracy. In its programme for the 1951 parliamentary elections, the SFIO stated that 'there is no true liberty without social justice', which is why

[58] L. Paggi, 'Violenza e democrazia nella storia delle Repubblica', *Studi storici*. vol. 39 no. 4 (1998), pp. 935-952, at p. 943.
[59] Vittoria, *Storia del PCI 1921-1991*, p. 68.
[60] P. Nenni, 'Relazione di Pietro Nenni al 31 Congresso' (1955), in: P.S.I. *31 Congresso Nazionale del Partito socialista italiano. Nel decennale della Liberazione, unità del popolo per restaurare la democrazia nello Stato, nelle fabbriche, nelle campagne* (Milan: Avanti, 1955), pp. 37-89, at p. 51.
[61] Nenni, *Dialogo con la sinistra cattolica*, p. 33.
[62] S.F.I.O., *Élections législatives de 2 janvier 1956. Programme d'Action du parti socialiste – S.F.I.O.* (1955), p. 10. International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam, Bro 58/23 fol.
[63] Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, pp. 188-190.
[64] P.C.I., *Risoluzioni e decisioni del VII Congresso nazionale del Partito comunista italiano. Roma 3-8 aprile 1951* (Rome: l'Unità, 1951), pp. 21-23.
[65] P.S.I., *31 Congresso Nazionale del Partito socialista italiano. Nel decennale della Liberazione, unità del popolo per restaurare la democrazia nello Stato, nelle fabbriche, nelle campagne* (Milan: Avanti, 1955), p. 26.

the SFIO aimed to construct a 'true economic democracy'.[66] Democracy should be conceived as more than mere political rights. 'Democratic liberties', the party claimed, should be developed 'towards the full equality of rights and duties among citizens, towards a broad liberation in all economic domains'.[67] In the elections of 1956, the party programme was even more explicit about the connection between mere 'political' and formal democracy and 'true' democracy, which comprised the 'democratisation' of the economy. 'Political democracy allows for the emancipation of the citizen; it does not allow for the emancipation of the worker, which will not be possible until the moment in which political liberties – which ought to be protected and developed – will be matched by the exercise of economic and social rights'.[68]

Despite these common features of the Left-wing contestation of capitalism in the 1950s, the way in which these political conflicts played out nationally differed greatly. In France, the successive governments were true coalitions in which Christian democrats, Radicals, and Socialists cooperated and the MRP was supportive of large-scale state interference in the industrial and financial sectors.[69] The principle *économie concertée* was widely endorsed in Paris, even though the content of planning was often matter of vehement disputes and the principle of the free market economy continued to operate.[70] In West Germany and Italy, the fact that the political constellation was starkly divided in a conservative government and a Left-wing opposition contributed to a more polarised debate. Even if government and opposition agreed on a certain policy, they conceived its objective differently from the perspective of democracy.[71] The 1951 West German Co-decision laws in the mining industry, a milestone in the development of the economic history of postwar West Germany, were such an example of rare cross-party support.[72] For the socialists, securing workers' influence on the running of factories was part of the democratisation of the economy. But Adenauer viewed these as an instrument to foster

[66] S.F.I.O., *Élections législatives du 17 juin 1951. Programme d'Action. Un seul espoir: le socialisme !* (1951), p. 5. Insternational Institute for Social History Amsterdam, F 1371/470 fol.
[67] *Ibid*., p. 4.
[68] S.F.I.O., *Élections législatives de 2 janvier 1956. Programme d'Action du parti socialiste – S.F.I.O.* (1955), p. 10. International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam, Bro 58/23 fol.
[69] Callot, *Le Mouvement Républicaine Populaire*, p. 145.
[70] Kuisel, *Capitalism and the State in Modern France*, pp. 248-260; Eichengreen, *The European Economy*, pp. 106-110.
[71] See about the CDU's concern for stability when it came to social security measures also: Becker, 'Der Einfluβ der Unionsparteien auf der politische Ordnung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland', p. 229.
[72] H. Thum, *Mitbestimmung in der Montanindustrie. Der Mythos vom Sieg der Gewerkschaften* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1982), see in particular pp. 93-97 about the parliamentary accords between SPD and CDU.

social peace and made it explicitly clear that the law should not be seen as an instrument to create economic democracy nor be connected to the SPD aim of 'socialisation'.[73]

The discontent with party democracy

Even though the debate on democracy between the major parties continued along the same lines at least until the mid-1950s, they actually also seemed to agree on many things. The leading principles of the transformation of democracy which had emerged during the era of constitution signing stood unscathed at the end of the decade: democracy still centred on political parties, representation, and limited popular participation. In all three states, political parties moreover greatly expanded their political power, and especially those in government blurred the line between party and state.[74] This situation triggered a reaction from those who rejected the principles of representative party democracy, and unveiled the level of dissatisfaction with the postwar settlements.

Political parties rejected critique on party democracy as undemocratic, reinforced their emphasis on the importance of political parties as a bridge between the world of high politics and that of society, and stressed that parties had a crucial function in stimulating the development of democratic consciousness among citizens. This justification of the importance of political parties was characteristic for France and the way in which politicians like Mollet and Pierre Mendès France of the Radical Party challenged the 'personal power' of De Gaulle. But it was equally visible in the party states of Italy and West Germany. Within the DC, the conception of parties as a link between state and society was broadly shared. The party for instance saw the rise of the movement 'Democratic Initiative' in the early 1950s, which was motivated to create a new sense of trust by citizens in democratic institutions, and to emphasise the necessity to connect the citizen to the state.[75] Parties were considered of crucial importance in this process, because only they could instil public faith in political institutions. They provided democratic inspiration and enthusiasm among the population and thus fostered, in the

[73] Kleinmann, *Geschichte der CDU*, pp. 152-156; Thum, *Mitbestimmung in der Montanindustrie*, pp. 116-119.
[74] R. Forlenza, 'A Party for the *Mezzogiorno*: The Christian Democratic Party, Agrarian Reform and the Government of Italy', *Contemporary European History*, vol. 19 no. 4 (2010), pp. 331-349, esp. at pp. 346-349. D. Hanley, *Party, Society, Government. Republican Democracy in France* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2002), ch. 6; S. Padgett, 'The Chancellor and his Party', in: S. Padgett ed., *Adenauer to Kohl. The Development of the German Chancellorship* (London: Hurst, 1994), pp. 44-77, at p. 46.
[75] F. Malgeri, *L'Italia democristiana. Uomini e idee dal cattolicesimo democratico nell'Italia repubblicana (1943-1993)* (Rome: Gangemi editore, 2004), p. 80; A. Giovagnoli, *Il partito italiano. La Democrazia cristiana dal 1942 al 1994* (Bari: Laterza, 1996), p. 58.

words of Rumor, 'an alliance between government and the people'.[76] At the DC's congress in 1954, De Gasperi stressed that parties had a double function: the party was an instrument to foster political commitment and a means 'to give a political direction to representatives and legislators'. This was for De Gasperi an essential feature of the 'exercise of democracy, that is [to advocate] the decisions of [party] militants in the assembly'.[77] For Schumacher, parties provided the only viable alternative to dictatorship in an age of mass societies.[78] Erich Ollenhauer, who was his successor as SPD-leader in 1952, stated in a major speech in parliament that 'we have to be very careful criticising political parties in a nascent democracy. We know they have their strengths and weaknesses, but there is no better form of expression of the political will and formation of the political will than political parties'. Especially because the West German youth had little experience with party politics, prudence was required when critically assessing the relationship between parties and democracies. For Ollenhauer, 'every attack on the parties is essentially an attack on democracy', even if this criticism was launched 'with good intentions'.[79]

Yet dissatisfaction with both this elitist conception of democracy and the way it functioned, bred discontent, and added to the atmosphere of democratic crisis that already existed thanks to the harsh attack between parties. The way in which this form of critique was able to affect the dominant conception of democracy as an affair for professional party politicians differed greatly. In the post-fascist and post-Nazi states, anti-party rhetoric was quickly viewed from the perspective of the totalitarian past. Even though this could not impede the expression of anti-party sentiments, it ensured that the delegitimation of this critique was easier for the parties than in France. Thanks to the resistance credentials of De Gaulle, the Gaullist critique on political parties could establish itself as a main competitor of the Fourth Republic.

De Gaulle's own sometimes rather harsh public interventions concealed a more subtly articulated Gaullist concern with the problems of party democracy in principle. Michel Debré, one of De Gaulle's closest allies, argued that parties deformed the nature of

[76] M. Rumor, 'Una forza popolare' (1952), in: Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana. Vol II*, pp. 558-559.
[77] A. de Gasperi, *Nella lotta per la democrazia* (Rome: Edizione Cinque Lune, 1954), p. 24.
[78] K. Schumacher, 'Um die Lebensnotwendigkeit des Volkes' (1950), in: Schumacher, *Turmwächter der Demokratie. II*, pp. 186-220, at p. 190.
[79] E. Ollenhauer, 'Voraussetzungen der Demokratie' (1949), in: Ollenhauer, *Reden und Aufsätze*, pp. 182-194, at p. 184.

delegation of power by the people and formulated three objections to party democracy. First, parties present a list of candidates at elections, which means that the transfer of 'sovereignty' no longer takes place between one citizen and another, but between the citizen and the party. The party moreover acts in the interest of the party and the interests it represents, rather than the general interest. Members of parliament are consequently no longer able to freely discuss the national interest, but have to follow the party line, while democracy 'means always governing in the general interest. Society, the state and politics are indivisible'.[80] Second, political parties thwarted the neutrality of the state. Because the composition of democratic power is by nature unstable, the Gaullists considered a strong state necessary to provide political stability. This implies a clear division 'between the will that expresses power and the instrument used by power to arrive at its ends'.[81] In other words, state impartiality is necessary in order to be able to govern in the general interest, but parties not only take control of parliament, but also of many other state institutions, which consequently come to reflect the political preferences and privileges of the interests they represent. For Debré there was 'not an idea more wrong or crazy', than the division of public power among different groups.[82] The weakest link between parties and democracy was that parties discharged ordinary citizens of their sense of political and public responsibility and of the obligation to be politically involved. Consequently, 'power and nation follow diverging tracks, the electorate, among which scepticism grows with each election, does not harbour the profound attachment for democracy that secures the protection of the system'.[83]

Also in Italy and West Germany, several critics contended that the dominance of political parties thwarted the original function of parliament. This 'parliamentary party critique' acknowledged the importance of parliament, but posited that parliament had lost its function as a meeting place for representatives who discussed the general interest. Instead, parliament had become an institution through which various parties competed over state power. In Italy, this critique was reflective of a more general concern of about the apparent merge between the largest party and the state.[84] This critique was expressed

[80] M. Debré, *La République et son pouvoir* (Paris: Nagel, 1950), p. 41.
[81] *Ibid*., p. 50.
[82] *Ibid*., p. 60.
[83] *Ibid*., p. 105.
[84] See for instance: P. Allum, 'The Changing Face of Christian Democracy', in: C. Duggan and C. Wagstaff eds, *Italy and the Cold War: Politics, Culture, Society* (Oxford: Berg, 1995), pp. 117-130.

by liberals like Croce,[85] but also by Luigi Sturzo, former leader of the Popular Party and a Senator for life in the early 1950s.[86] Sturzo asserted that the dominance of political parties within the democratic system at large had affected the democratic character of the state and public confidence in institutions. Although he was not in favour of a presidential system, his analysis shows resemblance to the one put forward concurrently by Debré. Sturzo did not denounce parties in principle, but stressed that they had become too powerful and thereby distorted the working of democracy, making the system 'unhealthy' and 'dysfunctional'.[87] The organisation of parliament in different party factions had, for Sturzo, 'exacerbated the errors' of the post-World War I era, when mass democracy was established in Italy, and 'has strengthened the stimuli of the *partitocrazia*'.[88] Effectively the parties' control of government obstructed a government in the general interest and entailed a significant strengthening of the power of the executive, because parliament had lost its place as centre for democratic control and free discussion of executive policy in which MP's decided freely. Sturzo warned that resistance to the *partitocrazia* was required, 'if we do not want to degrade parliament and annul its function'.[89]

The legacy of fascism ensured that party critique only had a small platform in Italy.[90] This counted arguably even more for West Germany, which meant that mainly those actors at some distance from direct political influence expressed critique on party democracy in West Germany. Many intellectuals saw the Adenauer era as an epoch of restoration in which they discerned features of the pre-1945 order. Political parties were in particular suspected in this regard, as they seemed to control all political life, left little room for active citizenship, and were moreover prone to the influence of organised interest.[91] This entailed a critical assessment of the role of political parties in the Federal

[85] D.M. Smith, 'Benedetto Croce: History and Politics', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 8 no. 1 (1973), pp. 41-61, at p. 57.
[86] See also: P. Alatri, 'Luigi Sturzo a cento anni della nascita', *Studi storici*, vol. 13 no. 1 (1972), pp. 199-215, at p. 205; p. 212.
[87] L. Sturzo, 'Democrazia e partitocrazia' (1954), in: L. Sturzo, *Opera omnia di Luigi Sturzo. Seconda serie. Saggi – Discorsi – Articoli. Volume 13. Politica di questi anni. Consensi e critiche (1954-1956)* (Rome: Istituto Luigi Sturzo, 1966), pp. 30-35, at p. 31.
[88] L. Sturzo, 'Partiti e partitocrazia' (1951), in: L. Sturzo, *Opera omnia di Luigi Sturzo. Seconda serie. Saggi – Discorsi – Articoli. Volume 12. Politica di questi anni. Consensi e critiche (1951-1953)* (Rome: Istituto Luigi Sturzo, 1966), pp. 39-43, at p. 43.
[89] L. Sturzo, 'Partitocrazia e Parlamento' (1950), in: L. Sturzo, *Opera omnia di Luigi Sturzo. Seconda serie. Saggi – Discorsi – Articoli. Volume 11. Politica di questi anni. Consensi e critiche (1950-1951)* (Rome: Istituto Luigi Sturzo, 1966), pp. 254-258, at p. 256.
[90] See, for instance: Chiarini, 'La fortuna del gollismo in Italia'.
[91] J.W. Müller, *Another Country. German Intellectuals, Unification and National Identity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 33-40; K. Sontheimer, 'Intellectuals in the Political Life of the Federal Republic

Republic, which were dominant in the state and detached from the people. Parties failed to perform their role as bridge between citizen and the state, which in turn impeded popular participation. Instead of fostering a democratic spirit among the population and enabling popular involvement, the 'Fathers of the Basic Law have fallen into the opposite extreme and have over-emphasised the representative character of our system of government'.[92]

Yet all these forms of party critique still appreciated the central place of parliament in democracy, even if only in 'rationalised' form. One of the reasons why politicians were able to delegitimise even this more moderate critique was that it existed next to an overt rejection of party democracy on the extreme right. In France, the Poujadist movement expressed this vision, as Poujadism evolved from a tax-revolt into a radical right movement over the course of the 1950s.[93] Pierre Poujade claimed that 'republican values are endangered' thanks to the fact that political parties stood with their back to society and were only interested in the survival of the system.[94] The party system was oligarchic and elitist and there existed a gap between the parties' rhetoric about 'democracy' and the reality of the lives of the ordinary French.[95] In Italy, the MSI profited from the electoral decline of the *Fronte dell'Uomo Qualunque* in 1948, partially because it shared its rejection of political parties.[96] The MSI envisioned corporatist representation of group interests as the basis of the political system and was as such in favour of a so-called *democrazia qualificata*. This entailed a third way between capitalism and socialism in which various interest groups worked together for the common good.[97] An explicit aim of this system was to overcome the Italian *partitocrazia*.[98] The neo-fascists denounced political parties on now familiar grounds: they expressed societal divisions and therefore jeopardized governing in the general interest – however that general interest was defined. In West

of Germany', in R. Pommerin ed., *Culture in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1945-1995* (Oxford: Berg, 1996), pp. 75-92.

92 E. Fraenkel, *Die repräsentative und die plebiszitäre Komponente im demokratischen Verfassungsstaat (*Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr , 1958), p. 56.

93 For continuities of the Poujadists with the Pétain regime, see: R. Souillac, *Le mouvement Poujade. De la défense professionnelle au populisme nationale (1953-1962)* (Paris: Sciences-Po Presses, 2007), p. 394.

94 P. Poujade, *J'ai choisis le combat* (Saint Cère: Société Générale des Éditions et des publications, 1955), p. 208.

95 *Ibid*., p. 113.

96 P. Ignazi, *Il polo escluso. Profilo storico del Movimento Sociale Italiano* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1989), p. 32.

97 Movimento Sociale Italiano, 'Elezioni politiche di 1948. Il MSI agli Italiani' (1948), Fondazione Ugo Spirito e Renzo di Felice Rome, Archivio del Movimento Sociale Italiano, Serie 2, busta 19, p. 108.

98 Movimento Sociale Italiano, 'Le corporazioni' (1957), Fondazione Ugo Spirito e Renzo di Felice Rome, Archivio del Movimento Sociale Italiano, Serie 2, busta 52, p. 6.

Germany, the main political expression of anti-party visions came from the Socialist Reichs Party (SRP). The party aimed for a personalisation of politics in which people voted for individuals rather than parties. Although the SRP claimed to respect the principle of the *Rechtstaat*, it also aimed to 'challenge' the West German party system and 'detoxify German political life' of the influence of the parties.[99] This discourse and its internal practices put the party clearly outside of the sphere of the politically acceptable in West Germany. Although it proved problematic to convict the party solely on the basis of a programme which claimed to accept the *Rechtstaat*,[100] the Federal Constitutional Court outlawed the party, because the SRP was based on the *Führerprinzip* and a continuation of the NSDAP and therefore incompatible with the Basic Law.[101]

The Poujadists, the MSI, and the SRP were the heirs of a fundamentally hostile stance not just on political parties, but also on the principle of parliamentary democracy. They were a sign of dissatisfaction with how parties dominated democracy. The fact that the extreme Right rejected party democracy provided another reason for those in power to emphasise that only parties could guarantee democratic government. Yet, this defence was not enough to silence the problems articulated by the more subtle criticisers of party regimes. In West Germany, those in power condemned party critique, but the questioning of the party state nonetheless pointed to an issue of growing concern in the debate on West German democracy: engaging the people.[102] West Germany, according to Karl Jaspers, had to become a democracy 'of hearts and minds' rather than solely a democracy as a form of government.[103] In Italy, the sceptre of communism acted as a break on the expression of antisystem opinions, which ensured that antifascism lost much of its political immediacy in the 1950s, and that anti-antifascist voters flocked to the DC as a

[99] Sozialistische Reichspartei, 'Aktionsprogramm Sozialistische Reichspartei' (1951), in: O.K. Flechtheim ed., *Dokumente zur parteipolitische Entwicklung in Deutschland seit 1945. Vol. 2* (Berlin: Verlag Dr. Herbert Wendler & Co, 1963), pp. 489-493, at p. 489.
[100] H. Hansen, *Die Sozialistische Reichspartei. Aufstieg und Scheitern einer rechtsextremen Partei* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 2007), p. 265.
[101] Bundesverfassungsericht, *Das Urteil das Bundesverfassungsgericht vom. 23 Oktober 1952 betreffend Feststellung der Verfassungswidrigkeit der Sozialistische Reichspartei* (Tübingen, J.C.B. Mohr, 1952), p. 10; 73.
[102] See for some nascent initiatives of popular involvement at the local level: Ullrich, *Der Weimar-Komplex*, pp. 376-412; S.A. Forner, 'Für eine demokratische Erneuerung Deutschlands: Kommunikationsprozesse und Deutungsmuster engagierter Demokraten nach 1945', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, vol. 33 no. 2 (2007), pp. 228-257.
[103] K. Jaspers, 'Wahrheit, Freiheit und Friede' (1958), in: K. Jaspers, *Hoffnung und Sorge. Schriften zur deutsche Politik* (Munich: Piper, 1965), pp. 174-184, at p. 181.

wall against Marxism.[104] However, the dissatisfaction with the *partitocrazia* grew steadily during the decade.

In France, the gravity of the Fourth Republic's crisis was reflected in the fact that the Poujadists took over fifty parliamentary seats in the 1956 general elections. For Pierre Mendès France, the only politician who seemed able to save the Fourth Republic,[105] parties were crucial in involving citizens in the political process, fostering political commitment and contributing to a 'fusion' of state and citizen. They were therefore considered part of the 'essence of a real democracy', which valued this kind of popular participation.[106] Yet the Fourth Republic government parties proved increasingly unable to provide coherent governments, especially now that the Algerian War absorbed all their attention, and this fuelled critique on party democracy.

The contested militancy of postwar democracies in the 1950s

There was a widespread agreement that the postwar order should be defended against antidemocratic forces during the first fifteen years after the War, but this concern over security of democracy co-existed with a distrust in the democratic credentials of political opponents. The constitutions obviously played a major role in this debate. They had been the result of the strained collaboration between the major political parties in the aftermath of the War, and, despite the fact that they were widely considered as compromises, they delineated the boundaries of what was considered democratic. In West Germany and Italy, the constitutions were broadly endorsed, but the way in which political antagonists were judged to conform to them was not universally accepted. In France, on the other hand, political forces could not agree on the constitution and the Gaullists aimed to alter it.

As a result, the question who could most credibly claim to defend and embody democracy lay still open in the 1950s. This debate was partially characterised by fierce and sometimes rather shallow political rhetoric in which actors accused each other of being antidemocrats. Yet, below these accusations true concerns persisted about the state of democracy in the 1950s, in which a crisis sentiment haunted all states. The mutual accusations were moreover the result of the stark divisions in government and

[104] Giovagnoli, *Il partito italiano*, p. 56.
[105] J.J. Becker, *Histoire politique de la France depuis 1945* (Paris: Armand Colin Editeur, 2000), p. 64.
[106] P. Mendès France, 'La crise de la démocratie' (1955), in: P. Mendès France, *Œuvres complètes. Vol. IV. Pour une République moderne* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987), pp. 81-102, at pp. 82-89.

opposition, which mirrored the competing and sometimes opposing conceptions of democracy.

Christian democrats and the defence of democracy in Italy and West Germany

These differences related again to national power constellations, which meant that West Germany and Italy showed many similarities in the way the Left and Christian democrats disputed and distrusted each other's compatibility with the postwar democratic order. The Christian democrats had a particular conception of the militancy of postwar democracies, captured under the notion of 'protected democracy' in Italy, which included the use of state institutions to battle political extremes, but also comprised some other, and more controversial, elements beyond strict institutional mechanisms. Next to outlawing political extremes this included the increased equation of democracy with the parliamentary majority, the entrenchment in the West, and a denouncing of the democratic credentials of the Left-wing opposition, whether of socialist or communist nature, under the header of anti-Marxism.

The Cold War tensions played a major role in this contestation of democratic legitimacy. This was obvious in the case of Italy, where the Christian democrats made much effort to integrate their country in the West, while the communists and socialists were allied to Moscow. But it was also the case for West Germany, where the SPD was fiercely anti-communist, but weary of the integration in the West, while exactly the entrenchment in the West was considered a key aspect of the Christian democrat notion of democracy. West Germany was expected to contribute to its own military defence, first through the ultimately failed project of the European Defence Community and later through its membership of NATO. Adenauer connected foreign policy to the militant defence of democracy. He stated that 'the Federal Republic of Germany is part of this Western world […] the German people, which loves peace, will never give up the hope that peace can be maintained'. This required that the Federal Republic 'should be prepared to make a reasonable contribution to the construction of this defensive front […] to secure the freedom of its citizens'.[107] Because of the link between democracy and the West, Adenauer instilled fears for the 'Marxist' SPD. He presented the CDU as a 'wall against

[107] K. Adenauer, 'Regierungserklärung vor dem Deutschen Bundestag' (1950), in: Adenauer, *Reden* , pp. 193-200, at p. 200.

Marxism',[108] claimed that 'All Marxist road lead to Moscow', and stated that the 1953-elections centred on the question 'whether Germany falls for the materialist world view or remains Christian'.[109] The resistance of the 'Marxist' SPD to the rearmament laws and international alliances demonstrated that this party was unwilling to defend West German democratic freedoms in the face of a Soviet threat. In an election campaign speech for the 1957 general election, Adenauer denounced the SPD's resistance to the integration of the Federal Republic in the West as undemocratic.[110]

As the party of government, the Christian democrats could also exert more influence over state institutions in their quest to defend democracy. In West Germany, this perception of a militant democracy was the least controversial, because it was supported by the SPD as an important pillar under the notion of democratic self-defence. In his first parliamentary speech as Chancellor, Adenauer promised to 'use every legal means available' to combat extremism and defend democracy.[111] This entailed that the Christian democrats saw the state rather than the people as ultimate line of democratic defence,[112] and led to the outlawing of both the neo-Nazi Socialist Reichs Party and West German communist party, which had taken 5.7% of the vote in 1949. During the trial, the government cited extensively from Lenin's writings to prove its case that the KPD favoured a violent revolution to bring the dictatorship of the proletariat about.[113] The Federal Constitutional Court outlawed the party in 1956.

The Christian democrat attempt to battle communism in Italy was understandably much more controversial, given the fact that the country harboured the largest communist party of the West. The DC-leadership proclaimed that 'democracy also means anti-communism' and moved to 'exit the strategy of a purely verbal anticommunism'.[114] The DC argued that the PCI was a totalitarian party and in that sense akin to fascism. De Gasperi stated that he was not antifascist 'out of hate for fascism, but out of love for liberty'

[108] Bösch, *Die Adenauer-CDU*, p. 152.
[109] Adenauer, 'Ansprache vor dem Bundesparteiausschuß der CDU' (1952), in: Adenauer, *Reden* , pp. 263-280, at p. 269.
[110] K. Adenauer, 'Rede auf der Schlußkundgebung des Landesparteitag der CDU im Messehaus Nürnberg' (1957), in: Adenauer, *Reden* , pp. 366-372, at p. 367.
[111] K. Adenauer, 'Erste Regierungserklärung von Bundeskanzler Adenauer' (1949), in: Adenauer, *Reden* , pp. 153-169, at p. 163.
[112] See: K. Hanshew, *Terror and Democracy in West Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), ch. 1.
[113] Bundesverfassungsgericht, *Verfahren gegen die KPD vor dem Bundesverfassungsgericht. Die Rechtsgrundlagen* (Bonn: it Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, 1955), pp. 13-15.
[114] D.C., '*Consiglio nazionale 12-13 Dicembre 1951*', in: D.C., *IV Congresso Nazionale. Relazione della Direzione Centrale 1949-1952. Atti e documenti* (Rome, 1951), p. 137.

and that this was the same reason why he was anti-communist: 'not out of hate for communism, but out of love for freedom'. De Gasperi subsequently held that the new republican state lacked 'methods to defend itself', and 'that what is necessary is a democracy that defends itself, otherwise there is no liberty'.[115] This formed the justification of the DC's 'exceptional laws', based on the assumption that recently established republican institutions had to be protected from the Marxist parties. These laws included the arrests of hundreds of people for selling the communist newspaper *l'Unità*, limitations on the right to strike, the easy application of emergency laws in the case of land occupations,[116] and the sacking of socialist and communist civil servants, school teachers, and university professors.[117] It culminated in state violence against protesters, which left a hundred people dead in the period 1948-1960 – the far majority of those killed were communists.[118] In terms of collective memory, however, the DC's claim to defend the democratic order has become identified above all with the electoral reform law for the 1953 general election. The 'Scelba-law' foresaw in the awarding of a majority-premium of two thirds of the parliamentary seats to the party or coalition of parties that obtained 50% plus one of the ballots cast.

The Scelba-law was an extreme example of the sometimes controversial way in which Christian democrats aimed to secure their power position, stabilise government, and construct a wall against Marxism. Democratic legitimacy was increasingly equalled with the support of the parliamentary majority, which could justify controversial policies. In order to sustain this majority and provide stability, also the CDU aimed for electoral reform to impede the 'splintering' of parliament.[119] The introduction of the 5% electoral threshold at national level for the elections in 1953, as well as the failed attempts to introduce a majority voting system, epitomised this tendency.[120] Also the Co-decision

[115] De Gasperi, 'Le ragioni di una politica anticomunista', p. 370.
[116] G. Scarpari, *La Democrazia cristiana e le leggi eccezionali 1950-1953* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1977).
[117] G. Crainz, *Storia del miracolo italiano. Cultura, identità e trasformazioni fra anni cinquanta e sessanta* (Rome: Donzelli editore, 2004), pp. 4-14.
[118] D. Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence and the State. A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 58. Galli mentions the figures of communist victims of police violence in 1948, 1949 and the first half of 1950: 62 killed of whom 48 communists, 3162 wounded of whom 2367 communists, and 92169 arrested of whom 73780 communist. See: G. Galli, *Storia del PCI. Il partito comunista italiano. Livorno 1921 – Rimini 1991* (Rome: Kaos editore, 1993), p. 189.
[119] C.D.U, *Hamburger Programm* (1953), p. 6. Found on: http://www.kas.de/upload/ACDP/CDU/Programme_Bundestag/1953_Hamburger-Programm.pdf accessed on 30 July 2015.
[120] M. Görtemacher, *Geschichte der Bundesrepublik. Von Gründung bis zum Gegenwart* (Munich, C.H. Beck Verlag, 1999), p. 75.

laws discussed above could be seen as a way to limit the scope for extra-parliamentary action, as they ensured political influence over the relationship between employers and employees. 'It should be prevented', Adenauer argued, that 'in a democracy strikes have a force which laws do not'.[121]

In Italy, the political tensions were higher and the polarisation was deeper, but the principle of the Christian democrats was the same: democracy meant in the first place the primacy of parliamentary politics and the equation of democracy with the legitimacy of the parliamentary majority. This stance became visible for instance when a fanatic almost fatally shot Togliatti in front of parliament in the summer of 1948. It led to mass Left-wing protests, occupation of the FIAT factories in Turin, roadblocks on the streets of Venice, and the take-over of the telephone exchange controlling all communications between the centre and north of the country. The PCI leadership aimed to diffuse the tensions and from hospital Togliatti famously called upon the protesters 'not to lose their heads', but many feared that Togliatti had met the same fate as Giacomo Matteotti twenty-five years earlier.[122] In his speech in parliament as a response to the unrest, De Gasperi stated that politics could be only conducted in parliament, so striking with the attempt to bring the government down, was an 'attempt to undermine the democratic order'. Any such demands could be only unfounded, because 'the government gained confidence of parliament and the electorate'.[123] Also Scelba's electoral reform law fitted perfectly in this conception of democracy, because it 'sublimes the existing principle that the majority rules'.[124]

This conception of democracy, labelled a 'democracy from above' in the case of West Germany,[125] sometimes took precedence over the realisation or adherence to the constitutions. The programmatic character of the Italian constitution was largely ignored by the DC, and it postponed the realisation of its most progressive articles, based on the fear that the Marxist Left could strengthen its power position.[126] The establishment of a constitutional court, the devolution of powers to the Italian regions, and the

[121] K. Adenauer, Mitbestimmung (1951), in: K. Adenauer, *Bundestagsreden* (Bonn: AZ Studio, 1972), pp. 79-83, at p. 80.
[122] Di Loreto, *Togliatti e la "Doppiezza"*, p. 291 ff.
[123] A. de Gasperi, 'Dopo l'attentato a Togliatti' (1948), in: De Gasperi, *Scritti politici*, pp. 339-343, at pp. 339-340.
[124] A. de Gasperi, 'La legge maggioritaria. La DC e la dottrina sociale cattolica' (1953), in: De Gasperi, *Scritti politici*, pp. 392-396, at p. 393. The law was also criticized from within the DC, see for instance: Galli, *Storia della DC*, p. 134.
[125] Bauerkämper, 'The Twisted Road to Democracy', p. 450.
[126] Lupo, *Partito e antipartito*, p. 56.

institutionalisation of referenda – indeed all instruments which could temper the force of the parliamentary majority – were postponed by De Gasperi, because it was important to 'go *adagio* with the constitution'.[127]

Threats to democracy according to the Left in West Germany and Italy

All these measures and declarations, ranging from the outlawing of political antagonists, limitations on extra-parliamentary action, to adaptions of the electoral system, were considered necessary because the democratisation of Italy and West Germany was a precarious process. It built upon the conviction that any change in government posed a threat to democracy, whether thanks to a lack of commitment to defend it militarily against communism, Marxist aspirations to drastically expand the size of the state, or, in the case of the PCI, international alliances and secretly harboured authoritarian tendencies. Yet, the Left also saw democracies in danger in the 1950s, but for them the threat was posed by the Christian democrats in government and the measures with which they claimed to protect recently won democratic freedoms.

So seen from the Left's perspective, the integration in the West was challenged as undemocratic. The Marxist Left in Italy naturally used the notion of democracy to denounce the Christian democrat's international orientation as belligerent. But it was equally visible in the SPD's reading of the Cold War. The party was formally commited to the West and Schumacher and his successor, Erich Ollenhauer, realised that their ideal of social democracy stood at odds with Soviet practices and ideology. Nonetheless, the SPD distinguished between being 'for' and 'with' the West and rejected virtually all major foreign policy initiatives of the CDU.[128] The SPD argued that Adenauer's foreign policy jeopardised the aim of German unification and did not take place based on full equality between the FRG and its Western allies. The socialists connected their resistance against rearmament with the contestation of the democratic credentials of the CDU. The SPD argued that the remilitarisation of West Germany was in contradiction to the pacific character of the Basic Law and took the government unsuccessfully to the constitutional court to prevent ratification of the European Defence Community treaty.[129]

[127] A. de Gasperi, 'Costituzione e riforma elettorale' (1952), in: De Gasperi, *Scritti politici*, pp. 383-386, at p. 383.
[128] G.D. Drummond, *The German Social Democrats in Opposition 1949-1960. The Case against Rearmament* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982), pp. 25-33.
[129] See for the debate about the constitutionality of the rearmament laws: Drummond, *The German Social Democrats in Opposition*, pp. 69-74.

This concern about the way governments made fundamental foreign policy choices solely based on a parliamentary majority was reflective of a broader concern on the Left about the quality of democracy under Adenauer and De Gasperi. The SPD feared that West Germany's 'democracy from above' could de-democratise and that fundamental issues could not be decided on the slim basis of a parliamentary majority, in particular not when the quickly shifting global situation posed questions for the German government unthinkable at the time of elections. When all parliamentary means of obstruction against rearmament had failed, the party therefore, reluctantly, endorsed the extra-parliamentary protests of the anti-rearmament *Ohne mich*-campaign.[130] Both Schumacher and Ollenhauer claimed that the social defence of democracy should gain prevalence over the military defence of democracy and that this required the promotion of a democratic consciousness among the population at large. Ollenhauer stated that 'the social securing of democracy must have priority above the military one. Our first obligation is therefore to formulate an answer to the methods of the Cold War by means of a politics which renders democracy worthy of defence in the consciousness of the entire German people'.[131] This promotion of a democratic consciousness was not only reflective of continuing concerns about the democratic spirit of the German people among political elites, but could also serve as a means to challenge the equation of democracy with the politics of the parliamentary majority and the personal power of Adenauer. The SPD carried a deep mistrust against the Christian democrats, and considered the 'autocracy of the Chancellor' to be against the spirit of the constitution.[132] Christian democrat MP's lacked 'any inner connection' to democracy, while the government had no respect for the parliamentary minority and displayed a 'tendency of authoritarian and autocratic action against parliament'.[133]

Whereas the SPD expressed doubts that the Christian democrat politicians harboured only an instrumental and superficial affection for democracy and with their support for capitalist economics risked a return to fascism, antifascism was also the

[130] P. Hockenos, *Joschka Fischer and the Making of the Berlin Republic. An Alternative History of post-war Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 41.
[131] E. Ollenhauer, 'Es geht um mehr als Divisionen' (1952), in: E. Ollenhauer, *Reden und Aufsätze* (Hannover: Dietz Verlag, 1964), pp. 195-205, at p. 197.
[132] K. Schumacher, 'Gesellschaftsumbau – Ein nationale Aufgabe' (1951), in: Schumacher, *Turmwächter der Demokratie. II*, pp. 249-281, at p. 250.
[133] E. Ollenhauer, 'Bericht über die bisherige Tätigkeit der sozialdemokratische Bundestagfraktion', in: S.P.D., *Es gibt nur eine Wahrheit. Kurt Schumacher und Erich Ollenhauer auf dem Hamburger Parteitag der Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands im Mai 1950* (Bonn: Vorstand der SPD, 1950), pp. 32-48, at pp. 34-35.

leading perspective through which the Left in Italy viewed the DC.[134] The DC governed allegedly with the specific aim of excluding the working class from power, by 'breaking the republican legality, trampling the most elementary civic and political liberties, hurting the trade union movement and workers organisation, its leaders and their means of struggle […]'.[135] For Togliatti, this showed again that 'anti-communism opens the road to fascism'.[136] Also for the Italian Left, the defence of democracy took place on the level of society and required a full acceptance of the rights enshrined in the constitution. Basso asserted that for De Gasperi and Scelba 'democratic means that the majority can make laws', and 'the government is always right, because the government has a majority that has in this way abandoned its rights and obligations of parliamentary control'. In short, Basso argued, 'we find ourselves confronted with a government that is always right like another one that has preceded it' – to underline the similarities with fascism.[137]

Also the Scelba electoral reform law, for the Christian democrats a means to protect democracy, was seen as a continuity with fascism and linked to the infamous Acerbo laws with which Mussolini aimed to perpetuate his rule. Togliatti claimed that the law 'is exactly an electoral swindle law, copy of the analogous fascist law'.[138] It meant that elections in the 1950s in Italy centred on the question of the 'defence' of democracy, most evident during those of 1953 which were dominated by the Scelba law and when the PCI argued that the DC 'violated every democratic principle' and that the elections were about the defence of democracy.[139] The electoral reform was moreover another example of how the Italian constitution was considered under threat by the majoritarian principles of the DC. This constitution was sacred, because 'at its origins are not fragile majorities that can also become minorities, but the sacrifices, the blood of the Resistance, that means imperishable values that do not collapse any more, whatever happens'.[140] Nenni remarked that the institution which could have asserted the constitutionality of the electoral reform, a constitutional court, 'is exactly the institution which has not been

[134] M. Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI. Vol. III Dal dopoguerra a oggi* (Bari: Laterza, 1993), p. 111.
[135] P. Togliatti, 'Per la lotta in difesa della Costituzione' (1951), in: P.C.I. *Documenti politici del comitato centrale della direzione e della segreteria* (Rome: La stampa moderna, 1954), pp. 54-56, at p. 55.
[136] P. Togliatti, 'Rafforzare l'unità democratica e antifascista' (1952), in: P.C.I. *Documenti politici del comitato*, pp. 91-92, at p. 91.
[137] L. Basso, *Due totalitarismi. Fascismo e democrazia cristiana* (Rome, 1951), p. 152; p. 174.
[138] P.C.I., *Per un governo di pace e di riforme sociali. Per un'Italia democratica e indipendente. Rapporto al consiglio nazionale del P.C.I. di 15 aprile 1953* (1953), p. 7. Istituto Gramsci, Rome, Archivio del P.C.I., F. Col. Op. 91 000071303.
[139] P.C.I., *Per un governo di pace e di riforme sociali*.
[140] P. Nenni, *Legge truffa e costituzione. Ragioni dell'ostruzionismo socialista* (Milan: Avanti, 1953), p. 21.

realised' by the DC thanks to its refusal to realise certain articles of the constitution.[141] The DC reduced the constitution to a text of solely historical and moral value. In this sense, Nenni argued, 'a silent but therefore no less effective coup d'état has taken place […]', because abandoning the constitution or impeding its proper functioning' was 'the same thing'.[142] Realisation of the constitution was therefore a key objective of the socialists and communists, because this could block the increasing power of the DC and thereby contribute to the defence of democracy.

The contestation of the Fourth Republic

In France, political forces similarly denied each other's democratic credentials in the 1950s, but with two major differences in comparison with West Germany and Italy. First of all, the political spectrum was divided between changing and unstable coalition governments supported by the MRP, Radicals and SFIO rather than a stark division between Christian democrats and the Left. Secondly, an important part of the opposition did not identify with the postwar constitution, but wanted to replace it. The continuing instability of the Fourth Republic's successive governments, their inability to silence the critique on the malfunctioning of the party system, and the colonial wars, not only discredited its major parties, but also the institutional outline with which they identified.

French democracy was therefore in permanent crisis and the government saw it threatened by two fronts: the communists and the RPF. In the face of the swelling critique, the government parties aimed to safe what they saw as the only truly democratic and republican model. Mollet claimed that the socialists should be 'in government when democracy is menaced',[143] and he denounced the Gaullists as a 'neo-fascist' threat against democracy with the aim of establishing a regime based on 'personal power'.[144] De Gaulle wanted 'to discredit and ruin our parliamentary institutions' by 'installing a personal dictatorship'.[145] As in West Germany and Italy, the parties in government used their power to 'defend democracy' and change the rules of the game. They adapted the electoral system in their own advantage in the 1951 elections. Like in West Germany and Italy, this

[141] Nenni, *Legge truffa e costituzione*, p. 12.
[142] Nenni, 'Relazione di Pietro Nenni al 31 Congresso', p. 57.
[143] G. Mollet, 'Participation au gouvernement de Mendès France ?' (1954), in: G. Mollet, *Textes choisis. Le socialiste et le républicain 1945-1975* (Paris: Bruno Leprince Éditeur, 1995), pp. 83-94, at p. 87.
[144] G. Mollet, *Nous travaillons pour une bonne cause* (Arras: Société d'éditions du Pas-de-Calais, 1949), p. 7.
[145] L. Blum, 'A la recherche d'une majorité' (1949), in: Blum, *L'œuvre de Léon Blum. VII*, pp. 252-262, at p. 255.

move was justified by the need for political stability and the protection of democracy. The reform benefited parties who formed alliances, something that the parties in government could do, but of course unthinkable in the case of the PCF and RPF. So even though the PCF and the RPF became the biggest parties in terms of votes, the Third Force retained its parliamentary majority, which contributed leading to the RPF's definite electoral demise.[146]

Concerning the opposition, the communists performed a somewhat ambiguous role in the contestation of democratic legitimacy in the 1950s. [147] The PCF was against many of the government's policies, but did not form an opposition against the Fourth Republic as such.[148] On the one hand, the party challenged the democratic credentials of the governments from the perspective of class politics. The PCF distinguished itself by envisioning no 'democracy in general', but 'a new and popular democracy in which the working class plays a decisive role'.[149] On the other hand, the PCF sided with the government parties in defence of the Fourth Republic's institutions against Gaullism. Thorez defended the basic principles of the institutional outline of the Fourth Republic and warned for the risks of a presidential system for France. Especially because the country was so strongly centralised it risked the establishment of a regime of 'personal power' with 'fascist methods'.[150] Particularly after Stalin's death, the party therefore took a more collaborative stance towards the government proven for instance during the 1953 presidential election and its parliamentary vote for special powers for the Mollet-government in the Algerian war.[151]

The Gaullists formed the true and structural opposition in France. The RPF experienced its heyday around the turn of the 1950s, and De Gaulle successfully presented the RPF as the only viable alternative between 'two extremes: communism that wants to destroy everything, the party regime that cannot change anything'.[152] It stayed true to the

[146] Charlot, *Le gaullisme d'opposition*, pp. 226-240.
[147] Courtois and Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste français*, p. 262; M. Lazar, 'Forte e fragile, immuable et changeante… La culture politique communiste', in: Berstein ed., *Les cultures politiques en France*, pp. 227-257, at p. 250.
[148] Courtois and Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste français*, p. 301.
[149] M. Thorez, 'Le combat pour l'unité' (1947), in: Thorez, *Ouvres Choisies en trois volumes. Tome 2 1938-1950* (Paris: Éditions sociales, 1965), pp. 476-491, at p. 487.
[150] M. Thorez, 'Intervention au comité central d'Arcueil' (1956), in: M. Thorez, *Ouvres Choisies en trois volumes. Tome 3 1953-1964* (Paris: Éditions sociales, 1966), pp. 71-93, at p. 73.
[151] Y. Santamaria, *Le parti de l'ennemi ? Le parti communiste française dans la lutte pour la paix (1947-1958)* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2006), p. 265.
[152] C. de Gaulle, 'Allocution prononcée à la radiodiffusion française' (1951), in: De Gaulle, *Dans l'attente*, pp. 435-438, at p. 438.

principles of the Bayeux programme outlined by De Gaulle in 1946, and saw the party strife of the Fourth Republic as a confirmation that only a comprehensive review of the country's institutions could safe French democracy. They rejected any initiatives of the parties to hold on to their power position under the ploy of defending democracy. De Gaulle claimed that the electoral reform of 1951 meant that the parties 'violate democracy'. '[I]n order '"to block", as they say, "the road to De Gaulle", they risk flouting democracy by pushing countless citizens into the separatist camp in case their scam succeeds'.[153]

The contested militancy of postwar democracies

In conclusion, the debate on the conceptions of democracy was characterised by division in the 1950s. These divisions were expressed in a wide variety of political topics ranging from foreign policy, to the economy and popular participation. References to democracy permeated debates on all these themes and by referring to democracy political actors contested each other's political legitimacy in a political landscape fractured by the legacy of the War and the tensions of the Cold War. So different conceptions of democracy did not significantly converge as a result of the signing of postwar constitutions, but parties used the principles enshrined in these constitutions to contest each other's democratic legitimacy. As a result of these deep divisions, there was a high sense of urgency that democracy should be defended, but little agreement on the question against whom. In West Germany, the SPD and the CDU united in their rejection of communism and neo-Nazism, but frequently accused the other of jeopardising the order that the Basic Law had established. In Italy, the *democrazia protetta* of the DC was presented as a means to protect the constitution from a Marxist plot, but according to the Left entailed unconstitutional measures such as the exceptional laws and the electoral reform bill – and it was therefore perceived as an assault on rather than a protection of democracy. In France, the Fourth Republic's governments claimed to defend the republic against the dictatorship of the communists or the personal power of the De Gaulle, but they were continuously haunted by doubts about their own democratic credentials. This ensured that little consensus existed on the question which parties fully adhered to the constitution and against whom this constitution must be protected.

[153] *Ibid*., pp. 437-438.

Democratic legitimacy and political power relations in the 1950s

Political debates on the nature of democracy were characterised by deep division in the 1950s. These divisions reflected fundamental differences of opinion on the relationship between democracy and capitalism, the role of political parties, a 'democratic' foreign policy, and the rights of the parliamentary majority. This meant that conceptions of democracy did not significantly converge after the ratification of postwar constitutions. The Gaullist, communist, socialist, and Christian democrat narratives of democracy were largely unchanged at the end of the 1950s. Even though they were all committed to limiting popular involvement, and, with the exception of the Gaullists, the principles of party democracy and existing representative institutions, they continued to provide different answers to the question what democracy was and what this form of government required. These divisions on democratic credentials also structured the division of political power in this decade, and offer an important explanation for the stark division between government and opposition.

As a result of these deep divisions, there was a high sense of urgency that democracy should be defended, but little agreement on the question against whom. In West Germany and Italy, the major political parties all identified with constitution, but valued different parts of it. Different notions of democracy were not yet able to balance each other in a way all parties could agree on, which resulted in a fierce contestation of democratic credentials. In West Germany, the SPD and the CDU were united in their rejection of communism and neo-Nazism, but frequently accused the other of jeopardising the order which the Basic Law had established. The conflict in Italy was even more polarised. The *democrazia protetta* of the DC was presented as a means to protect the constitution from a Marxist plot, but according to the Left entailed unconstitutional measures such as the exceptional laws and the electoral reform bill – and it was therefore perceived as an assault on rather than a protection of democracy. This ensured that there existed little consensus on the question who fully adhered to the constitution and against whom this constitution should be protected. The main political parties not only refused to endorse each other's conception of democracy, but repeatedly raised doubts on the question whether antagonists could be considered democratic at all. This sentiment of an unstable and threatened democratic order also counted for France, which was distinct from the other two states because the constitution was openly questioned.

Nonetheless, the differences between the three states concerning the gravity of political divisions should not be exaggerated. The Algerian War beyond doubt exacerbated the French crisis of democracy, but it was a sign rather than the cause of the Fourth Republic's demise. The PCF increasingly maintained a strained, but working relationship with the SFIO and was therefore not completely excluded from the political arena. France was moreover the only state with a real coalition government in which diverse political ideologies were represented. This bred many difficulties in the creation of parliamentary majorities, but also prevented a rift between the Left and Christian democrats as was the case in the FRG and Italy. In the Federal Republic, the major parties did not explicitly deny each other's democratic nature, merely the way in which they seemed to threaten the principles commonly agreed upon and enshrined in the Basic Law. This was not the case for Italy, which combined some of the most salient features of the debate in both states. The divisions between Christian democrat-dominated governments and the Left-wing opposition were exacerbated by the Cold War, which dictated the exclusion of socialists and communists from government, but raised doubts about the neutrality of a state conquered by the DC.[154] The alliance between the PCI and Moscow ensured that the DC asserted that this party was undemocratic as such, while the DC's refusal to realise constitutional provisions put the Christian democrats in the tradition of fascism in the view of the Left.

The perception of distrust that permeated the debates on democracy in the 1950s meant that contemporaries voiced alarmist concerns about the state of democracy at the end of the decade. The French case is the most obvious in this regard. The Algerian conflict became ever more violent and increasingly disrupted French politics, but it was also seen as another proof of the crisis of democratic values in the Fourth Republic.[155] According to the French government, the political class was not dragging the country into a dishonourable war. Instead, the government 'made up of Resistance veterans committed to left-of-centre, progressive values, claimed to be upholding the very highest principles

[154] See for instance: L. Longo, *Democrazia borghese e democrazia popolare* (N.P, 1952), p. 20. See for a historical interpretation for instance: P. McCarthy, *The Crisis of the Italian State. From the Origins of the Cold War to the Fall of Berlusconi and beyond* (Basingstoke: Palgrave McMillan, 1997), ch. 2; Giovagnoli, *Il partito italiano*, p. 73.

[155] See for instance: Rioux, *The Fourth Republic*, p. 256 ff.; R. Vinen, 'The Fifth Republic as Parenthesis? Politics since 1945', in: J. McMillan ed., *Modern France 1880-2002* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 74-10, at p. 84. See for an interesting historical essay on the fall of the Fourth Republic: M. Winock, *La république se meurt: 1956-1958* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1988).

of the French republican tradition'.[156] Mendès France stated that there were several concurrent crises at work in France: social, economic and colonial. 'But at the bottom, dominating the other debates is the crisis of democracy, the crisis of our republican regime, to which we are attached, but which we feel is ill'.[157] The growing sentiment of crisis also counted for West Germany and Italy. Adenauer's conception of leadership, which left little room for active citizenship, was slowly perceived as an obstacle to the democratic development of the FRG, rather than a stabilising factor. His landslide victory in the 1957 elections caused further doubts about the democratisation of the FRG, in which elections seemed a plebiscite on the Chancellor.[158] Also in Italy, concerns about the state of democracy matured as the decade proceeded. The Scelba law was annulled and the DC and its natural centrist allies lost their parliamentary majority, which contributed to increased governmental instability. The solution of the Christian democrats was a rapprochement with the neo-fascists in search for parliamentary support. But this legitimation of the MSI raised concerns about the price that was being paid for the continued exclusion of the Left, especially when the socialists forced a rupture with the communists after the crackdown of the Hungarian Uprising in 1956. For all three states, the 1950s were a period of continuing concerns about the state of democracy. The deep divisions which contributed to these concerns were partially bridged from the end of the decade onwards.

[156] M. Evans, *Algeria: France's Undeclared War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 155.
[157] Mendès France, 'La crise de la démocratie', p. 81.
[158] See for instance: Pulzer, *German Politics 1945-1995* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1995), p. 66.

III. Converging conceptions of democracy at the turn of the 1960s

The turn of the 1960s as turning point

The turn of the 1960s brought political change which was inextricably linked to changing conceptions of democracy among the major political parties. The establishment of the Fifth Republic in France, the formation of the first Centre-left government between PSI and DC in Italy, and the coalition talks between SPD and CDU which ultimate led to the Grand Coalition, meant an overhaul of the political constellation. These changes are often understood as the result of the socioeconomic changes which ushered in Western Europe's 'Age of Affluence', the 'peaceful coexistence' in the Cold War in the aftermath of Stalin's death, the CPSU's twentieth party congress, and, in the case of France, also of the Algerian War.[1] However, political actors were only able to form political alliances after they had accepted each other as democrats who shared broadly similar notions of democracy.

So political elites increasingly conceptualised democracy in similar terms as the different conceptions of democracy which had coloured debates during the first fifteen years after the War converged. This development was most visible in West Germany and Italy, where Christian democrats and socialists accepted each other as democrats, mainly thanks to changing conceptions of democracy on the Left. It also counted for France, where De Gaulle's reforms around the turn of the decade ultimately settled the disputes on French democracy over the course of the following decades, even though his reforms were considered very polarising at the time. Whereas these changes ushered in an age of cumulative consensus among the major political actors on the principles of postwar democracy, the new political constellations were also contested from the perspective of democracy. In France, De Gaulle's reforms of 1958 and 1962 did not yet create a broad consensus on the principles of democracy and the debate on the question who was the true democrat still displayed a profound continuity with the debate under the Fourth

[1] See for instance: Eichengreen, *The European Economy since 1945*, ch. 7; Judt, *Postwar*, ch. 10. See, more specifically, on the relationship between the *boom economico* and the formation of the Centre-left in Italy: Crainz, *Storia del miracolo italiano*, ch. 6; for an interpretation of the establishment of the Fifth Republic as the result of societal changes, see: J. Horne, 'The Transformation of Society', in J. McMillan ed., *Modern France 1880-2002* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 127-149, at p. 149; and the concurrent political changes in the FRG, see: Orlow, 'Delayed Reaction', p. 90. For the Fifth Republic as the result of the Algerian War, see: J.P. Rioux, *La France de la Quatrième République*, p. 44. On the domestic effects of 1956 in France and Italy see: M. Lazar, 'Les partis communistes italien et français et l'après-Staline', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire* vol. 28 no. 4 (1990), pp. 3-13.

Republic – only now with reversed power relations. In West Germany, the broad political agreement on the principles of democracy among parliamentary actors caused growing resistance against the principles of party democracy and the lack of civic involvement. In Italy, the formation of the Centre-left contributed to the resistance against the 'republic of the parties', and the continued exclusion of the communists from power.[2]

Socialists, Christian Democrats and converging conceptions of democracy

The conceptions of democracy of the PSI and DC in Italy and the SPD and Christian democrats in West Germany converged around the turn of the 1960s. This shift was primarily the result of a reconfiguration of the relationship between democracy and capitalism and the acceptance of the Western alliance by the socialists – in the Italian case fostered by the further delegitimation of the Soviet Union after its military intervention in Hungary in 1956. After initial reluctance, the Christian democrats eventually accepted the socialist Left as democrats. This paved the way for the construction of a new political constellation. The construction of this broader front in which these parties held similar conceptions of democracy meant that these parties were now jointly able to monopolise the meaning of democracy more powerfully.

Democracy as an end in itself: programmatic changes of PSI and SPD

Although the PSI and SPD made attempts to move closer to the political centre earlier in the 1950s,[3] these tentative efforts had little effect, because the way the socialists conceived of democracy still contrasted sharply with the democratic paradigm of the Christian democrats on essential points, most notably that of the economy. For both socialist parties, the eventual acceptance of the market economy as democratic was at least partially the result of the continued economic success under Christian democrat leadership, which not only produced economic growth, but also weakened traditional

[2] See for instance: G. Orsina, 'The Republic after Berlusconi: Some reflections on historiography, politics and the political use of history in post-1994 Italy', *Modern Italy*, vol. 15 no. 1 (2010), pp. 77-92, esp. pp. 78-80, for the contribution of the Centre-left to growing anti-party sentiments.

[3] In Italy, the PSI prudently proposed government collaboration with the Christian democrats in order to prevent that the Christian democrats collaborated with the Right after 1953. See for instance: Di Scala, *Renewing Italian Socialism*, pp. 84-133. Within the SPD, the call for reform also had deeper roots: already in 1952 the party claimed that it was a 'people's party', rather than a working class party. See: S.P.D., 'Aktionsprogramm der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands. Beschlossen auf dem Dortmunder Parteitag am 28. September 1952. Erweitert auf dem Berliner Parteitag am 24. Juli 1954', in: S. Miller ed., *Die SPD vor und nach Godesberg* (Bonn: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, 1975), pp. 95-106, at p. 96.

class allegiances and enhanced social security and equality.[4] Nenni saw that 'A whole new world is on the move, and because of it, higher levels of democracy, liberty, social justice and equality are achievable'.[5] The PSI and SPD consequently altered the way in which they conceived of the relationship between democracy and capitalism. Whereas they previously denied that democracy could exist in a capitalist system, and had advocated large scale nationalisations, social equality, and popular control over the economy, the PSI and SPD now endorsed the market economy as democratic and unconditionally endorsed individual freedoms.

The SPD reformulated its principles in the so-called *Godesberger Programm* in 1959 which explicitly aimed to strengthen the democratic credentials of the SPD by making the party 'ready for the market economy'.[6] Heinrich Deist, head of the economic-affairs commission that prepared the Godesberg conference, argued that the totalitarian experiments of the century, both Nazi and communist, had demonstrated that freedom could not exist in a state-led economy. This entailed that a 'liberal socialist movement', should necessarily endorse a 'liberal economic order'.[7] 'Freedom in the economy, which is unthinkable without a minimum of independent thinking and independent decision-making, leads necessarily to the fostering of freedom also in other areas of life. This is particularly demonstrated by the major transformations which Russia and its satellite states currently go through', Deist asserted.[8]

The re-evaluation of capitalism entailed that individual freedom became a core principle of the SPD's conception of democracy. 'Freedom' gained prevalence over equality in the democratic discourse of the SPD and was explicitly connected to what 'democracy' denoted, because 'the form of state that corresponds best to freedom and human dignity is democracy'.[9] Willy Eichler, president of the Godesberger programme commission, stated that 'equality' for the SPD meant 'equality of opportunity, because

[4] Crainz, *Storia del miracolo italiano*, ch. 4; Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI*, p. 270; Drummond, *The German Social Democrats in Opposition*, p. 261; C. Nonn, 'Das Godesberger Programm und die Krise des Ruhrbergbaus. Zum Wandel der deutschen Sozialdemokratie von Ollenhauer zu Brandt', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 50 no. 1 (2002), pp. 71-97.

[5] P. Nenni, 'La relazione di Pietro Nenni' (1963), in: P.S.I., *Il 35 Congresso Nazionale, Rome 25-29 Ottobre 1963. Resoconto integrale con una Appendice di documenti precongressuali* (Milan: Avanti, 1964), pp. 27-74, at p. 32-33.

[6] Lösche and Walter, *Die SPD*, p. 114. See also the complete text of the programme: http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bibliothek/retro-scans/fa-57721.pdf , accessed on 2 September 2015.

[7] H. Deist, *Wirtschaft von Morgen. Beiträge zur Wirtschaftspolitik der SPD* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1959), p. 53.

[8] *Ibid*., p. 15.

[9] W. Eichler, *Grundwerte und Grundforderungen im Godesberger Grundsatzprogramm der SPD* (Bonn: Vorstand der SPD, 1962), p. 20.

without personal freedom equality evolves into equalisation'.[10] Ollenhauer added that, 'democracy means that everyone enjoys the largest possible freedom to develop their skills and talents, their political rights, their economic initiatives, and to sustain their spiritual, religious and cultural life'.[11] This emphasis on freedom also clearly delineated the difference between the SPD and communism and the party abandoned its previous ambiguity on Marxism. Marx was not mentioned once in the ultimate Godesberger programme and Ollenhauer argued that the programme 'closed' the Marxist legacy of the party.[12] He stated that 'the principle and unbridgeable contrast between democratic socialism and any kind of totalitarianism lies in the relationship to democracy', because communism entails 'the suppression of human freedom'.[13] The denunciation of Marxism by the SPD meant that democracy became the final objective for the party, both in political and economic terms. It no longer distinguished between a 'bourgeois' democracy and a 'true' democracy which united political freedoms with a socialist economy. As a result, the SPD embraced parliamentary democracy as en in itself: 'the socialist is not committed to [democracy] as a road to an objective, but as an order, without which the socialist society cannot live'.[14]

Although the party did not officially abandon its Marxist inspiration, the PSI went through programmatic development which was essentially similar to the changes of the SPD.[15] The PSI accepted the free market economy as democratic and endorsed parliamentary democracy as an end in itself rather than as a means to socialism. After the brutal crackdown of the Hungarian Uprising, the PSI also distanced itself from communism and denounced it as undemocratic.[16] It thereby also took distance from the Italian communist party, because the PCI's reactions to 1956 refrained 'from asking how [someone who] is nowadays portrayed as a criminal was able to govern the Soviet Union for thirty years'.[17] Nenni criticised Stalin's personality cult, but also the communist

[10] *Ibid*., p. 11.
[11] E. Ollenhauer, 'Das Grundsatzprogramm der SPD. Der Vorsitze der SPD Erich Ollenhauer auf dem Außenorderntliche Parteitrag in Bad Godesberg. 13.-15. November 1959', in: Miller ed., *Die SPD vor und nach Godesberg*, pp. 110-116, at p. 111.
[12] E. Ollenhauer, 'Zum Godesberger Grundsatzprogramm' (1959), in: E. Ollenhauer, E. Ollenhauer, *Reden und Aufsätze* (Hannover: Dietz Verlag, 1964), pp. 275-306, at p. 283.
[13] Ollenhauer, 'Zum Godesberger Grundsatzprogramm', p. 288.
[14] Eichler, *Grundwerte und Grundforderungen*, p. 20.
[15] Nonetheless, the PSI denounced the course of the SPD as a surrender to social democracy. See, for instance: F. Traldi, 'Il Psi di fronte ad Bad Godesberg', *Ventunesimo secolo* vol. 8 no. 18 (2009), pp. 137-161.
[16] Tranfaglia, 'Socialisti e comunisti', p. 501; Barbagallo, 'Classe, nazione, democrazia', pp. 496-497.
[17] P. Nenni, 'Al 35 Congresso. Il primo governo Moro' (1963) in: P. Nenni, *Il socialismo nella democrazia. Realtà e presente* (Florence: Valecchi Editore, 1966), pp. 243-276, at p. 274.

conception of socialism, power, and the party as variations of a dictatorship.[18] The PSI condemned the communist conception of democracy as fake, and stated that 'when the formula of "popular democracy" was launched in 1947-1948, it seemed to indicate a new political turn, the synthesis of two experiences, socialist and communist, [but] in front of the Hungarian insurrection of 1956, popular democracy is nothing, if only a variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which means the dictatorship of the communist party'.[19]

But the changes from the PSI had wider implications than a rupture with the communists alone. Like the SPD, the PSI also reformulated its understanding of the relationship between democracy and capitalism. Whereas the party used to advocate the overcoming of capitalism and denounced the Christian democrats as the defenders of the same interests as fascism, the party now advocated 'in clear contrast to the anti-system philosophy' of the postwar years, a policy 'of public intervention […] orientated towards economic development and the market'.[20] The changes of the PSI were symbolised by the party's congress in Venice in 1957, where Nenni, in clear contrast to its understanding of the DC in the early 1950s, asserted that 'reformism' had replaced 'cleric-fascism' as the new dominant ideology of the country's economic and political elites.[21]

The PSI accepted the market economy as democratic, but more than the SPD, the party argued in favour of state planning, which the specific Italian situation required. The economic gap between Italy's north and south required a level of state interference beyond the Keynesianism practiced in other Western European economies, because parts of Italy lacked an 'autonomous [economic] development'. Because a functioning market economy was absent in the South, government intervention was actually necessary to establish it.[22] Yet the PSI clearly distanced itself from the Soviet-style state planning which aimed to organise the entire economy on forehand on the basis of fixed plans. The PSI stated that 'we have to operate in a market economy […] in which the state coordinates *post hoc* entrepreneurial decisions'.[23] Also regarding state planning, its conception of the relationship between democracy and capitalism converged towards the economic policy

[18] P. Nenni, 'Al 32 Congresso' (1957), in: Nenni, *Il socialismo nella democrazia*, pp. 5-44, at p. 31; P. Nenni, 'I "vergognosi fatti" del rapporto segreto di Krusciov' (1956), in: P. Nenni, *Le prospettive del socialismo dopo la destalinizzazione* (Turin: Einaudi, 1962), pp. 33-51.
[19] Nenni, 'Al 35 Congresso', pp. 275-276.
[20] Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI*, p. 220.
[21] Nenni, 'Al 32 Congresso', p. 7.
[22] P.S.I., *Convegno sulle Partecipazioni Statali. Atti e documenti, Roma, 3-4 maggio 1959* (Milan: Avanti, 1960), p. 212.
[23] *Ibid*., p. 21.

of the DC-led government, which was based on private initiative, but which had recently created a ministry for state intervention in the economy: 'our conception of the operation and intervention of public enterprises is inspired on the conception of the economy in two sectors: a public and a private sector. This economy based on two sectors could objectively already exist in Italy: *Italy is a socialist country without knowing it*', the PSI stated to encourage the government to do even more in this regard.[24]

For the PSI, as for the SPD, democracy was now both a means and an end in itself: 'By saying democracy, we express our allegiance to universal suffrage, to parliament, to the multi-party system', Nenni stated.[25] The PSI made 'a definite choice for democracy and the democratic method' and stated that democracy has 'permanent values'.[26] This meant not only that democracy for the PSI was no longer a stepping stone to a socialist society, but also that the socialists no longer distinguished between different kinds of democracy, between 'bourgeois' and 'true' democracy, as they had done since the War, and that democracy was connected to liberty explicitly, even if this concept figured less prominently in the PSI's programmes than in the discourse of the SPD. Liberty meant for Nenni 'emancipating men from misery' and 'the protection of constitutional liberties', no longer the strife for the overthrow of the capitalist system.[27]

Next to the acceptance of capitalism and the unconditional embracement of individual liberties, the quest for democratic legitimacy of the PSI and SPD required that the parties accepted the West and were willing to defend their democracies also with military means against communism. The PSI claimed to be officially neutralist in foreign policy, but simultaneously stated that it 'does not question the Italian adhesion to NATO and the obligations which come with it, because it does not entail in the current situation, the risk which we used to mention in various circumstances, namely to see the country dragged into a third world war'.[28] Nenni thereby explicitly denounced the party's alliance to Moscow and its claim that accession to NATO was a threat to peace and democracy.[29] For the SPD, the foreign policy shift stressed the SPD's and CDU's *Gemeinsamkeiten* in defence of Western values, and underscored the SPD's commitment to defending

[24] *Ibid*., p. 25. Italics in original. See also: Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI*, p. 266.
[25] P. Nenni, 'Al 32 Congresso', p. 29.
[26] P. Nenni, 'Al 33 Congresso' (1959), in: Nenni, *Il socialismo nella democrazia*, pp. 49-82, at p. 52.
[27] P. Nenni, 'Al 32 Congresso', p. 30. See also: Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI*, p. 224.
[28] Nenni, 'La relazione di Pietro Nenni', pp. 54-55.
[29] T. Nencioni, 'Tra neutralismo e atlantismo. La politica internazionale del Partito socialista italiano 1956-1966', *Italia Contemporanea*, vol. 260 (2010), pp. 438-470.

democratic values.[30] At the Godesberg conference, Wehner claimed that the SPD should resolve the tension between the party's conflicting messages that it was on the one hand the embodiment of democratic values in West Germany, but on the other hand refused to make a military commitment to defending those values: 'The commitment to the defence of the democratic order and the commitment to national defence are inextricably linked', he stated.[31] One year later, in a major foreign policy speech in parliament, Wehner stressed the common foreign policy objectives between Christian democrats and the SPD, with the explicit aim of contributing to the establishment of a set of shared democratic principles in the FRG. The SPD accepted NATO, a rearmed West Germany, and a common foreign policy, and was committed 'in word and deed to the defence of the free and democratic order' so that, 'there is no democratic alternative to the present government in West Germany'.[32] It can therefore be seen as a deliberate quest for consensus on the principles of West German democracy. Wehner stated that 'domestic political contradictions revive democracy, but a hostile relationship [...] ultimately kills democracy. West Germany democracy cannot bear an incurable mutual hostility of Christian democrats and social democrats'.[33]

Christian democrats and the 'expansion' of democracy

The fact that the SPD and the PSI reconfigured their conceptions of democracy around the turn of the 1960s entailed that the Christian democrats were forced to reconsider their rejection of the democratic legitimacy of both parties. After initial reluctance, the Christian democrats accepted the SPD and PSI as democrats in the early 1960s. This paved the way for government collaboration and the creation of a shared democratic framework which had been absent since the War. In both states, this constructed the political axe which determined the meaning of democracy for the next decades most powerfully and which guarded the boundaries of democracy, even though these constellations would be criticised as undemocratic themselves.

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[30] Orlow, 'Delayed Reaction: Democracy, Nationalism and the SPD 1945-1966', p. 91; Drummond, *The German Social Democrats in Opposition*, pp. 263-270; B.W. Bouvier, *Zwischen Godesberg und Großer Koalition. Der Weg der SPD in die Regierungsverantwortung. Außen, Sicherheits- und Deutschlandpolitische Umorientierung und gesellschaftliche Öffnung der SPD 1960-1966* (Bonn: Diez Verlag, 1990), p. 60.

[31] H. Wehner, 'Demokratie und Landesverteidigung. Diskussionsbeitrag vor dem Godesberger Parteitag der SPD' (1959), in: H. Wehner, *Wandel und Bewährung. Ausgewählte Reden und Schriften 1930-1975* (Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein Verlag, 1976), pp. 217-218, at p. 218.

[32] H. Wehner, 'Außenpolitische Lage. Aussprache über die Regierungserklärung zur außenpolitische Lage' (1960), in: H. Wehner, *Bundestagsreden* (Bonn: AZ Studio, 1970), pp. 197-215, at p. 206; 214.

[33] *Ibid*., p. 215.

In West Germany, the convergence between SPD and Christian democrats, and the mutual acceptation as democratic forces, went rather smoothly, even if the Christian democrats initially reacted with hostility to the SPD's reforms. Erhard contended that the Godesberger programme was merely motivated by tactical considerations and did not entail a true reconfiguration of the SPD's conception of democracy.[34] And the election campaign of 1961, in which the octogenarian Adenauer stood opposite Brandt, echoed the campaigns of the 1950s: Adenauer still claimed in his speeches that the SPD would 'sell out Germany to the Russians', and that it would be 'an insult for democracy and all democratic parties to equate the SPD with democracy'.[35] Nonetheless, the CDU was quickly forced to come to terms with the way in which the SPD established its democratic credentials and competed over the political centre-ground. The election of 1961 saw a narrowing margin in vote share between SPD and the Union and proved that it had become increasingly difficult to question the SPD's democratic credentials as the Christian democrats had done before.[36] The elections are therefore considered 'crucial' in the political history of the FRG, because the SPD and the CDU henceforward mutually accepted each other as democratic partners.[37] The CDU for the first time negotiated with the SPD in order to explore the possibilities of a Grand Coalition in the autumn of 1961. Even if they did so only to put pressure on its preferred coalition partner, the FDP, this symbolised that the parties had accepted each other as democrats. They continued to talk about a coalition throughout the coming years, leading eventually to the Grand Coalition in 1966.[38] When Adenauer left office, he remarked that his job had become easier over the years, thanks to a 'milder' opposition.[39]

In Italy, the PSI and DC also accepted each other as democrats, but this process was characterised by fierce conflict. The resistance against a government which included the

[34] L. Erhard, 'Soziale Ordnung schafft Wohlstand und Sicherheit' (1961), in: Erhard, *Deutsche Wirtschaftspolitik*, pp. 567-587, at p. 567.
[35] K. Adenauer, 'Wahlrede auf einer Großkundgebung in Regensburg' (1961), in: Adenauer, *Reden*, pp. 413-423, at p. 418.
[36] D. Koerfer, *Kampf um Kanzleramt. Erhard und Adenauer* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1987), p. 441.
[37] Bouvier, *Zwischen Godesberg und Großer Koalition*, p. 105.
[38] R.J. Granieri, 'Politics in C Minor. The CDU/CSU between Germany and Europe since the Secular Sixties', *Central European History*, vol. 42 no. 1 (2009), pp. 1-32, at pp. 23-24.
[39] K. Adenauer, 'Abschiedsansprache auf der Sondersitzung des Deutschen Bundestages' (1963), in: Adenauer, *Bundestagsreden*, pp. 453-456, at p. 455.

socialists was still strong in the Church, the DC, and among the upper middle classes.[40] Guido Gonella, a former Christian democrat party leader, for instance, equated collaboration with the PSI with an opening to the PCI as well. He argued that 'times change, but principles stay the same'. The DC had always been a party of the centre and in this sense protected Italian democracy: 'Saying no to the opening to the Left will […] give a new zeal to our battle for the consolidation of democracy'.[41]

The events of July 1960 eventually forged the mutual acceptance between PSI and DC as democrats, because they casted a shadow over the democratic credentials of the DC and showed that an alliance with the PSI was the only way in which Italian democracy could be secured. In the spring of that year the DC formed a government under leadership of Fernando Tambroni which only passed the confidence vote in parliament thanks to the support of the MSI.[42] The neo-fascists provoked progressive Italy by staging its party congress in Genoa that year, which had played an important role in the antifascist resistance. Protests in Genoa against what was seen as the government legitimation of neo-fascism were harshly suppressed, leading to mass protests and strikes across the country, and further clashes between protesters. The government reacted with more repression, banned the meetings of what were sometimes resistance heroes, and the police killed several protesters and wounded dozens of others.[43]

The Left saw the DC-government supported by the neo-fascists that repressed popular protests as the personification of a decade-long development of DC-assaults on democracy. Even Saragat, whose party had supported many DC-governments in the 1950s, argued that there had been an 'erosion' of democracy, because the working class lost trust in the state. The government had moreover 'underestimated the antifascism of the people'.[44] Nenni defended the protesters by claiming that the government acted 'in violent contrast with the entire democratic tradition in Italy and the values of the

[40] L. Radi, *Tambroni trent'anni dopo. La nascita del centro-sinistra* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1990), p. 104. The Americans under Kennedy however muted their resistance to a government including the socialists, see: Crainz, *Storia del miracolo italiano*, p.164.
[41] G. Gonnella, *L'apertura incondizionata* ([1962] Rome: Società nuova, 1963), p. 25.
[42] Which was the culmination of a trend in which the MSI increasingly gained political legitimacy at the end of the 1950s: F. Ferraresi, *Minacce alla democrazia. La destra radicale e la strategia di tensione in Italia nel dopoguerra* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1995), p. 56.
[43] See for instance: P. Cooke, *Luglio 1960: Tambroni e la repressione fallita* (Milan: Teti editore, 2000).
[44] G. Saragat, 'La restaurazione dei valori democratici' (1960), in: Saragat, *Quaranta anni di lotta per la democrazia*, pp. 536-543, at p. 537; p. 539.

resistance on which the Republic is founded'.[45] Tambroni, however, justified the suppression of the protests in a way akin to De Gasperi's defence of the suppression of the protests in the wake of the shooting of Togliatti in 1948. He claimed that 'the true danger' for Italian democracy was the PCI, and he vindicated the suppression of the protests by the security forces by equating democratic legitimacy with the parliamentary majority. Tambroni stated that 'the inclusion of the working class in the life of the state, which we sincerely aspire, should be a means and a victory of democracy, not something imposed violently on the *piazza* […]. If parliament is liberally and legally elected, […] if the masses can let their influence on the government of the state be heard by means of universal suffrage, the rhetoric of Nenni can be nothing but a danger in contrast with democracy'.[46] In this way, Tambroni's reaction could even be seen as an echo of the comments of the MSI, which stated that it had to protect Italy against 'the Marxist aggression' and that an opening to the Left would necessarily entail an opening to communism, because socialism and communism were inextricably linked.[47]

The DC claimed to be both popular and antifascist, but did not seem either in the summer of 1960. A decisive push in the direction of the socialists, who had established their autonomy from the PCI, now seemed the only option to strengthen the DC's democratic credentials and secure Italian democracy from both left- and right-wing extremism.[48] The progressive wing of the DC, which had advocated collaboration with the PSI from 1956 onwards, now gained the upper hand.[49] Two arguments from the perspective of democracy pleaded for an alliance with the PSI. First of all, it led to the exclusion of political extremes. Aldo Moro argued that the DC 'has the largest responsibility for the democratic development of Italy' and that, given the electoral increases of the MSI and the PCI, a 'parallel convergence' between PSI and DC was essential for the security of Italian democracy.[50] Most notably, the Centre-left was a way

[45] P. Nenni, 'L'avventura di destra dell'estate '60 stroncata dalla sollevazione della coscienza antifascista della nazione' (1960), in: P. Nenni, *La battaglia socialista per la svolta a sinistra nelle terza legislatura 1958-1963* (Milan: Avanti, 1963), pp. 45-80, at p. 49.
[46] F. Tambroni, *Un governo amministrativo. Discorsi pronunciato dal 4 aprile al 14 luglio 1960* (Rome: Editrice les problèmes de l'Europe, 1960), pp. 160-161.
[47] Movimento Sociale Italiano, 'VI Congresso Nazionale Genova 2-4 Luglio 1960. Mozione unitaria', Fondazione Ugo Spirito. Rome, Fondo Movimento Sociale Italiano. Busta 1. Materiale di propaganda elettorale 1948-1983.
[48] This was especially important, because in a party with so many centres of power, it were external alliances that made its identity: Lupo, *Partito e Antipartito*, p. 156.
[49] Giovagnoli, *Il partito italiano*, pp. 102-119.
[50] A. Moro, 'Le ragioni delle convergenze parallele' (1960), in: A. Moro, *Scritti e discorsi Vol. II 1951-1963* (Rome: Edizioni Cinque Lune, 1982), pp. 794-813, at p. 797.

to isolate the communists. Moro stated that 'the isolation of the communists is a defensive measure' and that one of the means 'in the struggle against communism is the expansion of democracy'.[51] Secondly, the inclusion of the PSI was portrayed as the necessary outcome of socioeconomic developments. These allegedly required political consensus rather than exclusion of the working class in the spirit of the 'exceptional laws' of the 1950s. Fanfani stated that the socioeconomic progress no longer required strict exclusion of the socialists: in fact, collaboration with the PSI helped to 'democratise' the party and thereby render a service to the democratisation of Italy.[52] Moro also saw the inclusion of the PSI as a means to strengthen the relationship between citizens and state in Italy, because this was this the major problem of Italian democracy, namely the 'reconciliation of the masses with the state, the overcoming of the opposition between top and base: not the state of some, but the state of all, not the fortunes of the few, but social solidarity, enabled by the maturation of democratic consciousness, […]'.[53] The inclusion of the PSI can therefore also be seen as a deliberate quest to overcome the harsh polemics on Italian democracy, by forging a coalition which facilitated the integration of the working class in the state.

These forces in favour of an alliance with the socialists definitely gained ground as a result of the events of July 1960. In the face of the controversy after the police suppression, the DC eventually compromised. Tambroni stepped down, a centrist government was formed, and the MSI was definitely discredited and isolated from governmental power for decades to come.[54] This paved the way for collaboration with the PSI.[55] Nenni presented the Centre-left now also as a guarantee of democracy in Italy and as a guarantee to prevent a turn of the DC to the Right again.[56] For the DC, the collaboration with the PSI, after the events of July 1960 brought clarity on its identity, which was anti-communist, but also anti-fascist.[57] Also Italy thereby saw the establishment of a broad alliance in which former antagonists now accepted each other as democrats and increasingly denoted democracy in similar terms.

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[51] A. Moro, 'La relazione di Moro' (1962), in: Democrazia Cristiana, *Consiglio Nazionale D.C. 10-11-12 Novembre 1962* (Rome: Documenti SES Cenrale, 1962), pp. 49-50.
[52] A. Fanfani, 'La D.C. di fronte al problema socialista. Relazione al Consiglio Nazionale della Democrazia Cristiana Vallombrosa' (1957), in: A. Fanfani, *Da Napoli a Firenze 1954-1959. Proposte per una politica di sviluppo democratico* (Rome: Garanzia editore, 1959), pp. 177-207, at p. 188.
[53] A. Moro, 'Il congresso di Firenze' (1959), in: Moro, *Scritti e discorsi. Vol II*, pp. 637-718, at p. 685.
[54] Cooke, *Luglio 1960*, p. 14; Remaggi, p. 207.
[55] Radi, *Tambroni trent'anni dopo*, pp. 127-128.
[56] See for instance: Di Scala, *Renewing Italian Socialism*, p. 133.
[57] Lupo, *Partito e antipartito*, p. 164.

Despite important similarities in both content and chronology, the establishment of consensus on the principles of democracy in West Germany and Italy was marked by three crucial differences. First, the convergence of conceptions of democracy entailed that the SPD accepted the two principles on which it had most vocally contested the democratic credentials of the CDU in the 1950s: the market economy and the integration of a rearmed West Germany in the West. The massive 1957 election victory of the Christian democrats proved that the SPD's quest for democratic legitimacy could only be completed by accepting the main principles of democracy as put forward by the CDU. In Italy, however, Moro rightfully talked of a process of 'parallel convergence'. Opposite the PSI's acceptance of NATO and the market economy, stood the DC's commitment to the actualisation of the still unrealised articles of the Italian constitution. Fanfani, prime minister of the first government with PSI-support in 1962, declared that the government would proceed with the institutionalisation of the Italian regions – an ideal long-cherished by the socialists –, with the 'democratisation' of the education system, a relaxation of censorship laws, and the nationalisation of the electrical energy sector. Nationalisation of key sectors of the economy had always been desired by the PSI from the perspective of the democratisation of the economy, but had always been rejected by the DC. It was now justified by Fanfani because, 'Electrical energy is so inextricably linked to the civil and economic development of the nation, in all aspects, that it is the duty of the state to make it available to citizens in the best conditions and with the best guarantees. In other words, the decision made by the government to transfer the electrical industry into public hands has its foundation in the nature of the public service of the industry itself'.[58]

Second, the two countries differed regarding the motivations behind this convergence. External events eventually stimulated the PSI and SPD to revise their programmes fundamentally. In Italy, these external events were those of 1956 in the Soviet Union and Hungary.[59] A 'parallel convergence' was moreover necessary, because the DC could no longer count on a stable parliamentary majority – as its experiment with the MSI underlined. The coalition with the PSI solved this problem by providing the DC with broader parliamentary support. In West Germany, by contrast, the CDU did not need the SPD for a coalition, it obtained an absolute majority in 1957 and governed with the FDP after 1961, which explains why the reconfiguration of conceptions of democracy was

[58] A. Fanfani, *Centro-Sinistra '62* (Rome: Garzanti, 1962), p. 116.
[59] Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI*, p. 185; Barbagallo, 'Classe, nazione, democrazia', p. 495.

undertaken largely by the SPD.[60] The SPD's motivation was the establishment of a shared democratic framework and a quest for a democratic legitimacy in the eyes of centre-ground voters, which have been referred to as 'tactical' by historians.[61]

A more important difference between the motivations behind the convergence was, however, that politicians in Italy feared that the democratic order as such was threatened by the stark divisions in the country. During the Tambroni government, the country experienced the culmination of a decade of tensions between the Left and the DC. Saragat remarked that 'the country was not on the brink of civil war, but it was getting close'.[62] As a result, the socialist quest for democratic legitimacy in Italy was also motivated by the PSI's analysis that Italian democracy was threatened. The DC not only seemed to prefer collaboration with the neo-fascists over that of the socialists, but also the state still showed more continuities with fascism than was the case in West Germany.[63] The penal code and the education system stemmed directly out of the fascist era, while the security services showed large continuities with the fascist regime in terms of personnel and attitudes towards the Left.[64] Referring to the end of the *biennio rosso*, in which the Left's confrontation with the state had finished in the establishment of the fascist regime, the PSI argued that only a parliamentary course and the accession of the socialists into government, in other words, integration in the state, could safeguard democracy.[65] The socialist fear that democracy was not secure was underscored for instance in 1964, when a *Carabinieri* general unsuccessfully planned a coup which aimed to arrest Left-wing politicians, take over Rome, and reverse the entrance of the socialists into government.[66]

The final difference concerns the effects on the political constellation this convergence had. In West Germany, the three parties represented in parliament now all accepted each other as 'democratic' and the deliberate attempt of the SPD to establish a broad front of forces which acknowledged each other's democratic credentials had therefore succeeded. In Italy, on the other hand, the convergence between PSI and DC was

[60] Hodge, 'The Long Fifties', p. 22; Spicka, *Selling the Economic Miracle*, ch 6.
[61] See for instance: K. Schönhoven, *Wendejahre. Die Sozialdemokratie in der Zeit der Große Koalition, 1966-1969* (Bonn: Dietz Verlag, 2004), p. 37.
[62] Saragat, 'La restaurazione dei valori', p. 537; p. 542.
[63] Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence and the State*, p. 194.
[64] Crainz, *Storia del miracolo italiano*, ch. 1.
[65] Nenni, 'La relazione di Pietro Nenni', p. 67.
[66] The so-called 'Piano Solo Coup' of 1964, see: Paggi, 'Violenza e democrazia nella storia delle Repubblica', p. 945; Crainz, *Storia del miracolo italiano*, p. 180.

also an attempt to isolate the PCI.[67] This left the country with a large and powerful opposition party entertaining a distinct conception of democracy.

Discontent with the new political constellation in Italy and West Germany

In West Germany, negotiations between the Christian democrats and SPD from 1961 onwards laid the groundwork of the eventual Grand Coalition of 1966, while in Italy the PSI-DC alliance forged in 1962-1963 reflected a common commitment to parliamentary democracy, antifascism, the West, and a form of capitalism characterised by state planning of the economy. However, this convergence of conceptions of democracy and the new political constellation which was its result encountered fierce criticism. This critique was a prelude to the severe contestation of the postwar order at the end of the decade and focused on the diminishing of alternatives in the way democracy could be conceptualised, now that former antagonists embraced each other as democratic and with increasing confidence portrayed their conception of democracy as the only one valid.

With the mutual acceptance of SPD, FDP and the Christian democrats as democrats, West Germany became the first state in which such a broad political agreement existed on the core principles of democracy. However, this process of convergence was neither complete nor uncontested, in particular on two issues. The first contentious issue in the debate on democracy continued to be of relevance despite the obvious agreement between Christian democrats and the SPD. They continued to disagree over the question how the people could be involved in West German democracy and to what extent civic commitment could be stimulated. The second issue gained in importance because of their decreasing differences: West German democracy was increasingly marked by a lack of parliamentary opposition and the ostensible lack of popular involvement seemed ever more pressing.

Notwithstanding their agreement on party democracy, parliamentarianism, foreign policy, and capitalism, the Christian democrats and the SPD diverged over the question of civic commitment. The CDU in this respect by and large continued to be weary of civic participation which went beyond the control of political elites and the parties. It searched for a new identity which matched an increasingly secular and more affluent society – but failed to provide programmatic innovation which went beyond its

[67] Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI*, p. 270.

conception of democracy expressed in the 1950s.[68] Erhard, Adenauer's successor, conceived of democracy as a form of government which secured the general interest and which should counter pluralism in a modernising West German society.[69] The CDU remained therefore committed to a formal conception of democracy, in which democracy was equated with a set of representative institutions determined by the parliamentary majority, and the principle that democracy was protected by the state rather than by the involvement of citizens.

The SPD increasingly emphasised the importance of a more active role for civil society and clashed with the Christian democrats on this point.[70] Brandt argued that the CDU was more concerned with governmental efficacy than with democratic freedoms and that Adenauer 'jeopardised the democratic order' by blurring the difference between party and state.[71] Such attacks had a special significance in the light of the scandals which tainted the last years of the Adenauer era, such as the *Der Spiegel* Affair, which delineated the extent until which the CDU's more formal conception of democracy was considered democratic in a quickly modernising West Germany. In the view of Adenauer and CSU-defence minister Franz-Johan Strauβ the arrest of several journalists who had published ostensibly classified military information was a justified move in the defence of West-German democracy in the Cold War. Adenauer claimed that people should be worried about 'who the traitors actually were', rather than about the fate of the imprisoned journalists.[72] But as these justifications backfired and Strauβ was forced to resign, it became evident that the Affair represented the 'new West Germany', in which democracy lived not only in state institutions, but also in civil society.[73] Brandt concurred to this tendency and claimed that it was necessary to overcome the distrust in the people which the German past had left behind. Instead, he argued, it was decisive for the quality of West German democracy to 'be a *mündiges* people' with an active notion of citizenship.[74] This

[68] Granieri, 'Politics in C Minor', p. 17; Bösch, *Die Adenauer-CDU*, p. 339.
[69] Kleinmann, *Geschichte der CDU*, p. 241.
[70] Hanshew, *Terror and Democracy in West Germany*, ch. 1.
[71] W. Brandt, 'Das Regierungsprogramm der SPD. Rede Willy Brandt SPD Kongress Bonn' (1961), in: W. Brandt, *Berliner Ausgabe. Auf dem Weg nach vorn. Willy Brandt und die SPD 1947-1972* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger GmbH, 2000), pp. 230-257, at p. 233; p. 246.
[72] K. Adenauer, 'Äußerung der Bundeskanzler Adenauer am 14. November 1962 vor dem National Press Club im Washington', in: A. Grosser and J. Seifert eds., *Die Spiegel Affäre. Vol. I. Die Staatsmacht und ihre Kontrolle. Texte und Dokumente zur Zeitgeschichte* (Olten und Freiburg im Breisgau: Walter Verlag, 1966), pp. 485-486.
[73] Nichols, *The Bonn Republic*, p. 177.
[74] Brandt, 'Das Regierungsprogramm der SPD', p. 233; p. 235.

required a lively public debate and greater tolerance for different opinions, and Brandt consequently opposed the model of the Christian democrats based on the general interest and limited civic involvement with an emphasis on citizenship and pluralism, because 'we need more free spirits and tolerance in the life of the state'.[75] The SPD's quest to democratise the Federal Republic also included larger opportunities for co-decision in the work place, which ensured 'autonomy' in a free economy and made relationships less hierarchical.[76]

However, having carefully stressed the common ground with the CDU over the past years, Brandt was careful to stress that society must be spared from 'every dogmatic world view and ideological rigidity' and as such evade ideological conflict between the major parties.[77] This profound agreement between the two major parties on the boundaries of democracy, turned into the second issue which dominated the debate on West German democracy: the influence of political parties, and the lack of civic involvement as counterweight to the power of these parties.[78] These qualms came fully to the surface from the mid-1960s onwards, but were already expressed by intellectuals at the turn of the decade. Karl Jaspers argued that because political freedom was imposed in the FRG rather than conquered, citizens displayed little affection for it and refrained from participating in political decision-making. In fact, he stated that no 'true democratic consciousness' had been created under Adenauer's long leadership.[79] Gerhard Leibholz noted that elections now centred on power divisions between political parties, rather than about electing popular representatives. West Germany was a 'party state democracy' in which the 'majority of parties in government and parliament is identified with the common will'.[80] He warned that it was necessary to ensure that citizens contributed to the formation of the political opinions of parties to prevent that parties became disconnected from society. This should ensure that they continued to facilitate rather than harm the functioning of democracy.[81] The conservative intellectual Karl Dietrich Bracher warned about the lack of civic commitment and the power of political parties. The wealth,

[75] *Ibid*., p. 233; p. 246.
[76] Deist, *Wirtschaft von Morgen*, pp. 107-113.
[77] W. Brandt, 'Entscheidung für Deutschland' (1961), in: Brandt, *Berliner Ausgabe. Band 4*, pp. 257-264, at p. 263.
[78] Hockenos, *Joschka Fischer and the Making of the Berlin Republic*, p. 47; Müller, *Another Country*, p. 45.
[79] K. Jaspers, *Freiheit und Wiedervereinigung: über Aufgabe deutscher Politik* (Munich: Piper, 1960), p. 274.
[80] G. Leibholz, *Das Wesen der Repräsentation und der Gestaltwandel der Demokratie im 20. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1960), p. 226.
[81] Leibholz, *Das Wesen der Repräsentation*, pp. 240-243.

consensus and stability in the FRG could be 'harmful for the development of civic consciousness. […] the increasing power of the executive, the advance of the bureaucratic administrative state, the retreat of the Parliament, which is further reinforced with the plebiscitary escalation of the elections, but also state funding of parties, all work against the of political participation of citizens and harbours the danger of a crisis in which citizens are alienated from those in power'.[82]

So because of the obvious convergence of conceptions of democracy in the FRG, there were growing concerns about the way democracy functioned. Whereas the SPD voiced parts of those concerns by advocating a more active role of civil society, the social democrats did so by implication of their commitment to share with the CDU a basis core consensus on the principles of democracy. The critique that parties were too powerful and that civic participation lacked was therefore left partially unanswered and culminated in concerns that the FRG increasingly resembled a one party state. This denunciation of the political constellation as undemocratic was ever more vocally advocated over the course of the 1960s, both inside and outside parliament.

In Italy, the Centre-left initially promised to be a new start. It aspired to replace the stark antagonism between the DC and the Left and the gap between the working classes and the state with an alliance that was in touch with the quick changes in society. In his government declaration, Moro stated that the parties joined forces with one objective, namely to create 'a vaster base of consensus and therefore a greater solidity of the democratic state […] while a great transformation of Italian society is taking place'.[83] Nenni called the collaboration with the DC, 'not just an alliance, but a way to create a modern state', which created 'a position of democratic security that this county has never known'.[84] But the collaboration also encountered fierce criticism from the perspective of democracy. The communists argued that the alliance did not contribute to the democratisation of Italy, but as the formation of the Centre-left shifted the parameters of political alliances, the PCI slowly became integrated in the party system. The fact that the political system as a whole continued to be criticised by those who questioned the dominance of political parties was in the end therefore more influential.

[82] K.D. Bracher, 'Die zweite Demokratie in Deutschland – Strukturen und Probleme' (1962), in: R. Löwenthal ed., *Die Demokratie im Wandel der Geschichte* (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1963), pp. 113-135, at p. 135.
[83] A. Moro, 'Il patto di Centro-Sinistra' (1963), in: A. Moro, *Scritti e discorsi. Volume II*, pp. 1351-1374, at p. 1351.
[84] P. Nenni, 'La relazione di Pietro Nenni', p. 48.

The PCI argued that the Centre-left did not solve the structural problems of Italian democracy, most notably that of social inequality and the integration of the working class in the state. However, as a result of the suppression of the Hungarian Uprising in 1956, the party's own democratic credentials were once again the topic of intense debate, as Togliatti defended the Soviet Union and denounced the Hungarian Uprising as an 'anti-communist, antisocialist and antidemocratic campaign'.[85] Despite the fact that it was somewhat more critical of Moscow than the PCF, historians speak therefore of a 'missing turn' of the PCI after 1956, because the party refrained from firmly denouncing the Soviet model as undemocratic.[86] The party's democratic centralism was not questioned and the party also remained firmly entrenched in international socialism.[87] The PCI claimed, however, to envision an 'Italian road to socialism' within the context of the Italian constitution, and this is how the conceptions of democracy of the PCI and those in government clashed.

The PCI conceptualised democracy primarily in terms of social equality rather than individual rights or representative institutions. It was from this perspective that the PCI argued that the governments, both with and without the PSI, failed to be democratic, because thanks to the capitalist system, 'democratic liberties are always limited and risk to be destroyed'.[88] Togliatti stated that 'every capitalist state is a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie'.[89] For the communists, 'democracy only has value if it touches upon economic life, if it contributes to social relationships'.[90] Democratic liberty should for the communists be given 'a new content', because the communists valued democratic liberties not in themselves, but only if they contributed 'to well-being and economic progress', because 'it is not enough to have elections one in a while to establish a democratic regime'.[91] However, Togliatti emphasised that the socioeconomic content of democracy could be realised within the context of the Italian constitution, because the

[85] P. Togliatto, 'Il rapporto al VIII Congresso' (1956), in: P.C.I., *Il PCI e la svolta di '56* (Rome: Rinascità, 1986), pp. 49-100, at p. 50.
[86] Barbagallo, 'Classe, nazione, democrazia', p. 498.
[87] Vittoria, *Storia del PCI*, pp. 88-93.
[88] P. Togliatti, 'Elementi per una dichiarazione programmatica del P.C.I.' (1956), in: P.C.I., *Il PCI e la svolta*, pp. 113-141, at p. 116.
[89] P. Togliatti, 'Linea democratica e prospettiva rivoluzionaria' (1961), in: P. Togliatti, *Democrazia e socialismo. Da l'Unità e la Rinascita. Febbraio – Aprile 1961* (Rome: Partito Comunista Italiano, 1961), pp. 15-20, at p. 15.
[90] P. Togliatti, 'A proposito di socialismo e democrazia' (1961), in: Togliatti, *Democrazia e socialismo*, pp. 21-50, at p. 31.
[91] *Ibid*., p. 35.

constitution expressed 'the intention to extend the economic sphere of democratic principles'.[92] So the communists slowly muted their resistance to the economic programmes of those in government during the 1960s,[93] and stated that capitalist states 'exist in different degrees' and that in Italy, despite all its problems, there existed 'a democratic order'.[94] This marked a shift of the PCI in which its frontal opposition to the DC and the party system was replaced with a slow integration in the party political constellation.[95]

Hence, notwithstanding its efforts to distinguish itself from the coalition, the PCI increasingly became integrated in the Italian party system which was being criticised ever more fiercely during the 1960s.[96] The formation of the Centre-left and the integration of the PCI in the political framework strengthened the antifascist political culture after it had been eclipsed by anticommunism in the iciest phase of the Cold War. This not only reinforced the consensus among the major parties, but, as heirs of the antifascist resistance, also increased the importance of the parties and ensured that they 'established themselves as central and commanding institutions of Italian politics'.[97] Especially under the leadership of Fanfani, the DC made an effort to enhance the role that the DC played as a bridge between the world of high politics and that of society.[98] Nenni also re-stated his commitment to party democracy and for instance defended the state financing of political parties based on the crucial function of parties in democracy.[99] So whereas the Centre-left was intended as a project to bridge the gap between citizens and the state, the parties complicated this integration by continuing to consider their own role pivotal in managing the relationship between citizen and state.

This defence of the intimate relationship between parties and democracy in the era of the Centre-left reinforced resistance and critique on the *partitocrazia*.[100] There was first of all the critique on the merge between the DC and the state, which the coalition between PSI and DC did not seem to counter.[101] A section of the PSI, among whom the

[92] *Ibid*., p. 32.
[93] Tranfaglia, 'Socialisti e comunisti', p. 507; Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI*, p. 285.
[94] Togliatti, 'Linea democratica e prospettiva rivoluzionaria', at p. 15.
[95] Tranfaglia, 'Socialisti e comunisti', p. 507; Lupo, *Partito e antipartito*, p. 197.
[96] G. Crainz, *Il paese mancato. Dal miracolo eocnomico agli anni ottanta* (Rome: Donzelli editore, 2003), pp. 155-170.
[97] Orsina,'The Republic after Berlusconi', p. 78.
[98] Giovagnoli, *Il partito italiano*, p. 120.
[99] Nenni, 'La relazione di Pietro Nenni', p. 48.
[100] Chiarini, 'La fortuna del gollismo in Italia'; Capozzi, 'La polemica antipartitocratica'.
[101] McCarthy, *The Crisis of the Italian State*, ch. 2; Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, ch. 5.

prominent Lelio Basso, left the party to find the Italian Socialist Party for Proletarian Unity (PSIUP),[102] because, as Basso argued, the coalition served only so that 'the DC can retain its monopoly on power'.[103] Now also the PSI seemed to be drawn into the clientelistic system of distribution of state benefits which the DC had built up over the course of the 1950s.[104] This fed critique on the concept of party democracy and the way it functioned in Italy. This critique came, naturally, from the MSI, which talked about distrust of Italians in the political class and a growing gap between the world of politics, the legal Italy, and the *paese reale*.[105] But it came also from inside the party system itself. DC-prominent Guido Gonella, for instance, criticised the functioning of party democracy and denounced it in similar terms. Italian democracy was born in 1945 as 'a party state' which had conserved some of the negative elements of fascism: parliament had 'a purely instrumental function. The general will is not determined by the free convergence of single representatives of the people, but by the deals of leaders of groups. These groups control, not the individuals […]. In the party regime, free suffrage finishes in legitimising the oligarchies'.[106] Parties also increasingly took control over society, rather than bridging society with politics. The parties shared a fundamental characteristic, namely 'their ability to dispose of positions and money, to have leaderships shrewdly supported by majorities, to cleverly create plans with which the top can control the base (so reserving the terms of the democratic logic), experts in nurturing the courtliness of patronage, intimidating with blackmail, and distort reality with advertising. This is the pathology of all parties and therefore of the system, the anti-democracy of democracy'.[107]

Yet, again, thanks to the dominant paradigms of antifascism and anticommunism, such views found no structural political outlet. A major question for the Centre-left was whether it was able to counter such critique on Italian democracy by enacting reforms. The Centre-left's reformism is usually understood, however, to have extinguished rather quickly. After the first major reforms in education and the energy sector, the regional

[102] Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI*, p. 330.
[103] L. Basso, 'Sulla comunicazione del governo' (1963), in: Basso, *In difesa della democrazia*, pp. 98-107, at p. 100.
[104] Crainz, *Storia del miracolo italiano*, p. 227.
[105] Movimento Sociale Italiano, *VI Congresso Nazionale Genova 2-4 Luglio 1960. Mozione unitaria*, Fondazione Ugo Spirito. Rome, Fondo Movimento Sociale Italiano. Busta 1. Materiale di propaganda elettorale 1948-1983.
[106] G. Gonella, *Fedeltà e coerenza* (Rome: Società nuova, 1963), p. 25.
[107] *Ibid*., pp. 25-26.

reform had to wait until 1970 for instance.[108] Some historians have even argued that 'the Centre-left as a project' for renewal in Italian democracy was over by 1964, even if the coalition continued.[109] Consequently, class relations and the power of political parties continued to stand at the centre of the debate on the quality of Italian democracy over the course of the 1960s.

In conclusion, the construction of new political power constellation around the turn of the 1960s was closely related to converging conceptions of democracy, in which former political antagonists accepted each other as democrats. The growing consensus among political elites on the meaning of democracy meant that their joint understanding of democracy was backed up by more political power. This tendency was contested by those who offered alternative understandings of democracy and pointed to the democratic promises which new coalitions failed to realise. This counted most of all for Italy, where the division between the Marxist Left and the DC was replaced with a division between the Centre-left and the PCI, even though the latter slowly but certainly became part of the party system. This constellation was marked by two divisions: on the one hand by that between the communists and those in government on the question of social equality and the democratic credentials of the communist party still allied to Moscow, and on the other hand between a seemingly ever more homogeneous political elite which by means of political parties strengthened their grip on the country and those who resisted this tendency. This means that West Germany was the only state in which government and parliamentary opposition fully accepted each other as democrats, and the country in which the establishment of a broad and secure framework of shared democratic principles was actually established. However, also this consensus had specific consequences and aroused critique on the way in which political parties increasingly seemed to resemble each other and left little room for active citizenship.

The establishment of the Fifth Republic and political consensus

Whereas in West Germany and Italy political change coincided with a broadening of political alliances and converging conceptions of democracy between former antagonists, France's situation was, at least for the time, markedly different. The establishment of the

[108] Giovagnoli, *Il partito italiano*, p. 119; R. Lumley, *States of Emergency. Cultures of Revolt in Italy 1968-1978* (London: Verso, 1990), p. 14; Tranfaglia, 'Socialisti e comunisti', p. 502. Cf: Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI*, p. 334.

[109] Crainz, *Storia del miracolo italiano*, p. 240.

Fifth Republic was the most far-reaching political change of postwar Western Europe, but it did not immediately lead to a convergence of conceptions of democracy. Even though the Algerian War required collaboration of political antagonists, De Gaulle's reforms remained contested and they were portrayed as anti-democratic by the fiercest adherents of a 'republican' model of democracy. Their confrontation with De Gaulle was reinforced by his constitutional reform of 1962. Apart from a short period of cooperation at the height of the Algerian War, the debate on French democracy therefore essentially continued along the lines which had become clear right after the Second World War: Gaullists and anti-Gaullists entertained different conceptions of democracy and refused to accept each other as democrats, but now in a reversed power constellation than during the Fourth Republic.

The establishment of the Fifth Republic as the quest for consensus

The democratic legitimacy of De Gaulle's return to power in 1958 is still a rather divisive issue in French historiography.[110] From the mid-1950s onwards, the war in Algeria was quickly spiralling out of control of the Fourth Republic's governments. While they adhered to the principle that Algeria should remain under Paris' rule, they failed to reassure the *pieds-noirs* of the future of a French Algeria. They consequently not solely faced violent opposition from those who advocated decolonisation, but also from those who wanted to keep Algeria French.[111] The tensions came to a head in the spring of 1958, when the army established a Committee of Public Safety in Algiers on 13 May and called publically for the return of De Gaulle. De Gaulle declared to be ready 'to assume the powers of the republic', but aimed to do so in a way that was at least formally legal.[112] The political parties that supported the Fourth Republic initially reacted by forming a 'republican front' in order to safe French democracy from De Gaulle. At the height of the crisis, there were consequently three centres of power which co-existed: the legal power of the government in Paris, the military power in Algiers, and the moral power of De Gaulle at his home in Colombré.[113]

In the following weeks, while tensions mounted in Algeria and the army took control over Corsica, De Gaulle carefully 'played off' politicians and the army against each

[110] See for an overview of the issues for instance: Facon, *La IVe République*, pp. 413-415 ; S. Berstein, 'De Gaulle and Gaullism in the Fifth Republic', in: Hough and Horne eds., *De Gaulle and Twentieth Century France*, pp. 109-123, at pp. 110-111.
[111] Evans, *Algeria: France's Undeclared War*.
[112] Berstein, *Histoire du Gaullisme*, pp. 207-211.
[113] Facon, *La IVe République*, p. 390.

other.[114] Anti-Gaullists, among whom François Mitterrand and Pierre Mèndes France, organised a mass protest rally in Paris, but many Radicals and Socialists believed that the only the Gaullist option could save the republic from the threat of an army coup. It was at that moment that President René Coty intervened and asked 'the most illustrious of all French' to form a government and thus sealed the faith of the Fourth Republic. In short, 'there was no coup d'état, but the threat of a coup d'état that convinced the leaders of the republic to step down'.[115] De Gaulle formed a coalition which resembled a government of national unity, including for instance his former antagonist Mollet.[116] The majority of the parties of the Fourth Republic subsequently voted in favour of six-month emergency powers for the general and entrusted him with the power to write a new constitution, on the basis of five conditions, including that the government had to be responsible before parliament, and that universal suffrage was the source of all power.[117]

The commission which set to work on the constitution was appointed by De Gaulle and produced a text which was inspired upon the Bayeux programme, but which was also a compromise between the conceptions of democracy of De Gaulle and his former antagonists. This showed how the two major democratic paradigms in France, 'republican' and Gaullist, converged under the pressures generated by the War.[118] De Gaulle announced their achievements on the Place de la République, which symbolised that he was not threatening but saving the Republic.[119] The text was subsequently endorsed by over 80% of the voters in a referendum. The constitution was built upon three key conceptions of democracy.

First, the constitution aimed to provide governmental stability and authority of the state, by protecting institutions from party strife. Debré, who had played a major role in the composition of the constitution, argued that democracies in general, and the French one in particular, were badly armed to defend themselves. They subsequently required stability to silence political divisions.[120] This stability was provided by a two-tier electoral system which should prevent the fragmentation of parliament, a constitutional council, but most of all a powerful president who appointed the prime minister, dissolved

[114] Vinen, *France 1934-1970*, p. 109.
[115] Berstein, *Histoire du Gaullisme*, p. 216.
[116] Knapp, *Parties and the Party System in France*, p. 34.
[117] Berstein, *Histoire du Gaullisme*, p. 218.
[118] S. Berstein, *The Republic of De Gaulle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 3.
[119] Broche, *Une histoire des antigaullismes*, p. 389.
[120] M. Debré, 'Construire enfin un régime parlementaire' (1958), in: M. Debré, *Refaire une démocratie un état un pouvoir* (Paris: Plon, 1958), pp. 15-35, at p. 18.

parliament, and exerted extensive powers in the case of an emergency. Most importantly, the president was elected by a broad electoral college, rather than by the parties in parliament. As a consequence, the president stood now above party divisions, he incarnated the sovereignty of the French people and the general, rather than the party interest, so that, in the words of Debré, 'more than ever, the president of the republic will also be the president of France'.[121] This is why De Gaulle's description of himself should count for any president who succeeded him. De Gaulle as president embodied democratic legitimacy 'because I am a man alone, I do not confound to any party, any organisation […] I am a man who belongs to no one and to everyone'.[122]

Second, apart from the strengthening of the position of the president, the Gaullist imprint on the project was visible in the importance of referenda. René Capitant, another of the most faithful Gaullists politicians, called democracy 'the popular participation of citizens in public affairs', and 'the more active this participation is, the more democratic a nation is'.[123] For Gaullists, the principle of the referendum equalled the active participation of the people in politics that the Fourth Republic had prevented. It was for Capitant 'the most perfect expression of democracy', because people directly voted on laws.[124] This signified a shift from the Fourth Republic's ideal that the popular will was represented and expressed exclusively by the national assembly, to a situation in which the president embodied sovereignty and could call upon support of the entire electorate. By successfully reaching over the heads of professional politicians directly to the people De Gaulle contested the parties' claim that they embodied democratic legitimacy.

Yet, the third principle considered the revised role of the national assembly, which still enjoyed considerable powers, most notably the right to force governments appointed by the president to resign. This meant that the Fifth Republic was presented as a parliamentary regime, even though in 'rationalised' form so that the instability associated with the Third and Fourth Republic were something of the past. Debré argued that French democracy was 'unthinkable' without a large role for parliament. 'The new task', he stressed, 'reasonable and at the same time revolutionary, is to renovate, to rejuvenate the parliamentary regime, or, rather, we dare to say, to finally construct a parliamentary

[121] *Ibid*., p. 17.
[122] De Gaulle, 'Conférence de presse tenu à Palais d'Orsay', p. 5.
[123] R. Capitant, 'La force du Gaullisme' (1961), in: R. Capitant, *Écrits politiques 1960-1970* (Paris: Flammarion, 1971), pp. 9-11, at p. 10.
[124] R. Capitant, 'Nécessité et légitimité du referendum' (1960), in: Capitant, *Écrits politiques*, pp. 65-67, at p. 65.

regime'.[125] The 'regime of the assembly' was replaced by a 'parliamentary regime, that is, a regime in which power is assured by the collaboration of independent organs', which pointed to the separation of powers so highly valued by the Gaullists.[126] Whereas parties had first been able to control government, the Fifth Republic aimed to limit their role to parliament and hoped to render parliament a place where these parties elaborated upon the general interests – just as Debré had argued in the early 1950s. The separation of powers was completed by the establishment of a Constitutional Council, which slowly gained in importance.[127]

The Fifth Republic was not solely built upon the Bayeux programme, but on presidential and parliamentary principles in a precarious balance.[128] The presentation of the constitution during the referendum-campaign emphasised that it was a not only a truly democratic and republican constitution, but also one which would finally ensure a system of parliamentary democracy in France, which underlined not only how flexible the republican tradition in France was, but also confirmed that De Gaulle placed himself in this tradition to strengthen his democratic credentials.[129] This view was reluctantly accepted by many on the Left and the centre, who saw De Gaulle as the only one who could safe democracy during the Algerian War.[130] Even Mollet, who had previously linked Gaullism to fascism, justified his collaboration in the constitutional project in this way. It was the middle way between a right-wing coup and a communist insurrection.[131]

The continued contestation of the democratic credentials of De Gaulle

As in Italy and West Germany, the establishment of a dominant democratic paradigm in France also encountered resistance. The opposition against the constitutional reforms came from some prominent Fourth Republic politicians, most notably François Mitterrand and Pierre Mèndes France, as well as from the French communists. They were

[125] Debré, 'Construire enfin un régime parlementaire', p. 22.
[126] M. Debré, 'Pourquoi oui ?' (1958), in: Debré, *Refaire une démocratie*, pp. 73-79, at pp. 74-75.
[127] S. Brouard, 'The Politics of Constitutional Veto in France: Constitutional Council, Legislative Majority and Electoral Competition', *West European Politics*, vol. 32 no. 2 (2009), pp. 384-403.
[128] Berstein, 'De la démocratie plébiscitaire au Gaullisme', p. 176.
[129] S. Hazareesingh, 'L'imaginaire républicain en France, de la Révolution française à Charles de Gaulle', *Revue historique*, no. 659 (2011), pp. 637-654, at p. 647.
[130] J. Jackson, 'General De Gaulle and his Enemies: Anti-Gaullism in France since 1940', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, vol. 9 (1999), pp. 43-65, at p. 54.
[131] G. Mollet, *13 mai 1958 – 13 mai 1962* (Paris: Plon, 1962), p. 3.

first of all united in their view that De Gaulle had come to power thanks to a coup d'état.[132] Mitterrand argued that his return to power after twelve years was democratically illegal: 'I cannot forget that General De Gaulle, president of the council which is presented, was called upon first and foremost by an undisciplined army. Legally, General De Gaulle is given his power by the national assembly; in fact he keeps it already after his *coup de force*'.[133] Mèndes France also refused to support a confidence vote in De Gaulle's government and added that 'above all, I cannot agree to give a vote constrained by the insurrection and the threat of a military coup. Because the decision that the Assembly takes – as everyone knows – is not a free decision; the consent that will be given is flawed'.[134]

Also the outline of the Fifth Republic's constitution was scrutinised. Mendès France argued that the constitution lacked a balance between presidential and parliamentary elements and was an assault on democracy. He admitted that the Fourth Republic had seen demagogic methods, extensive power of lobby groups, and a lack of courage from its politicians. But this did not necessarily make the 1958 constitution an improvement. The constitution clashed with the 'republican' inspiration of Mendès France, because it valued checks-and-balances to limit the power of parliament. By empowering institutions that were not directly elected by the people, the Fifth Republic diminished popular influence and harmed democracy, because 'the essential organs of the new Constitution, we know, the president of the Republic, elected by a inversed proportional suffrage, the prime minister, the constitutional council, the Senate […] can paralyse, in all ways, the Assembly, the only direct expression of universal suffrage'.[135] Also referenda were the object of criticism from those who adhered to a purely parliamentary form of democracy. The referenda reminded them of the Bonapartist plebiscites of the nineteenth century and were no means to genuinely involve citizens in political decision-making, but an instrument to assure popular affirmation of presidential politics. Moreover the questions

[132] E. Duhamel, *L'UDSR ou la genèse de François Mitterrand* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2007), p. 305; Santamaria, *Le parti de l'ennemi ?*, p. 340; Broche, *Une histoire des antigaullismes*, p. 381.
[133] F. Mitterrand, 'Réponse au discours d'investiture du général de Gaulle (1958), found on: http://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/decouvrir-l-assemblee/histoire/grands-moments-d-eloquence/francois-mitterrand-1958-reponse-au-discours-d-investiture-du-general-de-gaulle-1er-juin-1958 , accessed on 5 March 2015.
[134] P. Mendès France, 'L'investiture du Général de Gaulle' (1958), in: Mendès France, *Œuvres complètes Vol. IV*, pp. 418-425, at p. 421.
[135] P. Mendès France, 'Le rejet de la constitution de la Ve République', in: Mendès France, *Œuvres complètes Vol. IV*, pp. 435-452, at p. 438.

which De Gaulle posed in the referenda were always 'ambiguous' and intended to mislead, rather than involve the people.[136]

Above all, however, the constitution was rejected as undemocratic, because the president was too powerful. Mendès France called him a 'non-hereditary monarch' who thanks to his powers in emergencies 'can go as far as legally declaring a dictatorship'.[137] There was no true separation of powers, because the president also enjoyed legislative powers. The president was moreover elected by an electoral college in which rural regions, often politically conservative, were overrepresented. And the constitution, he argued, was tailor-fit for one man. Even if De Gaulle did not abuse the extensive powers given to him, no one could assure that his successor would display the same constraint. For these reasons, Mendès France called the Fifth Republic 'the dictatorship of De Gaulle',[138] and argued after the constitution was ratified that 'without a doubt, the French in 1959 no longer live in a democracy'.[139]

Whereas the non-communist Left was divided on the evaluation of the democratic credentials of the Fifth Republic, the communists were united in their rejection. The PCF found itself in a difficult situation after the Hungarian Uprising and Khrushchev's speech in which he denounced Stalin's personality cult. In the crucial year 1956 the PCF took a position 'diametrically opposed' to the Italian communist party,[140] which with its 'Italian road to socialism' harboured 'parliamentary illusions'.[141] Thorez defended Stalin and pleaded for a policy of international communist unity. He wrote that while the French people was 'attached to parliamentary institutions' and that it was therefore 'probable' that the struggle for social change would go by means of these institutions, but that 'history taught us that the forms of the struggle cannot always be peaceful'.[142] The party faced protests, dissidents and lost members as a result.[143] Yet the party's ambiguous stance towards parliamentary democracy was proven once more when De Gaulle came to

[136] P. Mendès France, 'Gaullisme, Mendèsisme et la Ve République' (1961), in: Mendès France, *Œuvres complètes Vol. IV*, pp. 656-660, at p. 658.
[137] Mendès France, 'Le rejet de la constitution', p. 439.
[138] Mendès France, 'Gaullisme, Mendèsisme et la Ve République', p. 660.
[139] P. Mendès France, 'Aucun démocratie est possible dans le mensonge', in: Mendès France, *Œuvres complètes Vol. IV*, pp. 525-527, at p. 527.
[140] M. Dreyfus, *Le PCF. Crises et dissidences* (Brussels: Éditions complexes, 1990), p. 117. See also: Lazar, 'Les partis communistes italien et français et l'après-Staline'.
[141] Courtois and Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste français*, p. 296.
[142] M. Thorez, 'Quelques questions capitales posées au XXe Congrès du Parti Communiste de l'Union Soviétique' (1956), in: M. Thorez, *Œuvres choisis en trois volumes. III 1953-1964* (Paris: Editons sociales, 1965), pp. 45-70, at p. 53.
[143] Dreyfus, *Le PCF. Crises et dissidences*, p. 118.

power. The PCI rallied to the defence of the Republic and denounced the events of May 1958 as a fascist coup.[144] Thorez had already denounced the presidential system as dangerous in a country as strongly centralised as France,[145] and now also denounced the majoritarian voting system which De Gaulle installed as undemocratic, claiming that only a system of proportional representation gave a just impression of the popular will.[146] Finally, the fact that the constitution did not envision large scale socioeconomic changes and nationalisations, made Thorez claim that the constitution 'poses a threat to the working classes.[147] He therefore sought collaboration with the socialists in the early 1960s to 'assure the victory of workers and democracy' in France.[148]

The conflict between the 'parties' and De Gaulle resurfaced in 1962, after the Algerian War had been settled by the Evian Accords. The attempt on De Gaulle's life by terrorists refusing the settlement was the direct cause for a plan which divided the political spectrum once again in Gaullists and anti-Gaullists: the direct election of the French president by universal suffrage.[149] De Gaulle submitted the plan in a referendum to the French, instead of taking the parliamentary road for constitutional revision. The Gaullists made several arguments to stress that a universally elected president fitted perfectly in the democratic and republican tradition. First of all, a universally elected president enhanced state authority and protected the presidential office from party politics. De Gaulle reasoned that only a president elected by the people would have enough authority to lead the state. In a televised speech, De Gaulle argued that the universal election of the president was necessary 'to maintain and strengthen the future of our institutions vis-à-vis the factious assemblies of any dimension, or manoeuvres of those who, in good or in bad faith, would bring us the disastrous old system'.[150] René Capitant depicted the resistance of the parties against the plan as a sign that they did not want to give up their privileges. It was an 'attempt of revenge of the political oligarchy

[144] Courtois and Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste français*, p. 306.
[145] Thorez, 'Intervention au Comité Central d'Arcueil', p. 73.
[146] M. Thorez, 'Intervention au Comité Central de Bezons' (1962), in: Thorez, *Œuvres choisis en trois volumes. III 1953-1964*, pp. 243-256, at p. 254.
[147] M. Thorez, 'Discours Clôture au Comité Central d'Ivry (1958), in: Thorez, *Œuvres choisis en trois volumes. III 1953-1964*, pp. 94-119, at p. 97.
[148] Thorez, 'Intervention au Comité Central de Bezons', p. 249.
[149] Berstein, *The Republic of De Gaulle*, p. 71.
[150] C. de Gaulle, 'Allocution radiodiffusée et télévisé au palais d'Élysée' (1962), in: C. De Gaulle, *Discours et Messages. Pour l'effort. Aout 1962 – Décembre 1965* (Paris: Plon, 1970), pp. 20-24, at p. 23.

dispossessed in 1958, which is fiercely determined to stop France embarking on the road to direct democracy'.[151]

Second, the Gaullists argued that the reform was a deepening of democracy. De Gaulle argued that 'nothing is more republican, nothing is more democratic', than a universally elected president.[152] The Gaullists made their case by frequently appealing to the 'will of the people' and the 'people's sovereignty' and juxtaposing this with the authority of parliament. Capitant portrayed Left-wing opponents in parliament as part of the old oligarchy which treated the people 'like a big child' and unjustly believed that citizens were unqualified for a decision like this.[153] The Gaullists, on the other hand, 'believe that the people are the sole legitimate sovereign'. […] We no longer support those who are elected as the guardians of a people of minors, but we want to be the agents of citizens in full possession and exercise of their rights. That is why we consider it democratic progress that the president should now be elected by universal suffrage'.[154]

However, all political parties except for De Gaulle's own movement turned against the reform, because they considered it both unconstitutional and a threat to the balance between parliamentarianism and presidentialism established in 1958.[155] The opponents included of course the PCF and Mendès France, but also Mitterrand, who had also opposed the 1958 constitution – even if Mitterrand also realised that the reform offered new opportunities in the contestation of power.[156] Mendès France stated that the president would have almost unlimited powers for 'seven years during which he governs without any control and without any responsibility'.[157] The PCF argued that France moved in the direction 'of a factual dictatorship' and saw the Gaullists as exponents of the capitalist system preparing a fascist take-over.[158] The communists continued to put forward a plan for 'democratic renewal' which centred on social equality and large scale nationalisations, as well as a central position for parliament: governmental instability of the Fourth

[151] R. Capitant, 'Réfutation du « non »' (1962), in: Capitant, *Écrits politiques*, pp. 151-160, at p. 156.
[152] C. de Gaulle, 'Allocution radiodiffusée et télévisé au palais d'Élysée 4 Octobre' (1962), in: De Gaulle, *Discours et Messages. Pour l'effort*, pp. 30-33, at p. 32
[153] R. Capitant, 'Réfutation du « non »', p. 152.
[154] *Ibid*., p. 153.
[155] N. Atkin, *The Fifth French Republic* (Basingstoke: Palgrave McMillan, 2005), p. 57; Jackson, 'General De Gaulle and his Enemies', p. 58; Broche, *Une histoire des antigaullismes*, p. 486.
[156] D.S. Bell, *Francois Mitterrand. A Political Biography* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), p. 44.
[157] P. Mendès France, 'La crise de Cuba et le Référendum sur l'élection du président de la République au suffrage universel' (1962), in: Mendès France, *Œuvres complètes Vol. IV*, pp. 894-902, at p. 896.
[158] Thorez, 'Intervention au Comité Central de Bezons', p. 249. See also: Courtois and Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste français*, p. 306.

Republic 'were not at all the consequence of an excess of democracy, in the contrary, but the result of a systematic violations of the principles of democracy: Democracy should always be in the interest of the both qualitatively and quantitatively most important part of the people: the working class'.[159] The party therefore advocated the establishment of a new constitutional assembly which would write 'a democratic constitution' and bring 'an end to the regime of personal power'.[160]

Also those who had supported the establishment of the Fifth Republic now turned against De Gaulle. Paul Reynaud, for instance, stated in a parliamentary speech that De Gaulle's plan was an attack on parliament. 'In all civilised countries, parliament is considered as the representative of the nation, with its qualities and defects, with its diversities and even its contradictions […]. For us France is *here*'. Together, the MP's, 'are the nation and there is no higher expression of the will of the people' than parliament.[161] Guy Mollet, argued that a 'unity of all democratic forces' should stand up against the plans of De Gaulle. He accused De Gaulle of having authoritarian intentions, because the referenda and the election of the president by universal suffrage were an assault on the rights of the minority. 'The essential rule of democracy', Mollet argued, is that 'the majority forms a community which governs in the interest of all, but in doing so it has no right to infringe upon certain fundamental rights that every person has'.[162] Moreover, the reform jeopardised the balance between president and parliament: 'Democracy cannot rest upon a person', but should instead be based upon 'the nation itself, in the measured decisions of its representatives and the harmonious functioning of its institutions'.[163] The reforms of De Gaulle also diminished the role of political parties, which were 'the only method for keeping permanent contact with the people'.[164]

De Gaulle ultimately won the referendum, which made '1962' the 'second foundation' of the Fifth Republic.[165] This had to somewhat paradoxical consequences. On the one hand, it contributed to the formation of two distinct political poles, Left-wing and Gaullist, over the course of the following years and to a further stabilisation of the political

[159] J. Duclos, *L'avenir de la démocratie* (Paris: Éditions sociales, 1962), p. 248.
[160] *Ibid*., p. 235.
[161] P. Reynaud, 'Débat de censure' (1962). My emphasis. http://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/decouvrir-l-assemblee/histoire/grands-moments-d-eloquence/paul-reynaud-georges-pompidou-1962-debat-de-censure-4-octobre-1962 , accessed on 10 June 2015.
[162] Mollet, *13 Mai 1958 – 13 Mai 1962*, p. 227.
[163] *Ibid*., p. 153.
[164] *Ibid*., p. 208.
[165] Atkin, *The Fifth French Republic*, p. 58.

system.[166] The lack of parliamentary opposition against the general was also the result of the newly introduced electoral system which weakened the parliamentary opposition: the PCF obtained 20.7% of the popular vote in the second round of the 1958 elections, but only 10 parliamentary seats, while the Gaullist *Union pour la nouvelle République* obtained 26.7% of the popular vote and 189 seats. Mitterrand and Mendès France both lost their parliamentary seats in 1958 and Mendès France was expelled from the Radical party one year later, making him join the newly found *Parti Socialiste Unifée* (PSU). But on the level of political ideas, the democratic credentials of De Gaulle, and the presidential character of the Fifth Republic, remained contested for the remainder of the 1960s.

Initially, the return of De Gaulle in 1958 had promised reconciliation between opposing conceptions of democracy. In the tensions generated by the Algerian War, former antagonists such as Mollet supported the General by default, aided by the fact that the Fifth Republic was presented as a 'parliamentary' regime. However, the agreement between 'republican' forces and De Gaulle was very partial and limited in time. On the level of political ideas, the Fifth Republic did therefore not forge an agreement between Gaullists and anti-Gaullists on the principles of democracy. Influential actors such as Mitterrand, Mendès France and the communists contested the democratic credentials of De Gaulle and the extensive power of the president under the Fifth Republic. And after the War in Algeria had been settled and De Gaulle launched an attempt to alter the precarious balance between presidential and parliamentary principles in the constitution, all the political parties but his own united against De Gaulle. It means that despite the momentous political changes between 1958 and 1962, the political debate on democracy in France showed continuities with that during the Fourth Republic: Gaullists and anti-Gaullists entertained different conceptions of democracy and questioned each other's democratic credentials.

Converging conceptions of democracy and their limits in the early 1960s

Around the turn of the 1960s, in West Germany and Italy a new political constellation was shaped in which the PSI, the SPD, and the Christian democrats accepted each other as democratic and endorsed a broadly similar conception of democracy. In both countries,

[166] Berstein, *Histoire du Gaullisme*, p. 235; Berstein, *The Republic of De Gaulle*, p. 98; Fieschi, *Fascism, Populism and the French Fifth Republic*, p. 84; Courtois and Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste français*, p. 309; Atkin, *The Fifth French Republic*, p. 58.

this new political axe not only agreed on some basic democratic principles, but could also back up their claim that they enjoyed the only 'valid' conception of democracy with political power. First, these parties equated parliamentary democracy with democracy as such. Christian democrat ideas on a corporatist chamber of parliament had definitely disappeared, whereas also the still nominally Marxist PSI now accepted parliamentary democracy as an end in itself, rather as a stepping stone to socialism. Second, the parties also shared a commitment to individual liberties which, in the face of the increasingly exposed assaults on individual liberties in the communist-ruled parts of Europe, was used to strengthen democratic credentials, especially in the case of Italy. Moro claimed in 1962 that 'communism changes the hierarchy of values, mortifies man, substantially dissolves men into a collective machine in which equality is not recognised as equal dignity, but entails the renouncing of the autonomous value of each individual'.[167] Third, this acceptance of individual liberty which had already been part of the Christian democrat vocabulary but became now also prominently part of the programmes of the PSI and SPD related to their acceptance of the market economy as democratic. SPD-prominent Carlo Schmid illustrated the shift of the Left in this regard by formulating the changed objectives of the SPD: 'no longer should the entire building of the economy be restructured, […] but the social product should be divided more justly, the abuse of economic power should be prevented, and the working people should enjoy co-decision rights in the economic process'.[168] This acceptance of the market economy was aided by the fact that the Christian democrats more explicitly followed an economic policy of public intervention and redistribution than early in the 1950s.[169] The fourth principle considered party democracy. Indeed, the political changes of the turn of the decade arguably strengthened the principles of party democracy. The Christian democrat parties in both countries sought new ways of connecting to society, while the PSI and the SPD, which enjoyed a large membership base, also continued to stress the vitality of parties in the democratic

[167] A. Moro, 'Il partito e le scelte di fondo della politica nazionale' (1962), in: F. Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana Vol. III. Gli anni di transizione 1954-1962. Da Fanfani a Moro* (Rome: Edizione Cinque Lune, 1988) , pp. 473-559, at p. 528.
[168] C. Schmid, 'Der ideologische Standort der deutschen Sozialismus in der Gegenwart' (1958), in: C. Schmid, *Politik und Geist* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1961), pp. 245-278, at p. 260.
[169] For the CDU the pension reform of 1957 was illustrative in this regard, see for instance: Spicka, *Selling the Economic Miracle*, pp. 214-215. For the DC, see: Avagliano, 'Democrazia cristiana e politiche economiche', pp. 371-372.

process: Nenni denounced critique on the *partitocrazia* as 'polemics of the Right' in contradiction to democracy.[170]

France actually saw a very similar development towards consensus on a few key principles, but thanks to far-reaching institutional changes, the polarising personality of De Gaulle, and the questions about the constitutionality of his 1962 reform, this trend was much less visible for contemporaries than it is with the benefit of hindsight. The establishment of the Fifth Republic did not yet forge a broad agreement on the principles on which French democracy was based. The 1962 reform confirmed for many former Fourth Republic politicians that De Gaulle was no democrat and that another reform of the constitution was essential to safe French democracy and protect the principles of parliamentary democracy. As a consequence, the principles of parliament and parties remained highly contested between Gaullists and anti-Gaullists, whereas the socialists and the communists still claimed to be revolutionary in their aim that capitalism should be overcome to establish a true democracy.[171] Yet by situating the Fifth Republic with emphasis in the republican tradition and by underlining its parliamentary characteristics, the Gaullists enabled the endorsement of the 1958 constitution by its antagonists in the future. It also, unexpectedly, allowed political parties to adjust to the new institutional outline and retain a large political influence.[172]

These different political power constellations, in which the changes around the turn of the 1960s occurred, meant that the political debates in the three countries displayed varying levels of consensus on the principles of democracy. West Germany was the first country in which all main political parties accepted each other as fully democratic. This consensus was largely the result of the reforms of the SPD symbolised in the Godesberger programme, and the way in which the CDU rather smoothly accepted the SPD as democratic partner. Even if it took several more years before a Grand Coalition was formed, the fundamental mutual contestation of democratic legitimacy based on competing economic and foreign policy orientations was evidently something of the past. But this consensus could not conceal two issues of growing importance in West German democracy: the differences in how the SPD and Christian democrats conceptualised civic

[170] Nenni, 'La relazione di Pietro Nenni', p. 48.
[171] Bergounioux and Grunberg, *Le long remords du pouvoir*, p. 206.
[172] Hanley, *Parties, Society, Government. Republican Democracy in France*, pp. 166-167.

participation and the growing concern over the lack of any fundamental opposition in a system dominated by political parties.

The Italian political constellation, by contrast, continued to feature a large parliamentary opposition with an alternative conception of democracy. However, the PCI's fundamental opposition was increasingly muted over the course of the 1960s, when the party, faced with further delegitimation of 'real existing socialism' and the new political domestic constellation, reconsidered its harsh critique of capitalism, its alliance with the Soviet Union and its depiction of the DC as a continuation of fascism.[173] Next to the events of 1956, the formation of the Centre-left played an important part in this process, because the inclusion of an at least formally Marxist party in government, the commitment to the actualisation of unrealised articles of the constitution, and the successes of the economic miracle created a new political constellation in which the distinction between 'democratic' masses and an 'authoritarian' state as put forward by the PCI in the 1950s sounded increasingly obsolete. As a consequence, despite the continued communist exclusion from government, the main political parties seemed ever more alike in their conception of democracy. The power of political parties, the distance between *paese legale* and *paese reale*, and limited alternative possibilities for political participation became increasingly pressing issues in the 1960s. They proved to be particularly explosive when they concurred with the qualms about social equality and worker's rights.

In France, finally, the political change did not yet forge a broad consensus on the principles of democracy. Many of De Gaulle's antagonists excluded a return to a regime akin to that of the Fourth Republic, but equally rejected the Gaullist conception of democracy. The continuing debate over which conception of democracy came closest to the republican ideal in France had consequences for the political constellation. On the one hand, it impeded a reform of the French socialists akin to that of the SPD or PSI. Even if the party made some gestures to the acceptance of the market economy in the early 1960s, it failed to produce a true reform of the party's conception of democracy, caused by the fact that the party remained preoccupied with the question of the defence democracy against Gaullism.[174] On the other hand, the reforms fostered the formation of

[173] Galli, *Storia del Pci*, pp. 194-198; Tranfaglia, 'Socialisti e comunisti nell'Italia repubblicana, p. 507; Scoppola, *La repubblica dei partiti*, p. 127.
[174] Bergounioux and Grunberg, *Le long remords du pouvoir*, pp. 206-208; Hodge, 'The Long Fifties, p. 31.

new political alliances, and the party system slowly developed into two antagonistic camps, in which the Gaullists and the Left challenged each other.[175]

The turn of the 1960s was thereby a crucial moment in the debate on democracy. The harsh divisions which had characterised the first fifteen years after the War were partially overcome and replaced with a broader consensus among political elites on the meaning of democracy. As a consequence, a growing resentment against political elites emerged, who seemed increasingly alike in their conception of democracy and left little room for alternative thinking outside their notions of limited participation, state coordinated capitalism, and, especially in West Germany and Italy, political parties. These issues dominated the debate on democracy in from the early 1960s onward and provided fertile ground for the extra-parliamentary Left and the remaining parliamentary opposition.

[175] Hanley, *Party, Society, Government. Republican Democracy in France*, ch. 7.

IV. The extra-parliamentary challenge and its consequences

The extra-parliamentary Left in the context of the debate on democracy

The debate on democracy reached new levels of intensity in Western Europe over the course of the 1960s. Conservatives denounced the extra-parliamentary Left as 'Left-wing terrorists', communist politicians belittled the protesters as bourgeois, and leaders of the protest movements denounced the political establishment as a clique acting in authoritarian or even fascist fashion. With their critique, the extra-parliamentary Left responded partially to the increased agreement among political elites on the meaning of democracy which became ever more evident after the turn of the 1960s. Yet this clash cannot be understood by juxtaposing the conceptions of democracy of the '68 generation with the 'postwar order', or the 'New' with the 'Old' Left.[1] The extra-parliamentary movements also built upon conceptions of democracy articulated by forces in parliament, parliamentary actors were divided in their response to the challenge to their democratic credentials, and the conceptions of democracy of the extra-parliamentary and parliamentary Left influenced each other.

Many of the issues which were raised by the extra-parliamentary Left regarding the state of postwar democracy were an echo of the political debate among parliamentary actors.[2] In particular the supposed authoritarianism of the executive, the question of civic participation, and the relationship between democracy and capitalism were themes which resonated inside and outside parliament. The most distinctive aspects of the extra-parliamentary Left's conception of democracy was how it questioned the equation between representation and democracy and the alternatives to representation which they proposed and practiced. In the face of the critique of the extra-parliamentary Left, forces from the Left and conservatives were united in their defence of capitalism, existing representative institutions, and limited popular participation, which rendered their

[1] Jan-Werner Müller argued that '68 was the moment in which the principles of the postwar order were challenged, see: Müller, *Contesting Democracy*, p. 6. Historians remain divided over the ultimate political impact of this contestation, which sometimes has been called 'non-existent', see: Vinen, *History in Fragments*, p. 398. In a way, the historiographical debates are related to the fact that this topic has never truly become history, since, as Wolfgang Kraushaar argued, its historians were partly also its participants who have contributed to the 'myth' of that year. See: W. Kraushaar, *1968 als Mythos, Chiffre und Zäsur* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2000).

[2] Because the protests dated from before '1968' and especially in Italy would continue into the 1970s, '1968' in this view epitomises the whole atmosphere of a decade caught up in quick social, cultural and political change. See for instance: P. Artières and M. Zancarini-Fournel eds., *68. Une histoire collective [1962-1981]* (Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2008).

conceptions of democracy more uniform than at any point since the War by the early 1970s.

Parliamentary actors and the sentiment of democratic decline in the 1960s

The consensus on the principles of postwar democracy among the main political actors became firmly established in the 1960s, but the new constellation also faced the accusation that it failed to be democratic. This critique was partially the result of this increased consensus, as this reinforced the image of elites who denounced visions outside their agreement as undemocratic, diminished the role of parliament, and downplayed ideological differences. This critique on governmental authoritarianism was visible in all three states. In France, the Gaullists by nature held that they did not govern in the name of some particular ideology, but only in the general interest. The coalition governments between Christian democrats and the PSI and SPD in Italy and West Germany put forward a similar argument. So everywhere, the parties in government seemed ever more alike and claimed to govern in the general interest, sometimes even based on 'scientific' solution to political problems.[3] As a result, opposition forces accused governments of breaking the principles of democracy, because governments imposed their policies on parliament without engaging in a political debate, and on society without permitting civic participation.

These concerns came most clearly to the surface in West Germany under the Grand Coalition, and in Italy at the time of the Centre-left's first governments under Moro. The PSIUP argued that the Centre-left's attempts to foster the integration between citizens and the state culminated in an authoritarian form of imposed consensus which negated the role of parliament. At the PSIUP's first congress in 1965, party secretary Tullio Vecchietti argued that the Centre-left 'tends towards the organisation of consensus, with a complex mediation between groups and capitalist sectors, between public and private sectors, between opposing classes. This complex mediation, which is being realised ever more outside the traditional instruments of democracy, most notably parliament, is the main cause of the tendency of every government and every majority to transform into a regime,

[3] K. Schönhoven, 'Aufbruch in die sozialliberale Ära. Zur Bedeutung der 60er Jahre in der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, vol. 25 no. 1 (1999), pp. 123-145, at p. 140; G. Metzler, 'Am Ende aller Krisen? Politisches Denken und Handeln in der Bundesrepublik in der sechziger Jahre', *Historisches Zeitschrift* vol. 275 (2002), pp. 57-103; D. Gosewinkel, 'Zwischen Diktatur und Demokratie. Wirtschaftliches Planungsdenken in Deutschland und Frankreich: Vom Ersten Weltkrieg bis zur Mitte der 1970er Jahre', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, vol. 34 no. 3, (2008), pp. 327-359.

of which the Centre-left is becoming the lightening example'.[4] In West Germany, the FDP remained as the only parliamentary opposition force after 1966. Its leader Walter Scheel argued that the SPD and CDU aimed to impede parliamentary control of the executive and diminish natural ideological differences.[5] He stated that 'authoritarian thinking gains ground, and the "authorities", like governments a hundred years ago, […] want to run their affairs behind closed doors […] That democracy happens publically […] seems to be more and more forgotten'.[6] The Grand Coalition equated democracy with stability and social harmony rather than with an open and potentially polarised debate between opposing interests, and thereby harmed democracy. 'The realisation of democracy has been halted by a flawed understanding of democracy […] fearful of conflicts', Scheel stated.[7]

In France, the question of the democratic credentials of De Gaulle continued to dominate the political debate in the 1960s, and it was seen from a similar perspective as in West Germany and Italy. Mitterrand, Mendès France, the Communists, and the Socialists questioned the institutional outline of the Fifth Republic.[8] The communists aimed to write an entirely new constitution which rendered the national assembly once again the heart of French democracy, and they depicted De Gaulle as a dictator. Jacques Duclos compared De Gaulle to Louis Bonaparte, and stated that 'we find many points of comparison between the behaviour of the Gaullists and that of the men of all the strands of the Second Empire'.[9] Mendès France proposed a new institutional outline in his pamphlet *La République moderne*. Also here parliament regained many of its lost powers, while Mendès France stressed the importance of enabling more popular participation in socioeconomic affairs and the development of a new 'civic spirit'.[10] Mitterrand differed from the communists and Mendès France, because he merely envisioned constitutional

[4] Partito Socialista di Unità Proletaria, *1 Congresso Nazionale. Per la pace e la libertà contro l'imperialismo, per il socialismo contro lo sfruttamento e il potere del capitalismo, rafforziamo nelle lotta l'unità dei lavoratori* (Rome, 1965), pp. 33-34.
[5] Becker, 'Der Einfluß der Unionsparteien auf der politische Ordnung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland', p. 231; Granieri, 'Politics in C Minor', pp. 23-24; Schönhoven, 'Aufbruch in die sozialliberale Ära', p. 132; R. Schmoekel and B. Kaiser, *Die vergessene Regierung. Die große Koalition 1966-1969 und ihre langfristigen Wirkungen* (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1991), p. 234.
[6] W. Scheel, 'Opposition: Kritik und Kontrolle', *Liberal*, vol. 11 (1967), pp. 806-809, at p. 806.
[7] W. Scheel, 'Zum geistigen Standort der Liberalen in dieser Zeit', in: W. Scheel et al., *Formeln deutscher Politik. Sechs Praktiker und Theoretiker stellen sich* (Munich: Bechtle Verlag, 1965), pp. 15-50, at p. 18.
[8] Broche, *Une histoire des antigaullismes*, pp. 501-507.
[9] J. Duclos, *De Napoléon III à De Gaulle* (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1964), p. 14.
[10] P. Mendès France, 'La République moderne. Propositions' (1961), in: Mendès France, *Œuvres complètes Vol. IV*, pp. 737-888, at p.795; 878. Broche concludes that the proposal did not convince anyone, see: Broche, *Une histoire des antigaullismes*, p. 501.

revisions which restricted presidential powers rather a new constitution.[11] He nonetheless contended that France was a dictatorship, 'even if it is a dictatorship that does not shed any blood and does not execute terror'.[12] In his 1964 political pamphlet, *Le coup d'état permanent*, Mitterrand argued that between De Gaulle and the republicans always stood the coup d'état of 1958. De Gaulle's coup was permanent, and consisted of 'the progressive crumbling of institutions, disappearance of parliamentary control, return of the force of legal exceptions, arbitrary police power, [and] totalitarian propaganda', for which 'General De Gaulle assumes the full, complete responsibility'.[13]

So according to the parliamentary opposition, postwar democracies seemed to be in a state of decline in the 1960s, either because governments deliberately diminished the role of parliament, or because the government parties negated ideological differences by referring to some ostensibly objective 'general interest' and thereby silenced the opposition. These concerns came most clearly to the surface in the debates on the socioeconomic reforms. The major parties seemed increasingly indistinguishable in their conception of this dimension of democracy, characterised by economic planning and state intervention within the framework of the free market. In West Germany, the SPD did not significantly challenge this consensus in the 1960s and was itself a major proponent of 'scientific' solutions to political problems and an advocate of economic planning.[14] *Mitbestimmung* of workers was even largely absent from the party's election campaign manifesto for the 1965 elections.[15] But this ostensible agreement among the major parties also counted for France and Italy, even though the communist parties formally still contested the relationship between capitalism and democracy. De Gaulle was portrayed as the protector of capitalist interests and in one of his last speeches before his death, Thorez retained that the constitution of 1958 was 'against the working class and democracy'.[16] The Italian communists challenged the democratic credentials of the Centre-left on the same grounds. The PCI stated that 'the regime in which we live is a regime characterised by a development in the interest of one social group; those in

[11] See, for instance: A. Bergounioux and G. Grunberg, *L'ambition et le remords. Les socialistes français et le pouvoir (1905-2005)* (Paris: Fayard, 2005), p. 245. See also: Duhamel, *L'UDSR*, pp. 307-318.
[12] F. Mitterrand, *Le Coup d'État permanent* (Paris: Julliard, 1984 [1964]), p. 270.
[13] *Ibid*., p. 269.
[14] See, for instance: Lösche and Walter, *Die SPD*, p. 116.
[15] S.P.D., *Tatsache und Argumente. Erklärungen der SPD Regierungsmannschaft* (1965), found on: http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bibliothek/retro-scans/fa99-04595.pdf , visisted on 13 April 2015.
[16] M. Thorez, 'Unité pour la démocratie, pour le socialisme' (1964), in: Thorez, *Œuvres choisis en trois volumes. III*, pp. 316-331, at p. 317.

possession of the most powerful means of production are in a position to dominate society and exploit the workers'.[17] However, because the communists also emphasised state interference and economic planning, they increasingly concurred to the economic politics of the Gaullists and Centre-left, if only more far-reaching.[18] The communist parties thereby faced a paradox: they formally still advocated the abolishment of capitalism, but negated the credibility of this demand by reducing their plans for the realisation of social equality to higher salaries and nationalisation of key industries.[19]

This growing consensus among the main political parties on 'state capitalism' was contested by the newcomers on the Left in parliament in France and Italy, who proposed alternatives to the way the relationship between democracy and capitalism should be conceived. The PSU claimed that its opposition 'is less an opposition to the personal power than the institutional economic and social order of which De Gaulle has become the embodiment. We cannot judge the institutions of the Fifth Republic, while at the same time neglecting the neo-capitalist arrangement'.[20] Socioeconomic issues were made subordinate to the survival of the capitalist system which required efficiency and stability, and therefore led to a 'degeneration of the parliamentary system'.[21] The PSIUP criticised the Centre-left's economic 'reformism' based on economic planning for the same reason. The integration of the working class in the state by enhancing the role of the state in the economy failed to overcome the inherently undemocratic nature of capitalism or revaluated labour as a process of personal liberation. The PSIUP claimed to lead the struggle 'against the reformism of the masses, which should be direct and reinforce class consciousness in the only possible way […] proposing solutions that inspire an alternative conception to the choices of modern capitalism'.[22] Lelio Basso conceived the overcoming of capitalism therefore as a way to 'stop the voidance of democracy, which is the voidance

[17] P. Togliatti, 'Rilancio della DC', (1964), in: P. Togliatti, *Opere VI 1956-1964* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1984), pp. 759-761, at p. 760.
[18] J-P. Dormois, *The French Economy in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 57-62; R. Guarltieri, *L'Italia dal 1943 al 1992. DC e PCI nella storia della Repubblica* (Rome: Carocci editore, 2006), p. 162; Berstein, 'De Gaulle and Gaullism in the Fifth Republic', pp. 115-116; Gosewinkel, 'Zwischen Diktatur und Demokratie', pp. 343-347, and pp. 358-359. The PCI thereby continued on the course set in at the turn of the 1960s, in which they advocated more moderate economic proposals and were on the road to a more reformist economic programme: Tranfaglia, 'Socialisti e comunisti', p. 507. Some even argue that, the economic differences between the DC and the communists had been bridged by the early 1960s: Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI*, p. 285.
[19] Galli, *Storia del PCI*, p. 194.
[20] P.S.U., *Tribune Socialiste* no. 371 (1968), p. 5. Found on: http://edocs.lib.sfu.ca/cgi-bin/Mai68?Display=3385, accessed on 30 June 2015.
[21] *Ibid*., p. 5.
[22] PSIUP, *1 Congresso Nazionale*, p. 54.

of man, in the condition under which he is condemned to live in a modern capitalist society; the alienated man, deprived of his conscious participation of collective life'.[23]

The concerns over the reduced role of parliament and the supposedly authoritarian way in which technocratic governments aimed to solve political problems coalesced with cries for a more active involvement of citizens in political affairs. These concerns were expressed most of all by progressive political actors, who argued that conservative politicians reduced the meaning of democracy to governing in the general interest by means of the majoritarian control over representative institutions.

This debate about the balance between civic participation and representative institutions was particularly urgent in West Germany, where it stood in the shadow of the legacy of Nazism and the inherited distrust of the people.[24] Ever more politicians conceptualised democracy also in terms of popular participation which ought to reflect the societal changes and the maturation of the German people in the 1960s. This change was epitomised by a more progressive character of the FDP at the end of the 1960s.[25] The liberal claim to stand at the side of civic commitment was made explicit in the case of the debate about the 'emergency laws', according to which the government could suspend constitutional liberties in the case of national emergencies. [26] Scheel criticised the Grand Coalition for having 'a conception of democracy that rejects a process of democratisation'. [27] The liberals voted against the emergency laws, because 'also in exceptional situations in a democracy, power belongs to citizens'. [28]

The question of civic participation also continued to divide the SPD and Christian democrats. The Christian democrats under Ludwig Erhard denoted their vision on democracy with the notion of a *formierte Gesellschaft*, which denoted that democracy was

[23] *Ibid*., p. 372.
[24] See, for instance: Bauerkämper, 'Reflections. The Twisted Road to Democracy', p. 446; Hockenos, *Joschka Fischer and the Making of the Berlin Republic*, p. 38.
[25] J. Dittberner, 'FDP – Partei der Zweiten Wahl. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der liberalen Partei und ihrer Funktionen im Pateiensystem der Bundesrepublik' (Opladen: Westdeuscher Verlag, 1987), pp. 14-39 at pp. 17-18; E.J. Kirchner and D. Broughton, 'The FDP in the Federal Republic of Germany: the Requirements of Survival and Success', in: E.J. Kirchner ed., *Liberal Parties in Western Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 62-92, at p. 83.
[26] Wolfrum, *Die geglückte Demokratie*, p. 236.
[27] Scheel, 'Zum geistigen Standort der Liberalen in dieser Zeit', p. 18. About authoritarian tendencies of the Grand Coalition, see also: F.D.P., 'Praktische Politik für Deutschland – Das Konzept der F.D.P. verabschiedet vom 20. Ordentlichen Bundesparteitag der Freien Demokratischen Partei am 25. Juni 1969 in Nürnberg, in: H. Kaack ed., *Studien zum politischen System der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Band 19* (Meisenheum an Glan: Verlag Anton Hain, 1977), pp. 200-209.
[28] W. Scheel, 'Zu den Notstandgesetze' (1968), found on: http://chronik.fnst.de/files/77/Scheel-Notstandgesetze_1.pdf , accessed on 30 July 2015.

the expression of the general interest. The *formierte Gesellschaft* was a political translation of Erhard's ideas on the social market economy, according to which the state acted as a supreme arbiter of diverse societal interests and thereby actively encouraged the promotion of the 'common good' in society.[29] Erhard explained at the CDU's Congress in 1965 that 'We have to be clear that also our political order undergoes a natural development. The *formierte Gesellschaft* therefore also requires new impulses from our political parties and from parliamentarianism itself. Parliamentary democracy can no longer be controlled by organised interest; but by contrast requires […] greater autonomy of our parliamentarianism. […] Maybe we need a new kind of specialists, namely specialists for the general interest'.[30]

Whereas the Christian democrats emphasised the general interest, the SPD increasingly stressed the importance of the involvement of citizens as a precondition for democracy. Brandt named 'democratisation' one of the party's top priorities and intended this particularly as a way to foster political commitment among citizens and shed the country's habitude to see democracy as an affair limited to professional politicians. For Brandt, the entrance of the SPD into government opened a second phase in the history of the Federal Republic, which was characterised 'by the task of democratisation'. Brandt conceived of democracy as a continuous process and believed that without committed citizens, West German democracy could not be secure, because 'the realisation of democracy is very much dependent on individual citizens'. He warned that 'when the leadership […] does not trust the citizen, it will be difficult to create a viable interest in political decision making'.[31] The SPD consequently aimed encourage the establishment of an active civil society next to parliament as the corner stone of democracy.[32]

Also in France and Italy the issue of civic involvement became increasingly important. The new Left-wing parties PSU and PSIUP commenced to conceptualise democracy also outside traditional forms of parliamentary representation.[33] The PSU

[29] H. Schot, *Die Formierte Gesellschaft und das deutsche Gemeinschaftswerk. Zwei gesellschaftspolitische Konzepte Ludwig Erhards* (Doct. Dissertation, Bonn, 1981), p. 27.
[30] L. Erhard, 'Formierte Gesellschaft. Rede vor dem 13. Bundesparteitag der CDU' (1965), in: Erhard, *Gedanken aus fünf Jahrzehnten*, pp. 915-931, at p. 917.
[31] W. Brandt, 'Artikel des Regierenden Bürgermeisters von Berlin und Vorsitzenden der SPD, Brandt, für Die Neue Gesellschaft' (1966), in: W. Brandt, *Berliner Ausgabe 7. Mehr Demokratie wagen. Innen- und Gesellschaftspolitik 1966-1974* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachf, 2001), pp. 94-106, at pp. 102-103.
[32] Bouvier, *Zwischen Godesberg und Großer Koalition*, pp. 243-254.
[33] This is not to suggest that both parties had essentially similar ideologies, which, it has been demonstrated, was not the case. The PSIUP was much closer to communism than the PSU, see, most notably: D.A. Gordon,

argued that 'the Left cannot be satisfied by battling for a bourgeois parliamentary democracy'. It was time, the PSU argued, to overcome the theme which had dominated the French debate on democracy ever since 1875, because all the subsequent constitutions 'were concerned with balancing the executive and legislative towards each other'. The PSU consequently stated that the Left could not only talk about the conquest of power by means of elections, but should focus on establishing 'new centres of political power and decision-making'.[34] PSIUP-prominent Lelio Basso, one of the founding fathers of the Italian constitution who had been known for his endorsement of parliament and political parties as cores of democracy,[35] argued now that 'we should not limit ourselves to a purely parliamentary and electoral vision, we do not delude ourselves that parliament is the most perfect form of democracy […] democracy is the spirit which permeates the masses, its capacity for initiative, and its effective participation in the control of society'.[36]

This critique on the parliamentary and party system was most urgent in Italy, because closing the gap between state and citizens had been one of the major aspirations of the formation of the Centre-left coalition. The Centre-left failed to enact the socioeconomic and political reforms which could render Italy's institutions congruent with the quick modernisation of society. This meant that the aspiration of the coalition to integrate citizens, and particularly the working class, in the state turned rather quickly into a delusion.[37] According to the PCI 'this is the true problem that has opened up today for the entire working class and democratic movement in Italy'.[38]

However, the fact that this form of critique on the malfunctioning of the political system was not only expressed by the opposition, as in France and West Germany, but also by the governing Christian democrats is a sign how urgent this problem was felt on the peninsula in the 1960s.[39] At the party's congress in 1967, party leader Mariano Rumor claimed that the 'central problem of Italian democracy today is the lack of faith in politics

'A "Mediterranean New Left"? Comparing and Contrasting the French PSU and the Italian PSIUP', *Contemporary European History*, vol. 19 no. 4 (2010), pp. 309-330. Cf: Horn, *The Spirit of '68*, p. 151.

[34] P.S.U., *Tribune Socialiste* no. 371 (1968), p. 5. Found on: http://edocs.lib.sfu.ca/cgi-bin/Mai68?Display=3385, accessed on 30 June 2015.

[35] Salvati, 'Il partito nell'elaborazioni dei socialisti', p. 263.

[36] PSIUP, *1 Congresso Nazionale*, p. 378.

[37] Crainz, *Il paese mancato*, ch. 1; Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, pp. 276-283; Giovagnoli, *Il partito italiano*, p. 119; N. Tranfaglia, 'Parlamento, partiti e società civile nella crisi repubblicana', *Studi storici*, vol. 42 no. 4 (2001), pp. 827-835. Cf: Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI*, p. 334.

[38] P. Togliatti, 'Le strade del partito socialista' (1963), in: P. Togliatti, *Opere VI*, pp. 740-743, p. 742.

[39] P. Castellani, 'La Democrazia cristiana dal Centro-sinistra al delitto Moro (1962-1978), in: F. Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia cristiana. IV. Dal Centro-sinistra agli "anni di piombo" (1962-1978)* (Rome: Edizione Cinque Lune, 1989), pp. 3-118, at p. 42; Malgeri, *L'Italia democristiana*, p. 101.

and the political party system'.[40] He stated that the *boom economico* had created 'the conditions in which the constitutional design could be realised in its essence'. Consequently, the phase in which democracy centred primarily on the guarantee of political rights was over, and a new phase had arrived, in which 'a community of state, local entities, civil society' led to further democratisation.[41] However, the Christian democrats had a rather patronising conception of how this democratic development could be enhanced, namely by praising exactly those institutions which were under fierce criticism of impeding the integration between citizens and state. Indeed, Rumor stated that the responsibility to raise civic development, elevate public morality, and modernise the state belonged to political parties. Along the same line of reasoning, Aldo Moro, prime minister of successive Centre-left governments in the mid-1960s, called parliament 'the only authentic expression of the popular will',[42] because in a democracy 'in the first place there is parliament, custodian of national sovereignty and guarantee of the democratic life of the country'.[43]

In conclusion, there was a vibrant and polarised debate between parliamentary actors on the state of democracy in the 1960s in all three states, in which concerns about the state of democracy were often expressed. Those left outside the new power constellations formed around the turn of the 1960s were most critical of the state of democracy, such as the PSU, the PSIUP, and to a lesser extent the FDP after 1966. They reacted against the growing consensus among coalition parties and the way in which they put forward their conceptions of democracy ever more confidently. This showed that the way in which the main parties now increasingly jointly gave meaning to 'democracy' in the postwar order encountered increased resistance from those who were dissatisfied with the way in which political elites monopolised the meaning of democracy.

The problems of postwar democracy according to the extra-parliamentary Left

The extra-parliamentary Left entered this debate on democracy from the mid-1960s onwards. Students initially dominated the protests and were at the heart of the social

[40] M. Rumor, 'Iniziativa dei democratici Cristiani per il rinnovamento dello Stato per lo sviluppo della democrazia per la libertà e per la pace' (1967), in: Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana. Vol IV*, pp. 423-466, at p. 424.
[41] *Ibid*., p. 439.
[42] A. Moro, 'Il terzo governo Moro' (1966), in: A. Moro, *Scritti e discorsi. Volume IV 1966-1968* (Rome: Edizione Cinque Lune, 1987), pp. 2006-2045, at p. 2010.
[43] A. Moro, 'Il X Congresso Nazionale della DC' (1967), in: Moro, *Scritti e discorsi. Volume IV*, pp. 2437-2465, at p. 2457.

movements and the articulation of their political ideas.[44] Particularly in Italy, however, the social movements succeeded in establishing ties between students and workers. Their collaboration reached levels unique in Europe and lasted into the mid-1970s.[45] Like forces of the parliamentary opposition, the leaders of social movements criticised the way in which political parties seemed increasingly alike and became increasingly authoritarian in the imposition of their views. They also advocated personal autonomy in the face of state capitalism and technocracy, stressed the importance of civic participation, and rejected hierarchical forms of decision-making. But in their conclusion they drew from their analyses, they differed markedly from most forces in parliament. Instead of arguing for changes within the parameters of existing representative institutions, they advocated delegation and direct democracy, because only these could overcome the allegedly authoritarian nature of representation and enable self-government that qualified as truly democratic.

The extra-parliamentary movements saw democratisation as a process which occurred first of all at the level of society rather than the state. Indeed, the authoritarianism of the state and the capitalist system were enabled by the apathy and lack of democratic commitment of the average citizen. Daniel Cohn-Bendit stated that apart from police power, political apathy was enough 'to sustain power in a modern society'.[46] Dutschke claimed that the 'fascist personality has not been defeated since 1945',[47] and called the masses 'dumb and passive'.[48] The economic miracle could not conceal that West Germans still had no true commitment to democracy: 'we increase our wealth, always more, always quicker, always better, and this is our only motto'.[49] The Grand Coalition and its suspected authoritarian ambitions risked 'degrading democracy to a constitution of luxury in a welfare state'.[50]

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[44] In West Germany, the *Außerparlamentarische Opposition* emerged out of three strands: the pacifist movement, the eclectic coalition protesting against the emergency laws, and the *Sozialistsiche Deutsche Studentenbund* (SDS), formerly part of the SPD. See: M. Klimke, 'West Germany', in: M. Klimke and J. Scharloth eds., *1968 in Europe. A History of Protest and Activism, 1957-1977* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), pp. 97-110. For France, see: I. Gilcher-Holety, 'France', in: Klimke and Scharloth eds., *1968 in Europe*, pp. 111-123.

[45] J. Kurz and M. Tolomelli, 'Italy', in: Klimke and Scharloth eds., *1968 in Europe*, pp. 83-96; D. Giachetti, *L'autunno caldo* (Rome: Ediessi, 2013); Lumley, *States of Emergency*.

[46] Cohn-Bendit and Cohn-Bendit, *Obsolete Communism*, p. 128.

[47] Bergmann, Dutschke, Lefèvre and Rabehl, *Rebellion der Studenten*, p. 58.

[48] Dutschke, 'Keiner Partei dürfen wir vertrauen', p. 86.

[49] E. Kogon, 'Die Verhängnisvolle Vorsorge' (1968), in: E. Kogon et al., *Der totale Notstandstaat* (Frankfurt am Main: Stimme Verlag, 1968), pp. 3-9, at p. 4.

[50] Schauer ed., 'Schluβerklärung des Kuratoriums "Notstand der Demokratie" zum Kongreβ'.

The extra-parliamentary Left underlined the authoritarian character of postwar democracy.[51] The parliamentary opposition offered no genuine alternative to the policies of those in government, thanks to the similarities between political parties in government and opposition. In France, these accusations centred on the alleged similarities between the political parties and De Gaulle, because 'even when voting for it, we feel well that the parliamentary opposition of the Left, and a change of government, will not mean grand changes'.[52] Daniel Cohn-Bendit remarked that even if the Left had won the parliamentary elections, 'we know perfectly well that different men would have promoted the same policies'.[53]

In West Germany, liberation from the supposedly authoritarian system required a true democratisation which distinguished the Bonn Republic from the Nazi state.[54] The emergency laws served at as a catalyst for concerns about historical continuities, and parallels were drawn between the emergency legislation and the rise to power of Hitler in 1933.[55] A major convention against the laws stated that 'serious dangers threaten the second German democracy', because the government 'wants to prepare a dictatorship by legal means' […]. Against the emergency plans of the federal government we declare the emergency of democracy'.[56] This 'emergency of democracy' was confirmed by the fatal shooting of protester Benno Ohnesorg by the police in West Berlin on 2 June 1967. Dutschke reacted by saying that 'it is clear what emergency laws mean for the police. We cannot trust a system in which people out of democratic convictions rejected police

[51] It makes 'anti-authoritarianism' a key concept of the extra-parliamentary Left, see for instance: K. Ross, *May '68 and Its Afterlives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), p. 11; N. Birnbaum, 'What Can We Learn From the Movements of 1968?', *Constellations* vol. 1 no. 1 (1994), pp. 144-157; Hanagan, 'Changing Margins in Post-war European Politics', p. 131; P. Gassert, 'Narratives of Democratisation: 1968 in Postwar Europe', in: Klimke and Scharloth eds., *1968 in Europe*, pp. 307-324, at p. 315. Compare with the classic of Marwich, who emphasises the cultural dimension of '1968' and argues that the social movements' counter culture which permeated dominant cultures was the distinguishing feature of the time: A. Marwick, *The Sixties. Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

[52] P. Claris and La Ruche Ouvrière, 'L'autogestion, l'état et la révolution'. *Supplément noir et rouge no. 41* (1968), found on: http://edocs.lib.sfu.ca/cgi-bin/Mai68?Display=3485 , accessed on 5-11-2013.

[53] D. Cohn-Bendit and G. Cohn-Bendit, *Obsolete Communism. The Left-wing alternative* (translated from German, London: Penguin Books, 1969 [1968]), p. 139.

[54] M.A. Schmidtke, 'Reform, Revolte oder Revolution? Der Sozialistische Deutsche Studentenbund (SDS) und die Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), 1960-1970, *Geschichte und* Gesellschaft, vol. 17 (1998), pp. 188-206, at p. 192.

[55] U. Bergmann, R. Dutschke, W Lefèvre and B. Rabehl, *Rebellion der Studenten oder die neue Opposition* (Berlin: Rowolt, 1968), p. 159. See also: N. Thomas, *Protest Movements in the 1960s in West Germany. A Social History of Dissent and Democracy* (Oxford: Berg, 2003), p. 123.

[56] H. Schauer ed.,'Schluβerklärung des Kuratoriums "Notstand der Demokratie" zum Kongreβ', in: H. Schauer ed., *Notstand der Demokratie. Referate, Diskussionsbeiträge und Materialien von Kongreβ am 30. Oktober 1966* (Frankfurt am Main, 1966), pp. 209-211, at pp. 209-210.

attacks against harmless demonstrators, but are united in a bureaucracy of professional politicians', and he saw a 'contradiction between those who rule us and those who want a radical democratisation of all elements of society'.[57]

In Italy, the supposed continuities with fascism and the capitalist system proved an explosive combination in the contestation of the credentials of Italian democracy.[58] In the first place, the extra-parliamentary Left denounced the alleged authoritarian nature of the 'DC-state'. The DC was the 'party of the bourgeoisie monopoly in Italy', the 'oppressor of the masses', and 'against the majority of the working people. […] Only with a long and conscious struggle, it is possible to beat the reactionary turn of the DC which crushes the masses'.[59] The *Movimento Studentesco* argued that '[t]he arrogance of the DC reaches intolerable limits. Every day it blatantly tramples the most elementary democratic liberties'.[60] This analysis displayed remarkable similarities with the way in which the PCI had challenged the DC in the iciest phase of the Cold War, but also the communists became the object of extra-parliamentary criticism, because of their ties to Moscow, their democratic centralism, and their integration in the party system. This threatened to deprive Italian democracy of a true opposition force which could nurture the integration of the working class in the Italian state.[61] The PCI's 'trust in bourgeois institutions and parliament and offer of collaboration with bourgeois parties' led to 'control of parliament by the forces of the bourgeoisie'.[62]

For the extra-parliamentary Left, the authoritarianism of contemporary democracies and the homogeneity of the political establishment were most of all visible in the socioeconomic system. In its analysis of state capitalism, the extra-parliamentary Left built upon ideas of the parliamentary opposition in the 1960s, namely that democracy was thwarted by the imposition of a socioeconomic consensus in the name of the general interest and executed by experts. This led to authoritarian forms of political decision-

[57] R. Dutschke, 'Keiner Partei dürfen wir vertrauen' (1967), in: R. Dutschke, *Geschichte ist machbar. Texte über das herrschende Falsche und die Radikalität des Friedens* (Berlin: Klaus Wagenbach, 1980), pp. 86-88, at p. 86.
[58] Lumley, *States of Emergency*, p. 116; Giachetti, *L'autunno caldo*, p. 109.
[59] Movimento Studentesco, 'La DC, partito della borghesia' (1972), in: L. Cortese ed., *Il Movimento Studentesco. Storia e documenti 1968-1973* (Milan: Valentino Bompani, 1973), pp. 39-42, at p. 42.
[60] Movimento Studentesco, 'La fascistizzazione dello Stato' (1974), in: Cortese ed., *Il Movimento Studentesco*, pp. 121-123, at p. 122.
[61] Horn, *The Spirit of '68*, p. 144; M. Tolomelli, *Terrorismo e società. Il pubblico dibattito in Italia e Germania negli anni Settanta* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2006), pp. 271-285.
[62] Movimento Studentesco, 'Sul Rapporto al XIII Congresso del PCI' (1972), in: Cortese ed., *Il Movimento Studentesco*, pp. 116-121, at p. 119.

making, in which technocrats and specialists ruled. By treating political problems as scientific problems, political parties domesticated political conflict and made all dissident voices seem antagonists to the order as such. The French movement *Nous sommes en marche* stated that '[we] should not confuse the technical division of labour with the hierarchy of authority and power. We do not want to be passively governed anymore by "scientific laws", by the laws of the economy or by technical "imperatives"'.[63] Rudi Dutschke concluded that this attempt to integrate all dissent voices 'have made it clear for us that the established rules of this unreasonable democracy are not our rules, and that the departure point of the politicisation of the student movement must be the conscious breaking of those rules'.[64]

Behind the structures of parliamentary democracy, real power was in the hands of those who represented the interests of big business, because 'the authoritarian capitalist state is based on a compromise between interests'.[65] Rudi Dutschke argued that the economic growth since the 1940s could not conceal that that the FRG had not truly democratised. Instead it was an *Interessendemokratie* in which power belonged to organised interest: 'after fascism, parliamentary democracy was and could only be a transitory period for the reconstruction period […] which paved the way for authoritarian state capitalism'. Parliament was controlled by interest groups and what seemed like a classless society was in fact a society in which 'people do not realise that they are being controlled'.[66] Cohn-Bendit noted that the quick economic modernisation of France had created tensions between different societal groups, but that the modernisation simultaneously required the easing of social tensions in order to increase productivity. As a result, governments were 'forced to grant special favours to special groups' and there was an increased cooperation 'between political bureaucracy and trade union bureaucracy'.[67]

Even the major opposition parties were part of this system and offered no alternative. In France, even though De Gaulle was the objective of much of the critique of

[63] Nous Sommes en Marche, 'The Amnesty of the Blinded Eyes' (1968), in: A. Feenberg and J. Freedman eds., *When Poetry Ruled the Streets. The French May Events of 1968. Part 2. Documents of the May Movement* (Albany: State of University of New York Press, 2001), pp. 81-86, at pp. 84-85.
[64] R. Dutschke, 'Professor Habermas, Ihr begriffsloser Objektivismus erschlägt das zu emanzipierende Subjekt!' (1967), in: Dutschke, *Geschichte ist machbar*, pp. 76-84, at p. 78.
[65] O. Negt, 'Politik und Unrest' (1967), in: O. Negt, J. Schmierer, K.H. Roth and H.J. Krahl, *Strategie und Organisationsdebatte* (Hannover: Internationalismus Verlag, 1970), pp. 3-16, at p.3.
[66] R. Dutschke, 'Demokratie, Universität und Gesellschaft' (1967), in: Dutschke, *Geschichte ist machbar*, pp. 61-75, at p. 73.
[67] Cohn-Bendit and Cohn-Bendit, *Obsolete Communism*, pp. 132-133.

the extra-parliamentary Left, students therefore warned for a 'thoughtless anti-Gaullism', which created the illusion that all the problems of democracy were solved with De Gaulle's departure.[68] In fact, French democracy was authoritarian because the political parties collaborated with De Gaulle in the establishment of 'a bourgeois dictatorship'. They offered no real opposition, because the 'supporters of the Bonapartism of the Fifth Republic could be found among the old parties, allied to lobbies and pressure groups'.[69] Also the Italian communist party was accused of being complicit in the development of postwar Italian democracy in which 'the state has developed along with capitalism to ensure the exploitation of the workers'.[70] Italy was in this sense essentially similar to the orthodox planning schemes of 'real existing socialism', and the PCI formed no alternative, because it was not against capitalism, 'but for state-regulated capitalism'.[71] Guido Viale, a leader of *Lotta Continua*, one of the most prominent revolutionary social movements, therefore stated that 'we should not aim for a strategy of bringing the working class to power that is led by the PCI'.[72]

As the parliamentary Left had done before, extra-parliamentary actors disputed the relationship between democracy and capitalism, because capitalism allegedly contributed to a 'verticalisation' of power relations that negated political equality and impeded the realisation of a true democracy.[73] This critique was directed specifically against the 'state capitalism' which had evolved in Western Europe after the War. So unlike the parliamentary Left, the extra-parliamentary Left advocated the democratisation of the relations of production, i.e. the social relationships at the workfloor, rather than the means of production. The movements embraced personal autonomy, self-determination of workers, and rejected bureaucracy and hierarchical relationships.[74] The struggle against the capitalist system was in the first place 'cultural'

[68] Various authors, 'The Revolutionary Action Committee of the Sorbonne' (1968), in: Feenberg and Freedman eds., *When Poetry Ruled the Streets*, pp. 152-168, at p. 164. Jackson concludes that the students fitted non of the various traditions of anti-Gaullism, see: Jackson, 'General De Gaulle and his Enemies', p. 60.
[69] Militants des comités d'action Sorbonne, Vincennes, Nanterre, *Apres mai 1968 les plans de la bourgeoisie et le mouvement révolutionnaire* (1969), p. 4 ; p. 15, found on http://edocs.lib.sfu.ca/cgi-bin/Mai68?Display=1268, accessed on 4-11-2013.
[70] S. Toscano, 'Appunti sulle istituzioni e sul partito' (1968), in: S. Toscano, *A partire dal 1968. Politico e movimenti di massa* (Milan: Gabriella Mazzotta editore, 1968), pp. 268-270, at p. 268.
[71] Movimento Studentesco, *La situazione attuale e i compiti politici del Movimento Studentesco* (Milan: Sapere Edizioni, 1969), p. 14.
[72] G. Viale, 'Cinquanta giorni di lotta alla FIAT' (1969), in: G. Viale, *S'avanza uno strano soldato* (Rome: Edizioni di Lotta Continua, 1973), pp. 49-58, at p. 56. See, on the *Lotta Continua* most notably: L. Bobbio, *Storia di Lotta continua* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1988).
[73] M. Capanna, *Movimento Studentesco. Crescita politica e azione rivoluzionaria* (Milan: Sapere, 1968), p. 7.
[74] Gassert, 'Narratives of Democratisation', p. 313.

and the emancipation of the masses from their position of inferiority by establishing anti-hierarchical modes of decision-making was the prime objective.[75] Guido Viale therefore claimed that 'our first battle is an internal one: getting rid of our fear for our masters'.[76] This entailed that in order to build 'true' democracies, citizens should shift their priorities from economic well-being to active participation in politics and society.

The democratic paradigm of the extra-parliamentary Left

The extra-parliamentary Left conceived democracy in the first place as a political practice and as an active process. Political participation of citizens was a prerequisite for a real democracy.[77] In the words of a French Action committee, the movements ensured that politics 'ceased to be a disgusting thing, […] of corrupt and careerist politicians and [instead] became everyone's right to play a role in social life'.[78] The students not only considered the university protests part of a broader quest for democratisation, but also contended that the protests were actually the core of what democracy was all about. Democracy, Cohn-Bendit reasoned, could be everywhere, in all political practices, because the practice itself was what constituted democracy. He illustrated this by stating that the organisation of action committees around Paris led to the involvement of local people in political decisions, after which 'democracy sprang from discussion of our immediate needs and the exigencies of the situation which required action'.[79]

Democracy was an activity which should be practiced also in spheres previously considered unpolitical. Initially, and most obviously, this quest to democratise society by means of active participation took place at the university. The university was seen as a symbol of the authoritarian way in which society was organised, and by addressing the lack of democracy at the university, this could be made more evident. As Dutschke stated, 'the 'democratisation of the universities', could consequently not be detached from 'the democratisation of society'.[80] In Trento, one of the centres of the student revolt in Italy,

[75] Capanna, *Movimento Studentesco*, p. 34.
[76] G. Viale, 'La Rivoluzione culturale nelle fabbriche italiane' (1969), in: Viale, *S'avanza uno strano soldato*, pp. 59-67, at p. 59.
[77] E. Cohen, 'L'ombre portée de Mai '68 en politique: démocratie et participation', *Vingtième siècle. Revue d'histoire*, vol. 98 (2009), pp. 19-28; F. Georgi, 'Jeux d'ombres: Mai, le mouvement social e l'autogestion (1968-2007), *Vingtième siecle. Revue d'histoire* vol. 98 (2008), pp. 29-41, at p. 41.
[78] Various authors, 'The Revolutionary Action Committee of the Sorbonne', p. 163.
[79] Cohn-Bendit and Cohn-Bendit, *Obsolete Communism*, p. 80.
[80] Dutschke, 'Demokratie, Universität und Gesellschaft', p. 61.

the movement stated that 'only a global vision of the university problems […] can achieve a democratic functioning of the university'.[81]

The notion that democracy was about participation and the establishment of anti-hierarchical relationships also affected relations at the work place. The extra-parliamentary Left's ideas on this theme went beyond co-decision and increased social equality. The way in which co-decision was conceived by the SPD was even denounced by the Socialist German Student Union (SDS) as a 'hypocritical campaign' of the 'technocratic aspect of the authoritarian state'.[82] But in France and Italy 'democracy' most visibly made its way to the factory floors. Particularly the Italian case is relevant in this regard, because, as Cohn-Bendit lamented, French workers were bribed into 'obedience' by the government's pay rise and did not regain the militancy and solidarity of May 1968.[83] In Italy, their quest to establish anti-hierarchical social relationships, actively participate, and go beyond established institutions coalesced in the actions and ideas of several revolutionary movements such as *Lotta continua*. The movement was founded during the massive wild strikes in Turin in the autumn of 1969 during which the trade unions feared to lose control of the working class completely.[84] These strikes were conceived in the first place as 'political action' and part of the quest for democratisation, because they centred on creating a new model of democracy on the workfloor outside of trade unions and political parties. In a description of the strikes in the *Lotta continua* of 6 December, the organisation described that: 'spontaneously, thousands of metal workers from a *corteo* inside the factory […]. A few workers explain in the improvised assembly the motivations of the struggle'. This spontaneous action ended, however, when representatives of the unions entered, and formulated clear economic demands. As a result, 'no political discussion was made, everything was immediately closed'.[85] The trade unions misttook a political struggle merely for an economic argument for higher salaries and benefits. As a

[81] 'La nuova fase politica del movimento studentesco trentino' (1968), in: Movimento Studentesco, *Documenti della rivolta universitaria* (Bari: Laterza, 1968), pp. 41-43, at p. 42.
[82] S.D.S. 'Erklärung des SDS Vorstsandes zur Bundestagswahl 1969', Neue Linke, Studentenbewegung, Außerparlamentarische Opposition in Deutschland Collection, inventory number 127, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.
[83] Cohn-Bendit and Cohn-Bendit, *Obsolete Communism*, p. 139.
[84] M. Tolomelli, '1968: Formen der Interaktion zwischen Studenten und Arbeiterbewegung in Italien und der Bundesrepublik', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, vol. 17 (1998), pp. 82-100, at p. 98.
[85] 'Cresce organizzazione interno alla fabbrica', *Lotta continua*, 6 December 1969, p. 3. Private Archive Giulia Cartini, Amsterdam.

consequence, they had 'lost all significance thanks to separation of economic from political struggle'.[86]

The rejection of the institutions of representative democracy was the natural consequence of conceiving democracy in terms of participation. Representation entailed that politicians formed an authoritarian leadership which governed over the people and impeded an active involvement of citizens in political affairs. Other than parties of the parliamentary Left, including the PSIUP and the PSU, the extra-parliamentary Left did not envision alternative modes of political decision-making and participation in addition to established modes of representation such as parliament, parties, and trade unions, but instead of these. They thereby questioned the democratic legitimacy of institutions in which democracy functioned, because, as Cohn-Bendit remarked, 'if the bourgeoisie is allowed to choose the arena, it will always cut the workers down to size'.[87]

The notion that representation was undemocratic touched most directly on the position of parliament and political parties. Postwar France and Italy were not unfamiliar with anti-party rhetoric, and neither was West Germany, even if critique there was largely limited to intellectuals. The rejection of party democracy by the extra-parliamentary Left differed from these traditions of anti-party critique, because it did not question the extensive power parties had, or challenged the way in which they deformed the expression of the general interest. Instead, political parties were now considered undemocratic, because they were based upon the principle of representation. All notions of authority should be banned from democratic practices, because, as Cohn-Bendit stated, 'democracy is not suborned by bad leadership, but by the very existence of leadership'.[88] He was perhaps the most prominent example of the rejection of parties with his argument that 'democracy cannot even exist within the Party, because the Party itself is not a democratic organisation'.[89] Similarly, Dutschke argued that political parties were undemocratic, because they featured hierarchical power relations and were manipulated from above instead of being 'organised from below'.[90] Because parties should 'no longer

[86] 'Tra servi e padroni. La funzione del sindacato nella società capitalistica', *Lotta continua*, 17 January 1970, p. 6. Private Archive Giulia Cartini, Amsterdam.
[87] Cohn-Bendit and Cohn-Bendit, *Obsolete Communism*, p. 139.
[88] *Ibid*., p. 250.
[89] *Ibid*.
[90] R. Dutschke, 'Unser Prozeβ der Revolution wird ein sehr langer Marsch sein. Träume, Wünsche, Hoffnungen', in: R. Dutschke, *Mein langer Marsch. Reden, Schriften und Tagebücher aus zwanzig Jahren* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowolt Verlag, 1980), pp. 11-29, at p. 13.

be allowed to determine what was to be understood by democracy',[91] extra-parliamentary movements in West Germany and Italy portrayed themselves also as 'anti-parliamentary', rather than merely 'extra-parliamentary' movements. Dutschke claimed to be in favour of the 'cancellation of the parliamentary system as it currently exists'.[92] Mario Capanna stated that parliament is 'the instrument of bourgeois power that manipulates the masses by giving them the illusion to conduct politics […]. For this reason, the change by the *Movimento studentesco* from its initial position of extra-parliamentary position to an anti-parliamentary position is a fundamental strategic choice'.[93]

The extra-parliamentary Left subsequently aimed to 'demystify electoralism' by exposing the hidden authoritarian tendencies that it harboured.[94] Instead of 'representation' by means of parliament and parties, it advocated and practiced a system of delegation and direct democracy. Delegates were different from representatives, because they were elected among the electoral body itself rather than from a list composed by political elites. They could also be recalled immediately, and did not have the liberty to vote as they pleased for a designated period of time. The continuous debate between delegates and their constituents enabled 'the autogestion of workers and students', which had as its goal 'to fully achieve free participation in production and consumption, elimination of hierarchies, setting up workers' councils elected by themselves'.[95] In France, protesters advocated the formation of a workers' government, 'based on the proposals of rank-and-file committees'.[96] French workers experimented with new forms of collective decision-making, in which rank and file committees practiced autogestion decided over the organisation of work, promotion and wages and hours, and elected their own delegates to negotiate with the firm. These delegates served only for short periods of time, half of them being replaced every three months, and could always

[91] Bergmann, Dutschke, Lefèvre and Rabehl, *Rebellion der Studenten*, p. 161. Regarding the alleged transformation of political parties in state organs the SPD was after '66 especially targeted: P.A. Richter, 'Die Außerparlamentarische Opposition in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1966 bis 1968', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, vol. 17 (1998), pp. 35-55, at p. 43.
[92] 'Außerparlamentarische oder antiparlamentarische Oppisition? Auszug aus einem SPIEGEL-interview mit Rudi Dutschke vom 1967', in: K.A. Otto, *Außerparlamentarische Opposition in Quellen und Dokumenten (1960-1970)* (Cologne: Paul Rugenstein Verlag, 1989), pp. 170-171, at p. 171.
[93] Capanna, *Movimento studentesco*, p. 27.
[94] La Voie, *Elections bourgeoises ou action révolutionnaire* (1968), found on: http://edocs.lib.sfu.ca/projects/mai68/pdfs/POST_May_Perspectives.pfd, accessed on 4-11-2013.
[95] Various authors, 'The Revolutionary Action Committee of the Sorbonne', p. 164.
[96] *Ibid*., p. 163.

be recalled in case workers felt they did not live up to their promises.[97] Similarly, the *Movimento studentesco* was locally administered by means of a system of assembly democracy in which all decisions were taken by the *assemblea* at a particular university.[98] In Florence, for instance, students claimed that 'the power in the faculty is exercised by the general assembly. Those who are part of the general assembly recognise publically the principle of power, which constitutes a critical commitment of all to active participation in the evolution of the faculty'.[99] These committees should become the backbone of a truly democratised society, because only they embodied the bottom-up and grass roots approach to politics that qualified as truly democratic. Viale approvingly cited workers at a FIAT factory in Turin who collectively refuted the demand of representation with the cry: 'We are all delegates'.[100] Along the same lines, Dutschke advocated the principle of 'council republics' to replace parliamentary politics. These council republics should organise decision-making process as closely situated to the people as possible and give everyone the opportunity to become politically involved and were essential in the 'radical democratisation' of West Germany.[101]

Lotta continua aimed to overcome the division between the representation and action of the working class, by making grass-roots initiatives, rather than the communist party, the frame of reference of working class democracy. The movement stated that there existed always 'a risk' that a vanguard divided the working class by leading it politically. 'From now on we must evade this risk: we must act in a way that the most conscious working comrades […] are not only the most resolute in conducting strikes […] but form also the effective and real political direction, having knowledge of that the struggle in the factory means […]'.[102] In Italy, the assembly system was adopted by workers in factories during and after the Hot Autumn of 1969.[103] By 1972, the country had over 60.000 elected delegates who represented over 6000 factory councils.[104]

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[97] *A new form of organisation in the factories*: http://edocs.lib.sfu.ca/projects/mai68/pdfs/A_New_Form_of_Organisation_in_the_Factories.pdf , visited 4-11-2013.
[98] Kurz and Tolomelli, 'Italy'.
[99] 'Mozione di 26 Febbraio. Firenze', in: Movimento Studentesco, *Documenti della rivolta*, pp. 362-363, at p. 362.
[100] Viale, 'La Rivoluzione culturale', p. 66.
[101] Dutschke, 'Demokratie, Universität und Gesellschaft', p. 64.
[102] 'Quale teoria e quanta? Il problema dello studio nell'organizzazione rivoluzionaria', *Lotta continua*, 17 January 1970, p. 3. Private Archive Giulia Cartini, Amsterdam.
[103] Lumley, *States of Emergency*, p. 231.
[104] Figures from: Giachetti, *L'autunno caldo*, p. 121.

The contribution of the extra-parliamentary Left and the question of organisation

The extra-parliamentary Left to a large extent responded to the same problems of democracy as many forces in parliament in the 1960s. In this respect, the critique of the extra-parliamentary on the homogenous way in which the main political parties gave meaning to democracy coalesced with similar objections of the parliamentary opposition. The distinctive feature of the extra-parliamentary movements' conception of democracy was their claim that representation was inherently undemocratic. Most parties of the parliamentary Left, most notably the SPD and the PSI, had embraced parliamentary democracy as an aim in itself around the turn of the 1960s and thereby also partially reduced the meaning of democracy to the settlement of conflicts of interest in parliament. The rise of the PSU and the PSIUP signified that this model was no longer sacrosanct, but these parties always envisioned alternative forms of decision-making in addition to, rather than instead of parliament. The extra-parliamentary intervention in the debate on democracy in the 1960s was innovative exactly in this regard. Representation was antithetical to democracy, because it implied hierarchical modes of decision making and impeded political participation.

In order to fulfil the promise of participation and absolute political equality, the extra-parliamentary Left claimed that only delegation and direct democracy qualified as democratic. This contestation of 'representation' was the major contribution of the extra-parliamentary Left to the debate on democracy in the 1960s. However, it was simultaneously also exactly the issue in which their conception of democracy most decisively failed to make a change in the way in which democracy was practiced. This does not negate the impact which '68 had on fostering egalitarian political relationships and its importance in the promotion of a culture of active citizenship. Yet the institutions of representative democracy, the major objective of their critique, withstood the attacks of the '68 generation unscathed. This was due first of all to the fact that any conception of democracy which did not feature existing representative structures were firmly rejected by virtually all parliamentary actors. But it was also related to the fact that the extra-parliamentary Left soon discovered that it was extremely difficult to sustain their activities based on ideals of absolute equality, full participation, and delegation, without

a formal and centralised organisation that could unite the various initiatives and determine a common political strategy.[105]

This problem was by Dutschke phrased as 'the problem of organisation as the problem of revolutionary existence'.[106] In France and West Germany, the movements with a comprehensive political programme dissolved largely into the new social movements of the 1970s, or into the parliamentary Left.[107] The West German SDS epitomised the failure to provide a convincing answer to the dilemma of organisation. Its final meeting concluded that 'no informal organisation can continue democracy, plebiscitary decision-making structures, and individual emancipation in society as a whole […] if the liberation of society is not immediately possible, the SDS should at the least guarantee democracy and emancipation for itself'.[108] In other words, it preferred to stay true to its ideals and abolish itself, rather than sacrifice those ideals in the pursuit of political power. In France, the role of the PSU as a bridge between the student movement and the world of high politics was crucial in this regard. Michel Rocard, PSU-leader, emphasised the importance of a decentralisation, alternative bodies of decision-making in schools, universities and factories and new centres of power in the economic sphere, and articulated many of the issues of '68 in parliament.[109]

In Italy, the 'problem of organisation' was solved in a manner contrary to that of France and West Germany, thanks to the long-lasting ties between the student and working class movements.[110] The Italian social movements had a more openly

[105] Both in France and West Germany, the major first blow for the extra-parliamentary movements came on 30 May 1968, in West Germany with the signing of the emergency laws, in France with the massive Gaullist contra-demonstration. See: T.S. Brown, *West Germany and the Global Sixties. The Anti-authoritarian Revolt 1963-1978* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 241-243; F. Georgi, '"Le pouvoir est dans la rue". La "Manifestation gaulliste" des Champs-Élysées (30 mai 1968)', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, no. 48 no. 4 (1995), pp. 46-60.

[106] R. Dutschke, Das Sich-Verweigern erfordert Guerilla-Mentalität (1967), found on: http://glasnost.de/hist/apo/67dutschke.html, accessed on 5 November 2013.

[107] Only a small minority of the extra-parliamentary Left Germany opted for organisations based on Marxist-Leninist principles, and even a smaller minority found a home in the terrorist organisations of the 1970s – which were thereby of a markedly different character than the ones in Italy: G. Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzent. Unsere kleine deutsche Kulturrevolution 1967-1977* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2001), p. 198; Tolomelli, *Terrorismo e società*, pp. 281-282; Hanshew, *Terror and Democracy*, p. 107.

[108] SDS, 'SDS-BS Öffentliche BV Sitzung. Aus dieser BV-Sitzung muss über die Auflösung des SDS-BV entschieden werden', Neue Linke, Studentenbewegung, Außerparlamentarische Opposition in Deutschland Collection, inventory number 127, International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

[109] P.S.U., *Tribune Socialiste* no. 371 (1968). Found on: http://edocs.lib.sfu.ca/cgi-bin/Mai68?Display=3385, accessed on 30 June 2015.See, also: Gordon, 'A "Mediterranean New Left"?', pp. 312-313.

[110] See, for instance: Tranfaglia, 'Parlamento, partiti e società civile nella crisi repubblicana'. According to the scholars Robert Lumley and Donatella Della Porta the radicalness of the extra-parliamentary Left was also caused by the fact that the rupture with fascism in Italy had been less severe than in Germany, especially in the light of neo-fascist violence and coup attempts causing suspicions of a state inclined to

revolutionary character and claimed to speak on behalf of a working class that was far less integrated in the system.[111] In terms of organisation, it meant that the extra-parliamentary Left's claim to speak on behalf of the working class started to gain prevalence over its desire to establish new models and practices of decision-making. Viale claimed in this regard that the main topic for *Lotta Continua* was 'not only that of organisation, […] but that of the growth of the worker's autonomy in the face of all aspects of despotism and capitalist control, the gradual transformation of the proletariat in a class in itself to a class for itself'.[112] More than in West Germany and France, the Italian extra-parliamentary Left answered the organisational issue by giving priority to the 'working class struggle' over the ideals of direct democracy and personal autonomy.

Political elites and '68

Even if the extra-parliamentary Left addressed many themes which were already debated among parliamentary actors, the unprecedented scale of the protests forced those in parliament to reconsider their conceptions of democracy. Obviously, the interaction between parliamentary and extra-parliamentary ideas on democracy was seen most of all on the Left of the political spectrum, where questions of participation and the relationship between democracy and capitalism had traditionally most prominently been addressed. The parliamentary Left, particularly in West Germany and France, reacted by articulating, and re-emphasizing its commitment to participation, co-decision and social equality. They refrained, however, from reconsidering the principles of representation and the existing institutions. In this respect, they formed a common front with the Christian democrats and Gaullists, who were less affected by the extra-parliamentary challenge, and re-stated their commitment to state authority and the general interest.

Christian Democrats, Gaullists and their response to '68

The Christian democrats and Gaullists were the embodiment of the establishment whose democratic credentials were challenged by the extra-parliamentary Left at the end of the 1960s. Yet conservatives turned the concept of democracy against extra-parliamentary critics who claimed to democratise society. Strauβ stated 'the democracies in Europe are

authoritarianism. Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence and the State*, p. 194; Lumley, *States of Emergency*, p. 237.

[111] Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence and the State*, p. 28.

[112] Viale, 'Cinquanta giorni di lotta alla FIAT', p. 57.

in a critical situation […] the hesitation and the weakness of the democratic authorities in defending the aggressive collective actions of the New Left reveals that democracy no longer has the certainty to be in the possession of all the legitimating values'.[113] The democratic credentials of those in power were juxtaposed with the alleged violent and antidemocratic nature of the extra-parliamentary Left. De Gaulle claimed that France was 'threatened by dictatorship' as a result of 'intimidation, intoxication and tyranny expressed by organised groups'.[114] According to the Strauβ the extra-parliamentary Left had little to do with democracy. It was rather an example of 'Left-wing terror', and he described it as 'cold rational hate against the law, civilisation and order, the envy of the anti-socials, the destructiveness of negative elements, who camouflage their criminal stance to society with political motives'.[115]

Instead of pursuing democracy in every sphere of society, the state should secure the expression of the general interest, which was threatened by pluralism, continuous debate, and participation. Rainer Barzel, the leader of the CDU, argued that conflicts in a democracy were only desirable 'as long as they do not go against the core values of others'.[116] The extra-parliamentary Left, by contrast, aimed 'to make the sociological fact of pluralist society into a qualitative, absolute standard. Because society is pluralist, the state may, the majority should never decide anything […] what not *communis opinion* is'.[117] Similarly, Moro claimed that 'security comes first' and that 'the democratic state can and will not consent any initiative to violence and disorder aimed at making the university the platform of a political game […] understanding and respect do not mean the abdication of the state in its duties of the guarantee of democracy against all disorders and violence, no matter what part they are coming from'. [118] In contrast to active participation, Christian democrats and Gaullists reaffirmed their conception of democracy in which representative institutions centred on the expression of the general interest. In France, the Gaullists stressed the ties between the president and the people as well as the position of parliament and in Italy and West Germany Christian democrats emphasised parliament and parties.

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[113] F.J. Strauβ, 'Über die APO' (1968), in: F.J. Strauβ, *Das Konzept der deutsche Rechten. Aus Reden und Schriften des F.J. Strauβ* (Cologne: Pahl Rugenstein Verlag, 1971), pp. 43-48, at pp. 44-45.
[114] C. de Gaulle, 'Allocution radiodiffusée et télévisée prononcée au palais de l'Élysée (30 May 1968), in: C. de Gaulle, *Discours et Messages. Vers le terme 1966-1969* (Paris: Plon, 1970), pp. 291-293, at p. 293.
[115] Strauβ, 'Über die APO', p. 46.
[116] Barzel, *Gesichtspunkte eines Deutschen*, p. 273.
[117] *Ibid*., p. 94.
[118] A. Moro, 'Invita alla partecipazione' (1968), in: Moro, *Scritti e discorsi. Volume IV*, pp. 2498-2507.

Along these lines, the West German Christian democrats rejected the attempt to democratise all sections of society and asserted that the SPD had become infected with the extra-parliamentary Left's ideology.[119] Helmut Kohl claimed that both the system of council republics and democratic socialism would mean a step backwards for democracy. 'Democratisation' had to be 'compatible' with the atmosphere in which it was introduced, he stated, and about which atmospheres this should be, 'society as a whole' rather than workers or students should decide, again pointing to the notion of the common will.[120] Strauβ denounced the aim to democratise society as 'romanticised democracy'. This 'romanticised democracy' was any conception of democracy as more than a form of government and its practice in spheres which should be left unpoliticised. Strauβ for instance declared the economy for 'impossible to democratise'.[121]

The French 'link' between president and people over the heads of other political representatives was epitomised by the Gaullist counter rally on the 30th of May 1968 where André Malraux claimed that De Gaulle enjoyed 'historic power' supported by the will of the people.[122] But the glorification of the link between the president and the people coincided with a tribute to parliamentary democracy. In the face of the supposed threats and disorders, De Gaulle claimed that he was defending democratic government and took 'the only acceptable road, that of democracy', by calling snap parliamentary elections, which led to a massive Gaullist victory.[123] Even when the Gaullists seemed susceptible to the 1968 critique of a highly centralised and authoritarian Fifth Republic, they in fact resorted to the core of Gaullist notion of democracy. This became evident in De Gaulle's proposal of a referendum on regional and Senate reform in 1969. The referendum most notably entailed that the Senate would be elected indirectly and be composed of

[119] R. Barzel, 'Regierungsprogramm CDU 1972. Wir bauen der Fortschritt auf Stabilität' (1972), found on: http://www.kas.de/upload/ACDP/CDU/Programme_Bundestag/1972_Regierungsprogramm_Wir-bauen-den-Fortschritt-auf-Stabilitaet.pdf. Accessed on 13 November 2013; F. Bösch, 'Die Krise als Chance. Die Neuformierung der Christdemokraten in den siebziger Jahren', in: K.H. Jarausch eds., *Das Ende der Zuversicht? Die siebziger Jahre als Geschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), pp. 296-309, at p. 299.

[120] H. Kohl, *Zwischen Ideologie und Pragmatismus. Aspekte und Ansichten zu Grundfragen der Politik* (Stuttgart: Verlag Bonn Aktuell, 1973), p. 75.

[121] F.J. Strauβ, 'Strauβ erklärt Wirtschaftsleben für nicht demokratisierbar' (1968), in: Strauβ, *Das Konzept der deutsche Rechten*, pp. 39-40.

[122] A. Malraux, 'Discours prononcé au parc des expositions' (1968), in: A. Malraux, *Essais. Œuvres Complètes VI* (Paris: Gallimard, 2010), pp. 512-517. The rally was the 'biggest demonstration of all' in 1968, see: A. Reader and K. Wadia, *The May 1968 Evens in France: Reproductions and Interpretations* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), p. 19. See also: Georgi, '"Le pouvoir est dans la rue"', pp. 56-57.

[123] De Gaulle, 'Allocution radiodiffusée et télévisée prononcée au palais de l'Élysée (30 May 1968), at p. 292.

socioeconomic interest groups.[124] The project was presented as a way to ensure more 'direct interaction and participation of the French in the affairs of the state'.[125] De Gaulle stated that French democracy needed was 'the Participation, a reform that is certainly both of the long term and far-reaching'.[126] However, the project turned the Senate into an unelected and advisory body and offered little news: the project came straight out of the Bayeux plan of 1946.[127] Instead of adapting its conception of democracy to the cries of participation, De Gaulle therefore resorted to the core of the Gaullist political programme of twenty years earlier. He lost the referendum and was succeeded by Georges Pompidou.

In Italy, the DC saw the contestation of '68 and '69 as a sign that Italy's political class was unable to close the gap between state and society that had been one of the motivations for the formation of the Centre-left, just as Rumor had already warned for at the party's 1967 congress.[128] DC-leader Flaminio Piccoli spoke at the party congress in 1969 about a 'crisis of political parties' and a 'growth of crisis in the political class'.[129] Mariano Rumor made a similar analysis when he claimed that the main challenge for Italian democracy lay in the defying of the party system and pointed to the necessity for political change: 'in particular in regard to the young this need for participation seems ever more pressing in order to avoid a gap between country and the political class […] the theme of participation is essential for the survival and the democratic development of our country'.[130] These remarks were no sign that the DC, more than the CDU or the Gaullists, endeavoured to adopt the issues of the extra-parliamentary Left, but rather demonstrate that the perception of a crisis of Italy's democracy permeated also the discourse of the country's leading party. The DC was unable to initiate the political change Italy needed and to contribute to the integration of citizens and state which had been on the agenda for so long. The DC rejected the claim that the student contestations were the sign of a

[124] Historians generally regard this referendum as a failed instrument to reassert De Gaulle's personal authority: See for instance: Berstein, *The Republic of De Gaulle*, p. 238.
[125] C. de Gaulle, 'Allocution radiodiffusée et télévisée prononcée au palais de l'Élysée (11 March 1969), in: De Gaulle, *Vers le terme*, pp. 384-389.
[126] *Ibid*., p. 386.
[127] Broche, *Une histoire des antigaullismes*, p. 541.
[128] The response of the DC to '68 remains a surprisingly little studied topic in Italian historiography. See for an overview of the DC in these years: Castellani, 'La Democrazia cristiana dal Centro-sinistra al delitto Moro'; Malgeri, *L'Italia democristiana*, pp. 100-106.
[129] F. Piccoli, 'Idee, struttura e iniziative della Democrazia cristiana per il rinnovamento delle istituzione nell'attuazione della Costituzione e nello sviluppo della società nazionale' (1969), in: Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia cristiana IV*, pp. 457-506, at p. 470.
[130] M. Rumor, 'La Democrazia cristiana raccoglie le sfide del futuro', (1968), in: M. Rumor, *Discorsi sulla Democrazia cristiana* (Milan: Franco Angelli, 2010), pp. 372-381, at p. 375.

crisis of 'a political class' as such and reaffirmed the centrality of representative institutions, most notably that of the parties and parliament,[131] and the party system should be 'defended'.[132]

So instead of being susceptible to demands for more citizen participation, the DC held that the solutions to the sentiment of democratic crisis lay within the party system. In his speech at the DC's congress in 1973, Moro observed that while society was changing quickly, the 'political system has never managed to find a rhythm of adapting'.[133] Political change was, however, necessary, because Italy's democracy faced a dangerous polarisation and 'risks moving into the frontal contraposition of two blocs'.[134] According to Moro, the core of the problem of this polarisation was the impossibility of government alternation. He therefore called for a dialogue with the PCI and urged the communists to do more to alter its conception of democracy to 'enter the game'.[135] However, this cautious rapprochement with the communists was also a confirmation of the primacy of political parties in guiding the development of the country, and still centred on the centrality of the DC in Italian democracy. Moro called upon his party to 'become an alternative to itself' in order to contribute to the renewal of Italian democracy.[136] So the main Italian party resorted to the principles of party democracy and elite collaboration in the face of heightening social and political tensions.

Conceptions of democracy among the parliamentary Left and '68

The interaction of ideas on democracy between forces inside and outside parliament was much more visible among the parliamentary Left, most notably, with the PSIUP and the PSU. The PSIUP stood closest to the student and worker's movements and witnessed its electoral high tide in 1968, when it captured 4% of the vote.[137] Its conceptions of democracy increasingly paid tribute to participation, workers' autonomy, and alternatives to state-led capitalism. At its congress in 1969, the party moved beyond pure parliamentarianism. It stated that 'in this revolt the necessity becomes clear to create new

[131] Galli concludes that the meaning and practice of democracy was reduced to purely representative democracy by means of parties and parliament, see: Galli, *Storia della DC 1943-1993*, p. 253.
[132] Rumor, 'La Democrazia cristiana raccoglie le sfide del futuro', p. 377.
[133] A. Moro, *Per una iniziativa politica della Democrazia cristiana* (Rome: Agenzia Progetto, 1973), p. 95.
[134] *Ibid*., p. 110.
[135] *Ibid*., pp. 126-127.
[136] *Ibid*., p. 128. See, also: G. Cotturi, 'Moro e la transizione interrotta', *Studi Storici*, vol. 37 no. 2 (1996), pp. 489-511, at pp. 495-497.
[137] Giachetti, *L'autunno caldo*, p. 141.

forms of democratic life, of control, and self-government in political life'.[138] The PSIUP stated that '[we] do not intend a legal and parliamentarian road that has no prospects of success […] we intend to construct a revolutionary strategy of the working class and its organisations, based upon the development of a new and more advanced relationship between party and class, able to gather and express the entire potential of class struggle, developing new ways of *autogestione* in social struggles and new centres of democratic power opposed to those of the capitalist state'.[139]

The PSU was the most obvious link between the extra-parliamentary and the Old Left, launching an attack both against Gaullism and the Left-wing opposition, which, for Rocard harboured a tension between *autogestion* and the planning of the economy.[140] At the party's 1969 congress the party stated that what really counted, was not the conquest of governmental power, but the 'conquest of real power', which meant that the battle for power 'primarily should take place at the work place'.[141] There should consequently be 'a mobilisation of the masses at all the levels'. The PSU deliberately advocated politics beyond parliaments and parties, because 'the revolutionary movement of the masses is the most authentic expression of democracy'. In the case of a 'crisis of the regime, illegal means such as strikes, manifestations, occupations of public spaces and buildings, and formation of counter-power units are all democratic actions of the masses'.[142] Extra-parliamentary politics were thereby considered completely democratically legitimate.

'1968' was of great importance for the relation between the French Left and democracy in three other aspects. First of all, the massive defeat of the Left in the parliamentary elections of 1968 were the definite catalyst in the formation of the *Parti Socialiste* in which the French non-communist Left united under the leadership of Mitterrand.[143] The Épinay congress displayed a dual tribute to the traditional critique on the centralised and presidential character of the Fifth Republic and the participatory

[138] PSIUP, *Tesi approvati del 2 Congresso', in: PSIUP, 2 Congresso Nazionale del PSIUP. Unità della sinistra per una alternative al centrosinistra e per un nuovo internazionalismo proletario. Napoli 18-21 dicembre 1969* (Rome, 1969), pp. 7-39, at p. 23
[139] *Ibid*., p. 21.
[140] M. Rocard, *Le P.S.U. et l'avenir socialiste de la France* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1969), p. 72.
[141] P.S.U. 'Les 17 thèses du P.S.U. Adoptées au Congrès du Dijon mars 1969' (1969), in: M. Rocard, *Le P.S.U. et l'avenir de la France* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1969), pp. 123-183, at p. 143.
[142] *Ibid*., p. 164.
[143] J. Moreau, 'Le congrès d'Épinay-sur-Seine du parti socialiste', *Vingtième siècle. Revue d'histoire*, vol. 65 no. 1 (2000), pp. 81-96; Bergounioux and Grunberg, *L'ambition et le remords*, pp. 281-312. In a way the unification of the Left was the result of the 1962 reforms of De Gaulle, which greatly contributed to the polarisation of French politics in two poles, rather than a broad variety of poltical parties: Knapp, *Parties and the Party System in France*, pp. 39-41.

claims of the 1968 movements.[144] The congress famously stated that there could be 'no real democracy in a capitalist society', and that the party proclaimed itself to be of revolutionary nature.[145] Socialism was understood not only in terms of nationalisation of the means of production, but also as a process of worker's participation. Mitterrand endorsed the *autogestion* by claiming that 'change is coming to France […] change in the relationship between an omnipotent state and its excessive administration with citizens, local authorities and local communities. Change in the very concept of democracy, which should become a daily experience for fully responsible citizens'.[146] In the spirit of '68, Mitterrand had called the alternative to De Gaulle a 'liberal socialism'.[147]

Second, at the Épinay congress, Mitterrand made an overture to the PCF. He denounced 'ideological dialogue' and proposed an 'alliance in elections'.[148] This initiative was answered by the PCF, which after the events of '68 in both Paris and the brutal crushing of the Prague Spring made an effort to become integrated in the Fifth Republic's party system.[149] In fact, the Soviet intervention in Prague triggered a unique rejection of the Soviet Union by the PCF and was the prelude to a decade of relative autonomy from Moscow.[150] The PS and the PCF agreed on a common programme in 1972, which was exemplary of the way in which the values of '68 entered Left-wing vocabulary. The document is sometimes referred to as a pragmatic move which for both parties had primarily electoral reasons,[151] but exposes how conceptions of democracy on the French Left developed during the 1970s. The Left confirmed that a political democracy could not be separated from an economic democracy. Only when democracy was conceived as more than political institutions and included social equality, there could be, in the words of PCF-leader Georges Marchais 'an advanced democracy. Which means a democracy that our country has never known before and which manifests itself in political and economic reforms with a social significance without precedent […] In short, an advanced social and

[144] See also: Winock, 'Le parti socialiste dans le système politique français', p. 16.
[145] Bergounioux and Grunberg, *Le long remords du pouvoir*, p. 257.
[146] F. Mitterrand, '1974: les élections présidentielles et ses conséquences', in: Mitterrand, *Politique*, pp. 555-571, at p. 568.
[147] F. Mitterrand, 'Mai 68 et ses conséquences' (1968), in: Mitterrand, *Politique*, pp. 478-507, p. 489. See also: J-F. Sirinelli, *Mai 68. L'événement Janus* (Paris: Fayard, 2008), p. 280.
[148] F. Mitterrand, 'Discours au Congrès de l'unité des socialistes. Épinay, 13 Juin 1971', in: M. Ouraoui ed., *Les Grands Discours socialistes français du XXe siècle* (Paris: Bibliothèque Complexe, 2007), pp. 142-161, at p. 159.
[149] M. Bracke, *Which Détente? Whose Socialism? West European Communism and the Czechoslovak Crisis* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2007), p. 310.
[150] M. Lazar, *Le communisme, une passion française* (Paris: Perrin, 2002), p. 39.
[151] Courtois and Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste français*, p. 352.

economic democracy that the success of this programme permits […] a transition towards socialism'.[152]

The Common Programme was also an example of how the PCF reconfigured its conception of democracy in terms of an increased acceptance of civil liberties, individual freedoms, and political pluralism.[153] These liberties were now no longer seen primarily through the perspective of working class rights, but as the 'democracy and liberty of everyone. […] We should guarantee individual liberties, liberty of thought, freedom and expression'.[154] Marchais claimed that the PCF had a 'rich conception of democracy', in which universal suffrage, political party pluralism, local autonomy, free cultural associations all had a place.[155] In 1973, party secretary Georges Marchais even wrote a pamphlet, *Le défi démocratique*, in which he refuted claims that a socialist society would necessarily be a bureaucratic society limiting personal freedom. Instead, 'we are a long way from Étatism, from bureaucratic centralisation'. On the contrary, Marchais claimed that 'the communist ideal is a society in which members auto govern themselves'.[156]

Third, the French Left increasingly came to terms with the institutional outline of the Fifth Republic after '68. This did not preclude a continued critical assessment of the Fifth Republic, but this was certainly less polemic than during the presidency of De Gaulle. In his 1973 pamphlet *Le rose au poing*, Mitterrand outlined a list of constitutional reforms in order to diminish the power of the president, strengthen that of parliament, and decentralise the state.[157] However, the common programme between PCF and PS no longer advocated an entirely new constitutional outline. Mitterrand's conviction that the constitution had to be revised rather than replaced thereby gained ground on the Left and contributed to an increased acceptance of the Fifth Republic. The prime objective of the Left, and particularly that of the PS, became to gain power, and Mitterrand saw that the Fifth Republic's outline offered many opportunities in this regard.[158]

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[152] G. Marchais, *Préface. Programme Commun du gouvernement du Parti communiste français et du Parti socialiste (27 juin 1972)* (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1972), pp. 38-39.
[153] Courtois and Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste français*, p. 354.
[154] Parti Socialiste and Parti Communiste Français, *Programme Commun du gouvernement du Parti communiste français et du Parti socialiste (27 juin 1972)* (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1972), p. 143.
[155] G. Marchais, *Le Défi Démocratique* (Paris: Éditions Grasset & Fasquelle, 1973), p. 122.
[156] *Ibid*., p. 101.
[157] F. Mitterrand, *La Rose au poing* (Paris: Flammarion, 1973).
[158] See, for instance: Bergounioux, 'Socialisme français et social-démocratie européenne', p. 101; Moreau, 'Le congrès d'Épinay-sur-Seine du parti socialiste', pp. 81-96; Bergounioux and Grunberg, *L'ambition et le remords*, p. 241.

In West Germany, the social-liberal coalition's understanding of democracy also captured key themes of the extra-parliamentary Left. In the light of the traditional social democratic claim that democracy should be practiced at the level of society, it is clear why the formation of the SPD-FDP government in 1969 has been as the 'second foundation' of the Federal Republic.[159] The rise of the extra-parliamentary Left reinforced the appreciation of civic participation and the democratisation of society which were visible earlier in the 1960s among progressive politicians. The Brandt-government claimed that 'we want to dare more democracy. We will […] work towards this goal not solely by hearings in parliament, but also by constantly being in touch with representative groups of our people, by a full disclosure of government's policy, by giving every citizen the opportunity to participate in the reform of state and society […]. Co-decision in the various spheres of our society will be a dynamic force in the coming years. We cannot create the perfect democracy. We want a society which offers more freedom and more shared responsibility'.[160] Democracy should consequently be conceived not solely in terms of the state, but 'it must also freely be practiced in society'.[161]

The changing character of the FDP was illustrative of the way in which extra-parliamentary and parliamentary ideas on democracy influenced each other around the turn of the 1970s. The liberals increasingly turned into a progressive party which advocated the involvement of citizens in political affairs.[162] The FDP for instance endorsed the direct election of the federal president, referenda on major issues, increased transparency of parliament, a lowering of the voting age, and more influence of ordinary people in the organisation of political parties.[163] The party's *Freiburger Thesen* were an explicit response to the extra-parliamentary Left, and designed to formulate a 'political practice for this new spirit of the democratisation of society'. It believed the youth

[159] K. Sontheimer, *So war Deutschland nie. Anmerkungen zur politischen Kultur der Bundesrepublik* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1990), p. 90. Cf: Schönhoven, *Wendejahre*, p. 687. The expression of many of the extra-parliamentary issues by the parliamentary Left has been considered the 'socialisation' of the '68 critique, see: T. Etzemüller, *1968 – Ein Riss in der Geschichte?* (Konstanz: UKV Verlagsgesellschaft, 2005), p. 195.
[160] W. Brandt, 'Aus der Regierungserklärung des Bundeskanzlers Brandt vor dem Deutschen Bundestag' (1969), in: Brandt, *Berliner Ausgabe. Band 7*, pp. 218-224, at p. 219, p. 220.
[161] W. Brandt, 'Perspektiven der neuen Mitten. Aus der Rede des Bundeskanzlers, Brandt, anlässlich der Verleihung des Theodor-Heuss-Preises in München' (1974), in: Brandt, *Berliner Ausgabe. Band 7*, pp. 480-490, at p. 486. See, also: Wolfrum, *Die geglückte Demokratie*, p. 315; Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt*, p. 203.
[162] See also: Dittberner, *FDP – Partei der Zweiten Wahl*, pp. 17-18.
[163] F.D.P., 'Praktische Politik für Deutschland', pp. 200-201.

protests denoted 'deep changes in consciousness', no less than the French Revolution grounded upon the notion of freedom, equality and fraternity.[164]

The Italian communists and the 'historic compromise'

In comparison with the PS and the SPD, the main Left-wing party in Italy was less responsive to the conceptions of democracy put forward by the extra-parliamentary Left. Whereas it would have been the most natural ally of the extra-parliamentary Left, the PCI responded 'by closing itself off, expelling those party members who came closest to expressing activist agendas at the centre of public attention in the *biennio rosso* of 1968-1969'.[165] This was perhaps epitomised by the party's expulsion of the young intellectual Rossana Rossanda for her critical assessment of how the communists regarded the '68 movements. Rossanda called it a 'grave error' of the PCI to regard the movements with disdain.[166] The PCI allegedly refused to recognise that the student movement was a 'political actor'. As such, it had an entirely different model of political organisation than the Old Left, and 'this originality in its formation creates a strong diffidence to being a party: the students [are] egalitarian, the parties rigidly centralised and hierarchical'.[167] The stance of the PCI contributed to the fact that the themes of the extra-parliamentary Left were least visible in the democratic discourse of the major Left-wing party precisely in the country where the tensions were highest.

This does not mean that the PCI's conception of democracy was unaltered after '68. Its changes were, however, not only the result of the increased distance from Moscow after its crackdown of the Prague Spring, but also of the polarisation and tensions in Italy, which reached heights unparalleled in Western Europe. The country not only faced the continued dichotomy between Christian democrats and communists, but also sustained working class militancy into the early 1970s. Just after the Hot Autumn of 1969, the terrorist bombing of a bank at the Piazza Fontana in Milan moreover launched the beginning of the 'Strategy of tension'. Although anarchists were initially blamed for the bombing, and an innocent suspect died in police custody under never clarified

[164] F.D.P., *Freiburger Thesen zur Gesellschaftspolitik der Freien Demokratischen Partei* (1971), found on: http://www.freiheit.org/files/288/1971_Freiburger_Thesen.pdf, accessed on 7 November 2013.
[165] Horn, *The Spirit of '68*, p. 194; See on the negative reply of the PCI to '68 also: Crainz, *Il paese mancato*, p. 312; Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, p. 307. Cf with Höbel, who has a more positive account of the openness of the PCI to the student movement: A. Höbel, 'Il Pci di Longo e il '68 studentesco', *Studi Storici*, vol. 45 no. 2 (2004), pp. 419-459, in particular p. 458.
[166] R. Rossanda, *L'anno degli studenti* (Bari: De Donato editore, 1968), p. 135.
[167] *Ibid*., p. 111.

circumstances, it was soon clear that forces with links to the security services had been responsible. The true nature and extent of the links between neo-fascists and the security services is still a largely unresolved issue, but the essence of the Strategy of Tension was a somehow coordinated effort by neo-fascists and elements within the security services to prevent an eventual Communist entrance into government by means of launching terrorist attacks which would turn the political opinion favourable to a right-wing, possibly even authoritarian solution.[168] This led to numerous neo-fascist terrorist attacks, as well as another failed coup in 1970, this time by General Junio Borghese.[169] The events in Chile, where the democratically elected socialist leader Salvador Allende was disposed of in Pinochet's right-wing coup, confirmed Berlinguer's fears that even a hypothetical Left-wing government in Italy would not secure the future of democracy in the country.[170] Whereas the state and the republic had previously been two different entities for the PCI, the state had now to be defended in order to defend the republic.[171]

These tensions and the continued exclusion of the PCI from government affected the way in which the communists conceptualised democracy after 1968. The new party leader Enrico Berlinguer aimed to overcome the domestic polarisation which, he feared, could be a threat to the very existence of the PCI and Italian democracy.[172] Berlinguer therefore proposed the 'democratic turn' to 'block a reactionary attack on our democracy'.[173] This 'democratic turn' aimed to establish democratic legitimacy of the PCI in the eyes of the DC, to reconcile the country's opposing subcultures, and implied a more independent line from Moscow.[174] Berlinguer contended that 'in a country like Italy, a new perspective can only be realised by the collaboration of the large popular currents: communist, socialist, Catholic. In this collaboration the unity of the Left is necessary, but

[168] See, on the strategy of tension: Ferraresi, *Minacce alla democrazia*, pp. 167-173. Cf: P. Cooke and A. Cento Bull, *Ending Terrorism in Italy* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 3, who consider the right-wing attacks to diffuse to talk of a deliberate strategy.
[169] Ferraresi, *Minacce alla democrazia*, pp. 222-224; Paggi, 'Violenza e democrazia nella storia della Repubblica', pp. 949-951; Crainz, *Il paese mancato*, pp. 372-373.
[170] F. Barbagallo, 'Enrico Berlinguer, il compromesso storico e l'alternativa democratica', *Studi Storici*, vol. 45 no. 4 (2004), pp. 939-949, esp. at p. 940.
[171] Paggi, 'Violenza e democrazia nella storia della Repubblica', p. 951.
[172] S. Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo* (Turin: Einaudi editore, 2006), p. 18.
[173] E. Berlinguer, *Per un governo di svolta democratica. Il testo integrale del rapporto tenuto al XIII Congresso nazionale del Partito comunista italiano* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1972), p. 80.
[174] Vittoria, *Storia del PCI*, p. 115. Both motivations were in fact, as Silvio Pons has demonstrated, deeply connected: in the search for governmental legitimacy at home, the cancellation of the veto of the Americans on government participation of the PCI was crucial, which in turn demanded a rupture with Moscow: Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, p. 36. It can alternatively be seen as a continuation of Togliatti's line in the sense that it re-established the antifascist collaboration as centre of Italian democracy, see: Bedeschi, *La prima repubblica*, p. 230.

not sufficient […]. This is the road to an alternative government, based on the collaboration between the large popular, democratic and antifascist currents'.[175] Berlinguer proposed more than a mere political alliance. He believed that the crisis of Italy's democracy could only be overcome by the establishment of a broad consensus on the antifascist and constitutional values of the country: 'a determined system of political relationships that favours a convergence and collaboration between all the democratic and popular forces […] a historic compromise between the forces that assemble and represent the grand majority of the Italian people'.[176]

In order to achieve this 'historic compromise', Berlinguer proposed 'a new model of socialism', which in two ways signified a convergence towards the way in which the DC conceptualised democracy. First of all, and much clearer than under Togliatti, the DC was recognised as a democratic force: 'We always recognised the link between the DC and the dominant groups of the bourgeoisie', Berlinguer argued. But now he added that in the DC 'assemble also other forces and social and economic interests'.[177] Secondly, Berlinguer, aimed to seek governmental legitimacy of the PCI by accentuating the common ground in the conceptions of democracy of PCI and the DC. This line was made more explicit later in the 1970s, but it was already visible in the embracement of parliamentary democracy as an aim in itself, rather than as a stepping stone to socialism. Berlinguer claimed that the communists 'should not resort to foolish anti-parliamentarianism […]. We consider parliament an essential institution of the Italian political life, and not only today, but also in the phase of our transformation to socialism and during its construction. […] Parliament can consequently not, as in the time of Lenin or as happens in other countries, be conceived only as a platform to denounce the evils of capitalism and bourgeois governments in order to propagate socialism'.[178] It made the 'Eurocommunism' of the PCI, of which the proposal for a 'democratic turn' in 1972 was only the beginning, markedly different from that of the PCF. As the historian Silvio Pons has demonstrated, the PCF, by making the Common programme with the PS, was more integrated in the French party system, stood in closer relationship to the socialists, and more easily adopted references to individual liberties and constitutional rights. However, its move was motivated by

[175] Berlinguer, *Per un governo di svolta democratica*, p. 79; 84.
[176] E. Berlinguer, 'Riflessione sull'Italia dopo i fatti di Cile' (1973), in: E. Berlinguer, *La crisi italiana* (Editrice l'Unità, 1985), pp. 45-75, at p. 69, p. 75.
[177] *Ibid*., p. 72. See also: G. Amendola*, La crisi italiana* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1971), p. 60, for similar remarks.
[178] Berlinguer, 'Riflessione sull'Italia dopo i fatti di Cile', p. 60.

tactical considerations, whereas the PCI made an autonomous move to reconfigure the understanding of democracy under the threat of an anti-democratic coup.[179]

Berlinguer's attempt to reach out to the DC coincided with Moro's plea for a prudent and slow involvement of the PCI in Italian democracy.[180] It pointed exactly to one of the major problems of Italian democracy in the 1970s: the polarisation was partially caused by a lack of government alternation and the perception of an increased detachment of the political parties from the rest of society, but the extent of the polarisation actually drew these parties more tightly together, without the opportunity of an alternative to the long rule of the DC in sight. The attempt to make the PCI fit for government was therefore also a project which reaffirmed the primacy of political parties and parliamentary politics in Italian democracy, while exactly these two institutions were so often accused of malfunctioning.

'68 and the strengthening of a cross-party consensus on democracy

The flexibility of the parliamentary Left, especially in France and West Germany, in responding to the issues raised by the extra-parliamentary actors testifies to the fact that these movements captured upon themes which stood already at the forefront of the political debate in the 1960s. Supposed authoritarian governments, civil liberties, a more active notion of citizenship, and critique on capitalism were themes with which the perceived problems of democracy were denoted in the 1960s, most notably by the parties like the PSU and the PSIUP, but more generally among Left-wing actors. The adoption of these themes was far less visible on the part of the Gaullists and Christian democrats in the early 1970s, which all continued to emphasise state authority, stability, and the general interest.

This makes it tempting to conclude that divisions between the parliamentary Left and the conservative side of the spectrum were sharpened by the extra-parliamentary challenge, exactly because of the fact that the extra-parliamentary Left reignited themes which had stood at the heart of the debate between the Left and Christian democrats and Gaullists in the 1940s and 1950s, such as co-decision of workers, the relationship between political and economic democracy, and participation. However, while the parliamentary

[179] Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, pp. 30-31.
[180] A. Giovagnoli, *Il caso Moro. Una tragedia repubblicana* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2005), pp. 14-16; Barbagallo, 'Enrico Berlinguer, il compromesso storico e l'alternativa democratica'; Cotturi, 'Moro e la transizione interrotta'.

Left and Right certainly disagreed over these issues, and parliamentary actors, especially those from the Left, now made increasing references to *autogestion* and participation as core principles of democracy, they were united in their rejection of the most far-reaching and innovative aspects of the extra-parliamentary critique, namely that representation was undemocratic. Virtually all parliamentary actors rallied to the defence of representative institutions and were more in agreement in their conceptions of democracy in the 1970s than at any time since the War. This meant that the protests of '68 strengthened the trend towards increased convergence among political elites which was under way since the turn of the 1960s.

This convergence even counted for France, were the nature of representative institutions had always divided Gaullists and anti-Gaullists, but the political spectrum in the early 1970s was more consensual when it came to the question of the democratic legitimacy of the Fifth Republic. The question of parliamentary versus presidential democracy was less violently fought over than a decade earlier. With the formation of the PS and its Common Programme with the communists, a Left-wing opposition contested the right wing of the spectrum which was increasingly divided after De Gaulle left office.[181] The PCF now agreed with Mitterrand that constitutional changes should take place within the framework of the Fifth Republic, rather than outside of it.[182] Guy Mollet concluded in 1973 that the constitution was no longer the topic of debate or of popular protests, not even among the Left: The antagonists of the Gaullists 'are not very concerned' with the functioning of the constitution, and he observed that 'the protests of the French Left against the malfunctioning of our institutions are rare and timid'.[183]

This increased agreement on the principles of existing representative institutions among the major parties was even more visible in the case of West Germany and Italy. The CDU and CSU's emphasis of parliament and political parties created a common ground with the SPD, because these were exactly the democratic principles on which the SPD was unwilling to compromise in the face of the extra-parliamentary Left.[184] Brandt instead

[181] The conquest of power, rather than mere opposition, became the explicit aim of the PS, see: Moreau, 'Le congrès d'Épinay-sur-Seine du parti socialiste', p. 92.
[182] And, therefore, in the spirit of Mitterrand, envisioned only the adaption of constitutional articles, rather than the complete reversal of the constitution, see: Parti Socialiste and Parti Communiste Français, *Programme Commun du gouvernement*, p. 154.
[183] G. Mollet, *Quinze ans après 1958-1973* (Paris: Éditions Albin Michel, 1973), p. 145.
[184] This was partially caused by the fact that 'without a clear demarcation from the Left-radical spectrum that extended into its own student organisation, the SPD could not win credibility and trust of moderate voters', see: Schönhoven, *Wendejahre*, p. 613.

held that 'as democratic parties, the Christian democrats, Free Democrats and the Social Democrats all shared a set of political *Gemeinsamkeiten* that they should uphold'.[185] Indeed, like the Christian democrats, Brandt warned for the consequences of unlimited 'democratisation', by pointing out that is was actually for democracy 'a step backwards to apply the principles of democracy to every atmosphere of society'.[186] The controversial emergency laws were defended by Brandt by claiming that the critique on these laws was caused by an 'unjustified mistrust in the democratic inclinations of the parties'.[187] And finally, the market economy continued to be embraced as a system that 'better than other systems performs its social and societal tasks'.[188] Helmut Schmidt asserted that the 'basic principle' for the SPD remained 'our attachment to parliamentary representative democracy, trust in evolutionary change, and a rejection of revolution or the dictatorship of the proletariat'.[189]

In Italy, it is clear that the PCI and the DC did not recognise each other as democratic equals. But still, the tensions generated by '68 and terrorism actually brought the parties closer together. They not only shared a concern over threats to state institutions and the division of the country in two subcultures, but also, partially thanks to the PCI's 'democratic turn', were increasingly jointly committed to party democracy as the key principle of Italian politics. The great paradox for the communists lay thereby in the fact that if they wanted to remain the progressive force of democratic change connected to the broad societal resistance against DC-rule, it had to wage a fierce opposition against the DC, but that at the same time the extreme tensions of terrorism and massive strikes required that a rapprochement with the Christian democrats. The PCI remained condemned to opposition, for some exemplary for the way in which the Italian political class failed to catch up with the modernisation of a society which was moving decisively to the Left, and the convergence between PCI and DC fostered doubts about a homogenous political class detached from civil society.[190]

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[185] Orlow, 'Delayed Reaction', p. 91.
[186] W. Brandt, 'Politik in Deutschland – Wertvorstellungen unter Ideologieverdacht. Aus der Rede des Bundeskanzlers, Brandt, in der Evangelischen Akademie in Bad Segeberg' (1973), in: Brandt, *Berliner Ausgabe. Band 7*, pp. 444-456, at p. 452.
[187] W. Brandt, 'Aus der Rede der Bundesminister des Auswärtigen. Brandt, vor dem Deutschen Bundestag' (1968), in: Brandt, *Berliner Ausgabe. Band 7*, pp. 148-156.
[188] H. Schmidt, 'Für eine Politik der Vernunft' (1973), in: H. Schmidt, *Auf dem Fundament des Godesberger Programms* (Bonn: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, 1973), pp. 9-34, at p.20.
[189] Schmidt, 'Für eine Politik der Vernunft' , p. 24.
[190] Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, pp. 14-15; Gualtieri, *L'Italia dal 1943 al 1992*, p. 200; Lumley, *States of Emergency*, p. 44.

It left Italy as the country which faced particular problems at the turn of the 1970s. Political elites here were least affected by the discourse of the extra-parliamentary Left. Their increased collaboration was perhaps required by the unparalleled social and political polarisation, but meant that solutions were sought largely within the same system that was already under fierce criticism.[191] It meant that despite the fact that also the main Italian parties converged in their conception of democracy, the debate on the peninsula increasingly diverged from that in France and West Germany. Whereas in the latter two, the convergence was a sign of increased agreement on the main issues which had divided political actors since the 1940s, it was in Italy an indication that only the increased agreement between PCI and DC could face the challenges posed to the Italian state, while this paradoxically seemed to enhance rather than reduce the growing dissatisfaction with the state of Italian democracy.

[191] Ferraresi, *Minacce alla democrazia*, p. 350.

V. Consensus on the principles of democracy and its discontents

The making of consensus in the 1970s

The second half of the 1970s was a decisive moment in the debate on democracy in Western Europe. The main political actors in France, West Germany and Italy increasingly accepted each other as democrats as their conceptions of democracy converged, thereby culminating a process that was on the way since the early 1960s. In general terms, this development was stimulated by the détente in the Cold War, the economic downturn, and, in the case of West Germany, and Italy, also by the challenge of terrorism. This process of convergence led to a de-ideologisation of the debate on democracy, but with disparate consequences for the three states. In West Germany and France, the establishment of a broad consensus on the rules and principles of the democratic game was perceived as an answer to the most tormenting issues which had dominated the debate on democracy in the previous decades. Even though there was dissatisfaction with how democracy functioned, the major actors concurred to the present model, which was accepted by all major political forces as a settlement of the disputes which had dominated the postwar debate on democracy.[1] In Italy, by contrast, a similar process of convergence exposed that the leading actors had been unable to solve the most pressing issues of postwar Italian democracy. As a result, the sentiment of democratic crisis deepened and both major and minor political actors increasingly questioned the model of democracy dominant in Italy at the time.

The agreement on some key principles of democracy had several constitutive elements. It was first of all stimulated by the changing conceptions of democracy among the Left in France and Italy, which ensured that also in these two states, like in the FRG since the early 1960s, the main political parties now conceptualised democracy in broadly similar terms and competing democratic paradigms increasingly overlapped. Secondly, the main actors, including increasingly those on the Left, now agreed on the ideological and practical connection between democracy and the free market economy, epitomised by the U-turn of the Mitterrand administration in 1983. And finally, the consensus became visible in an agreement on the balance between representative institutions and civic

[1] See, for a discussion of the question whether the 1970s harboured delusion or promises most notably: H. Kaelbe, *The 1970s in Europe: A Period of Disillusionment or Promise?* (London: German Historical Institute, 2009).

participation. This was fostered by the acceptance of 'representation' by important leaders of the extra-parliamentary Left and the increased appreciation of participation among Christian democrats and Gaullists, in the atmosphere of a rebalancing between state and individual in times of economic hardship.

This meant that around the turn of the 1980s, the leading political actors increasingly agreed on the core features of a model of democracy. They converged on the principles of party democracy, representation, the free market, and an appreciation of civic participation – as long as this was confined to civil society rather than direct inclusion in political decision-making. This convergence does not mean that their conceptions of democracy completely overlapped, or that political actors stopped criticising the functioning of their democracies and their political opponents. Neither does it mean that this model should be considered a success by either contemporary or present standards. But it did crucially entail all major political actors largely accepted each other as democratic and shared broadly similar views of democracy.

Converging conceptions of democracy of the French and Italian Left

The strong contestation of democratic legitimacy by the Left of their Gaullist and Christian democrat opponents which had marked the previous decades gave way to an acceptance of these antagonists as democrats and an embracing of their conceptions of democracy as democratic. In France, the Left increasingly realised that the Fifth Republic's institutional outline offered large opportunities in the contestation of political power, and the presidency of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing contributed to a more consensual atmosphere in which tensions between Gaullists and anti-Gaullists diminished. Whereas in France the convergence around the institutions of the Fifth Republic created a broad consensus on the rules of the democratic game, the collaboration between PCI and DC was increasingly perceived as a sign of the *partitocrazia* which could not solve the problems of Italian democracy. The PCI's conception of democracy underwent a genuine transformation in which civil liberties, political pluralism, and parliamentary democracy were endorsed as ends in themselves. Yet, the communists seemed to endorse a DC-system that was already in a state of decay, and consequently deprived the country of a genuine opposition.[2] Other than in France the convergence of conceptions of democracy of the DC and the PCI was largely the result of the deep political and economic crisis of the 1970s.

[2] McCarthy, *The Crisis of the Italian State*, ch. 6.

The acceptance of the Fifth Republic by the Left

The French Left embraced the Fifth Republic as fully democratic after having contested the democratic legitimacy of De Gaulle and his conception of democracy ever since 1945. This reformulation initially took place within the framework of the Common Programme of PS and PCF. For the PCF, this change was aided by the détente in the Cold War and more specifically the relative independence from Moscow which allowed Marchais to speak about international socialism as 'unity in diversity'.[3] The PCF recognised the plurality of political parties, embraced the acceptation of election verdicts and government alternation, and guaranteed individual liberties such as freedom of thought an expression.[4] It endorsed the liberty of expression and claimed to have ended its feud with Catholicism and now had 'respect for the spiritual families that reflect the history of our people'.[5] For the communists, 'liberty and socialism are inseparable' and they claimed 'in all circumstances' to accept the outcome of elections, 'because it [the PCF] excludes categorically all resorts to oppression, personal power, totalitarianism'.[6] In 1976, the party officially shed the notion of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' from its programme.[7] However, the PCF's changes were not unconditional: the ideological distance between the socialists and communists increased after the common programme was cancelled in September 1977. For still largely unexplained reasons, the PCF returned to its previous orthodoxy and sought closer ties with the Soviet Union.[8]

The rupture with the PCF was a blessing in disguise for Mitterrand, not only because the PCF was electorally marginalised over the course of the 1980s, but also because it made it increasingly difficult for his main opponent, Jacques Chirac, to portray the PS as part of the Soviet camp.[9] It allowed the PS to establish itself more firmly at the

[3] A. Brogi, *Confronting America. The Cold War between the United States and the Communists in France and Italy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), p. 315.
[4] Parti Socialiste and Parti Communiste Français, *Programme Commun du gouvernement*, pp. 143-149; PCF, *Projet de déclaration des libertés du Parti communiste français. Introduction de Georges Marchais* (Paris: l'Humanité, 1975), pp. 22-23; Courtois and Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste français*, pp. 356-386; Lazar, *Le communisme*, pp. 40-41.
[5] PCF, 'Extraits des documents adopté au 22e Congrès du Parti communiste français', in: G. Marchais and G. Hourdin, *Après le 22e Congrès du P.C.F. Communistes et Chrétiens ou Communistes ou Chrétiens* (Paris: Desclée, 1976), p. 52.
[6] G. Marchais, 'Première partie. La voix des communistes français', in: Marchais and Hourdin, *Après le 22e Congrès*, pp. 7-49, at p. 22.
[7] Courtois and Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste français*, p. 355.
[8] Knapp, *Parties and the Party System in* France, p. 104; Courtois and Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste français,* p. 358.
[9] G. Ross, 'Party Decline and Changing Party Systems: France and the French Communist Party', *Comparative Studies*, vol. 25 (1992), pp. 43-61, at pp. 49-51; Lazar, *Le communisme*, pp, 128-135; Knapp, *Parties and the Parties in France*, pp. 104-105.

electoral centre ground, not only by embracing the Fifth Republic, but also by delineating the distance with the communists, for instance by stating that the 'socialist party, while according a grand importance to the theories of Marx, is not a Marxist party'.[10] The French socialists saw a structural development of the way in which they conceived democracy, specifically in the way in which it related to the constitutional settlement of 1958. There were several factors which contributed to the changing evaluation of the Fifth Republic by the socialists. First of all, the Fifth Republic lost its most partisan leaders who embodied the ideological and divisive character of the constitution, when De Gaulle left office in 1969 and his successor Pompidou died in 1974.[11] As a result, the Fifth Republic became less of a divisive political programme with which primarily the Gaullists identified, and more of a political model which was endorsed by all political parties. This process was stimulated by the presidency of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, who was by no accounts a Gaullist. Indeed, his election brought 'a new era' to the Fifth Republic's institutions, because for the first time the president could not count on a parliamentary majority.[12] This meant that Giscard depended on fluctuating parliamentary majorities, including that of dissident socialist MP's. More than his predecessors, he invested in a dialogue with parliamentary opposition and valued the role of an active civil society, [13] and he is regarded to have been more of a 'citizens' president' who aimed to heal the wounds of 1968 by striking a consensual tone.[14] Giscard governed through the centre and thereby brought an end to the polarisation between the Left and the Gaullists which had hampered a full reconciliation between the Left and the Fifth Republic's institutions. Indeed, Mitterrand's assumed that Pompidou had been the 'last projection' of Gaullism and that the ideology was now dead.[15]

Secondly, the French socialists fully accepted the Fifth Republic as democratic, because they increasingly perceived it as a parliamentary system in agreement with their traditional republican views. Even Mendès-France, one of the most principled antagonists

[10] F. Mitterrand, *Ici et Maintenant. Conversations avec Guy Claisse* (Paris: Fayard, 1980), p. 44. See also: M. Winock, *La Gauche en France* (Paris:Perrin, 2006), p. 424.
[11] See for the establishment of the French presidency on a partisan basis: D.S. Bell, *Parties and Democracy in France. Parties under Presidentialism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), p. 202.
[12] M. Bernard, 'Les relations entre Valéry Giscard d'Estaing et la majorité (1974-1978)', in: S. Berstein, R. Rémond and J-F. Sirinelli eds., *Les années Giscard. Institutions et pratiques politiques 1974-1978* (Paris: Fayard, 2003), pp. 191-207, at p. 191.
[13] G. Dubois, 'La conception de la présidence de Valéry Giscard d'Estaing', in: Berstein, Rémond and Sirinelli eds., *Les années Giscard*, pp. 59-75.
[14] Atkin, *The Fifth French Republic*, p. 123.
[15] Mitterrand, '1974: Élection présidentielle', at p. 555.

of the 1958 constitution, now stated that he compromised on the way in which the PS evaluated the constitutional outline.[16] Mitterrand diminished the differences between a Gaullist and 'republican' vision on democracy by stating that both in a presidential and parliamentary system, popular sovereignty was the key feature. In contrast to how he had denounced the Fifth Republic as a 'permanent coup d'état', Mitterrand now argued that 'we do not forget that the Constitution of 1958 is a parliamentary constitution'.[17] This implied for him that 'if we would reform certain aspects of our institutions, this will be within the framework of that same existing institutions'.[18] And as if to underline the process of convergence of conceptions of democracy that had taken place, Mitterrand stated that as president 'I will be the most faithful interpreter of the institutions of the Republic'.[19] The '110 propositions' of the 1981 campaign aspired a limiting of the presidential term time to five years, a restriction of his rights to appoint the members of the constitutional council, and the installation of the proportional representation for elections.[20] But of these plans for institutional reform, only the introduction of proportional representation at parliamentary elections was enacted – and annulled after it resulted in major losses for the socialists.[21]

Finally, the acceptance of the Fifth Republic's constitution was also the result of strategic considerations. Even though Mitterrand had initially rejected the installation of the direct election of the president by universal suffrage in 1962, he had immediately realised the potentials of this change.[22] When he was still only the leader of a minor Left-wing party, the direct election provided him with a national platform and visibility, such as in the 1965 elections. After the Épinay congress, when he became the leader of the PS, the strife for power became the main motivation of the socialists.[23] The constitution of the Fifth Republic provided massive opportunities in this regard, which contributed to their acceptance by the PS, as the endorsement of the Fifth Republic was an instrument to assert political legitimacy within the existing political framework during the 1970s.

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[16] P. Mendès France, 'Le programme commun définit une orientation variable' (1973), in: P. Mendès France, *Œuvres Complètes. Vol. V. Préparer l'avenir 1963-1973* (Paris: Gallimard, 1989), pp. 562-565, at p. 565.
[17] Mitterrand, 'L'avènement du socialisme', p. 247.
[18] *Ibid*., p. 246.
[19] *Ibid*., p. 247.
[20] F. Mitterrand, '110 Propositions pour la France' (1981), in: F. Mitterrand, *Politique II 1977-1981* (Paris: Fayard, 1981), pp. 305-324, at p. 311.
[21] And which+ was the first major breakthrough of the Front National, see: Vinen, 'The Fifth Republic as Parenthesis?', p. 95.
[22] See, for instance: Bell, *François Mitterrand*, p. 44.
[23] See, for instance: Bergounioux, 'Socialisme français et social-démocratie européenne', p. 101.

When Mitterrand was elected in 1981, he placed the socialist ascent to power and the inclusion of four communist ministers in his government, in the tradition of the Popular Front of the 1930s as well as of the institutionalisation of the values of '68.[24] In the end, however, the most remarkable consequence of his election was the definite reconciliation between two opposing visions on French democracy that had marked the postwar era: the Gaullist and the 'republican' conception of democracy.[25] By his endorsement of the Fifth Republic and his commitment to its institutional outline, Mitterrand not only exposed the often-praised 'flexibility' of the Fifth Republic's constitution and that of the 'republican tradition' as a whole,[26] but also the way in which an acceptance of these institutions as 'democratic' by any political actor had become imperative in order to be eligible for political office. Mitterrand had transformed from being one of the staunchest opponents of the Fifth Republic to a 'Gaullist' president.[27] His election thereby confirmed the process towards consensus on the institutional outline of France in the 1970s, which had been absent ever since 1945.

The Historic Compromise as an agreement on the principles of democracy

Both the causes and the consequences of the changing conceptions of democracy of the Italian Left differed from those in France. Whereas in Paris, the convergence was a result from the diminishing polarisation between Gaullists and anti-Gaullists during the more consensual Giscard presidency, the 'democratic turn' launched by the PCI took place at 'the most difficult moment for Italian democracy', in which the country faced social polarisation and an economic crisis with double-digit inflation.[28] Most importantly, Italy battled with a terrorist crisis which caused over 4000 terrorist incidents and left 362 people dead.[29] Stimulated by these crises, the communists aimed to make an end to the

[24] Atkin, *The Fifth French Republic*, pp. 139-144.
[25] Berstein, *Histoire du Gaullisme*, p. 398.
[26] J. Jennings, *Revolution and the Republic. A History of Political Thought in France Since the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 568; Berstein, 'De la démocratie plébiscitaire au Gaullisme'; Hazareesingh, 'L'imaginaire républicaine en France'.
[27] Hazareesingh, *In the Shadow of the General*, pp. 135-136.
[28] Lupo, *Partito e antipartito*, p. 222. See for an overview of the economic issues at stake: N. Crafts and M. Magnani, 'The Golden Age and the Second Globalisation in Italy', in: G. Toniolo ed., *The Oxford Handbook of The Italian Economy since Unification* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 69-107.
[29] Figures concern the period between 1969 and 1980, see: M. Galleni ed., *Rapporto sul terrorismo* (Milan: Rizzoli Editore, 1981) 49. See on the 'years of lead' also I. Montanelli and M. Cervi, *L'Italia degli anni di piombo* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1993).

Cold War logic which condemned the communists to opposition and could, in the eyes of Berlinguer, jeopardise the democratic order.[30]

The tensions in Italian society and politics since 1968 were consequently a major cause for the communist shift in the conceptualisation of democracy. They were perceived as the result of the exclusion of the PCI from government and the increased polarisation of the country in two blocs. The reconfiguration of the communist conception of democracy was a continuation of the 'democratic turn' launched by Berlinguer in 1972, which was grounded upon the premise that threats posed to democracy required an understanding akin to the antifascist collaboration which had inspired the Italian constitution.[31] The collaboration with the DC was considered vital, because in the face of the "strategy of tensions" a hypothetical Left-wing government would encounter strong and possibly fatal opposition that put the democratic order at risk. Berlinguer therefore talked about providing 'democratic legality' and offering 'solid and broad' support by the communists to face this crisis.[32]

This change of the PCI related to its acceptance of the principles of liberal democracy, at least when it came to civil liberties, parliamentarianism, individual freedom, and government alternation.[33] On a meeting with the Western European communist parties in Brussels in 1974, Berlinguer explained that 'democracy' now had a different meaning and should no longer primarily be conceived of in terms of social relations. As a consequence, the values which used to be denounced as mere 'bourgeois' democracy were now considered an end in themselves. Berlinguer saw the 'affirmation of socialism as the coherent and full actualisation of democracy'. This included 'the recognition and the guarantee of the value of personal liberties, the principles of a secular state, plurality of political parties, autonomy of labour unions, religious liberties, freedom of research, culture and science. This also includes for us a socialist solution to the economic problems […] which includes coexistence and complementarity of various

[30] See, most notably: Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*.
[31] And this gained prevalence over collaboration with the socialists, see: Tranfaglia, 'Socialisti e comunisti nell'Italia repubblicana', pp. 502-504.
[32] E. Berlinguer, *L'Italia di oggi ha bisogno dei comunisti. Per essere governata, risanata, rigenerata. Il discorso di Enrico Berlinguer alla Camera dei Deputati, 20/2/1976* (Rome: Stabilimento grafico editoriale fratelli Spada, 1976), p. 5.
[33] This should not be perceived as an acceptance of social democracy, but as a genuine attempt to unite socialism with democracy: F. Lussana, 'Il confronto con le socialdemocrazie e la ricerca di un nuovo socialismo nell'ultimo Berlinguer', *Studi storici*, vol. 45 no. 2 (2004), pp. 461-488, at p. 470.

forms of initiative and management, both public and private'.[34] To underline the PCI's transformation and its eligibility for government, Berlinguer even famously declared 'to feel safer being on this side' of the Iron Curtain.[35]

A second factor which contributed to the reconfiguration of the communist conception of democracy was the changing stance of the DC towards Berlinguer's PCI. The increasing reciprocal acceptance of the DC and PCI as democratic was a 'parallel convergence', because also the DC's stance on the communists' democratic credentials altered during the 1970s.[36] Moro aspired to construct an entire new political system, the so-called 'Third phase' of both the DC and Italian postwar democracy. He did not aim to bring the PCI directly into government and continued to emphasise that only the DC could offer 'an authentic social and political pluralism',[37] but he also claimed that 'there is space for a responsible contribution of the communist party, which the extreme emergency in which we find ourselves requires'.[38] Mariano Rumor captured this semi-legitimation of the PCI as democratic powerfully when he claimed that the entrance of the communists in the parliamentary majority was both an achievement and a problem: an achievement 'because it testifies the evolution of the party over the last years', but also problematic 'because despite of its evolution the party has not superseded the contradictions of its programme: endorsing liberty and the acceptance of the Soviet Union'.[39]

The convergence between DC and PCI became visible when the PCI moved closer to the centre of government power. The PCI abstained from a confidence vote in the DC-led government, and then it entered the parliamentary majority and signed a joint programme with the DC.[40] But, the PCI's transformation was most explicit during the Moro hostage crisis, in which the PCI defended the state institutions which it had furiously contested in the 1950s and 1960s. In the crisis, Moro was kidnapped on clear daylight on his way to parliament to debate the first government since 1947 which enjoyed

[34] E. Berlinguer, 'Costruire un'Europa nuova' (1974), in: E. Berlinguer, *La "Questione Comunista" 1969-1976* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1976), pp. 675-682, at p. 678.
[35] Vittoria, *Storia del PCI 1921-1991*, p. 134.
[36] See, for instance: R. Rufilli, 'L'ultimo Moro: dalla crisi del centro-sinistra all'avvio della terza fase', in: Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana. Vol. IV*, pp. 317-334; Cotturi, 'Moro e la transizione interrotta', p. 497; Gualtieri, *L'Italia dal 1943 al 1992.*, p. 184.
[37] A. Moro, 'Sviluppo democratico e presenza della DC (1976), in: A. Moro, *Scritti e discorsi Vol. VI 1974-1978* (Rome: Edizioni Cinque Lune, 1990), pp. 3469-3489, at p. 3488.
[38] A. Moro, 'Un quadro politico da costruire' (1976), in: Moro, *Scritti e discorsi Vol. VI*, pp. 3491-3506, at p. 3506.
[39] M. Rumor, 'Democrazia cristiana partito del cambiamento e della continuità' (1978), in: Rumor, *Discorsi*, pp. 431-439, at p. 434.
[40] Gualtieri, *L'Italia dal 1943 al 1992*, pp. 184-198.

communist support.[41] The 'historic compromise' was originally intended as a slow process of reconciliation, but was now tried in extremely difficult circumstances, and took the form of a 'national solidarity' or 'emergency' government.[42] During the hostage crisis, the government opted for a line of *fermezza*, or no-negotiation with the terrorists. It claimed that *raison d'état* had to prevail over the saving of individual lives, because it would be harmful for democracy if the government gave in to the terrorist demand for a prisoner's swap. Albeit not without discussion and internal tensions, the communists adhered to the *fermezza*. They criticised the DC for its decades-long exclusion of the communists and for wrongly 'seeing and indicating the enemy of democracy, of Italian democracy, […] in the PCI', which allegedly alienated a part of the population from the state and sowed the seeds of violence.[43] But the communists in the end were 'above all preoccupied with defending the democratic institutions to the spread of terrorism, together with their recently acquired participation in the government's majority'.[44] The crisis therefore contributed to the process in which the PCI accepted the Italian state and the main democratic conceptions of the Christian democrats as democratic.[45]

The "historic compromise" ended in 1979 after the communists, dissatisfied with the lack of fundamental change, left the parliamentary majority. But even though the PCI was never fully recognised as a democratic force by the DC, the shift in the PCI's conception of democracy was not reversed during the 1980s.[46] Unlike for the PCF, the PCI's changes were structural.[47] The PCI stayed true to the essentials of its reformed conception of democracy and remained committed to individual liberties and political pluralism. It also distanced itself increasingly from the Soviet Union, for instance after the introduction of martial law in Poland in 1981, when the PCI declared to have an 'autonomous role' from the Soviet Union and stated that democracy and socialism 'can

[41] Agostino Giovagnoli, the prime historian of the event, has pointed out that the kidnapping was not directed against the historic compromise as such, but primarily targeted at the DC as 'enemy of the Italian working class' and protector of the 'Imperialist state': A. Giovagnoli, 'Democrazia Cristiana e terrorismo', in: V.V. Alberti ed., *La DC e il terrorismo nell'Italia degli anni di piombo* (Rome: Rubbettino, 2008), pp. 19-31. It has been interpreted too as the inevitable consequence of the long period of DC rule which epitomised a political elite that 'was not able to manage social tensions with the right methods of representative democracy', namely government alternation: Galli, *Storia della DC*, p. 349.
[42] See also: Barbagallo, 'Enrico Berlinguer, il compromesso storico e l'alternativa democratica', p. 944.
[43] P. Bufalini, *Terrorismo e democrazia. La relazione al Comitato Centrale del PCI 18 aprile 1978* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1978), p. 21.
[44] F. Barbagallo, 'Il Pci dal sequestro di Moro alla morte di Berlinguer', *Studi storici* vol. 42 no. 4 (2001), pp. 837-883, at p. 840.
[45] Giovagnoli, *Il caso Moro*, p. 14.
[46] Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, p. 154.
[47] Giovagnoli, *Il caso Moro*, p. 264.

only be asserted in full respect of every people to decide over its own fortunes'.[48] The last PCI-leader Occhetto symbolised the party's transition by stating just two weeks after the fall of the Berlin Wall that 'democracy is the road of socialism. This means not only that there is no Chinese Wall between democracy and socialism, but that socialism itself can only be conceived as a process, always defined openly, within the democratic process'.[49] This phase ultimately culminated in the dissolution of the party and its transformation into the Democrats of the Left in 1991.[50]

The consequences of the changing conceptions of democracy of the Left in France and Italy

The Italian communists, like the French Left, came to a full acceptance of the rules of democracy as their political adversaries had outlined them in the previous decades. These changing conceptions of democracy constituted no interrelated development.[51] Although the détente in the Cold War contributed to the convergence of conceptions of democracy, and the communist leaders enjoyed a brief moment of Eurocommunism in which their joint ideas for reform came together, national characteristics were in the end more crucial. The outcomes of these processes of convergence therefore also differed greatly.

In France, the convergence of democratic actors left a positive imprint on the stability of its democratic order and contributed to the fact that the major forces agreed on a set of rules and institutions which were by all considered 'democratic' and 'republican'. The Left adapted its conception of democracy to the new reality of the Fifth Republic on its own initiative and from a position of opposition in an atmosphere of easing of social and political tensions. In Italy, the convergence did not contribute to a structural solution to the problems of Italian democracy, even if it should be credited with defending Italian democracy from serious immediate threats.[52] Other than in France, the reconfiguration of the Left's understanding of democracy did not occur in an era of

[48] P.C.I. 'Risoluzione della direzione del Pci' (1980), in: P.C.I. *Socialismo reale e terza via. Il dibattito sui fatti di Polonia nel Comitato centrale del P.c.i. I documenti sulla polémica con Pcus* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1982), pp. 235-245, at p. 236.
[49] A. Occhetto, 'La Relazione di Achille Occhetto. Una Costituente per aprire una nuova prospettiva della sinistra', (1989), in: P.C.I., *Documenti per il congresso straordinario del PCI. Il Comitato Centrale della svolta. Roma 20-24 Novembre 1989* (Rome: L'Unità, 1989), pp. 3-25, at p. 6.
[50] M.J. Bull, 'The great failure? The Democratic Party of the Left in Italy's transition', in: Gundle and Parker eds., *The New Italian Republic*, pp. 159-172
[51] Which makes the PCI and the PCF markedly different, see for instance: Pons, *Berlinguer e la fine del comunismo*, preface; Courtois and Lazar, *Histoire du Parti communiste français*, pp. 341 ff; Eley, *Forging Democracy*, 408-417.
[52] Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, p. 356.

relative social peace, but at a time of national emergencies which seemed to jeopardise the democratic state. The 'democratic turn' was intended as a slow merge of the subcultures from below, but turned out to be quite an elitist project decided by the leading politicians, and thereby exacerbated the problem of Italian democracy which was increasingly conceived in terms of the dominance of the political parties and their detachment from civil society.[53] The 'historic compromise' of Berlinguer was originally an autonomous initiative of the PCI-leader, but eventually occurred in relationship with the policies of the DC, above all those of Moro.[54] The PCI consequently lost much of its distinctiveness in the 1980s and even came to share in the spoils which marked the DC-PSI coalition partners and erupted in the corruption scandals a decade later.[55] The convergence of conceptions of democracy was therefore both too complete and not complete enough to contribute to a settlement of the issues which dominated the Italian debate on democracy. It was too complete, because in the eyes of many it deprived the country of a genuine opposition and aggravated the worst features of the *partitocrazia*. But it was not complete enough, because the PCI was not fully recognised as democratic by the other parties and this therefore excluded the option of government alternation and a change from DC-rule.

The free market as constitutive element of democracy in the 1970s and 1980s

After the collapse of Bretton Woods and the Oil crisis the economic climate changed drastically in the second half of the 1970s and early 1980s. Whereas the effects of this downturn were visible in all three states, the gravity and chronology of the crisis and their consequent impact on the debate on democracy differed sharply. In France, the economic crisis hit particularly hard in the early 1980s, when the interventionist economic politics of the Mitterrand administration backfired, and Paris was forced to devaluate the *franc* three times in two years.[56] In West Germany, the effects of the economic slowdown were severe, but thanks to corporatist negotiations and an extensive welfare state this did not

[53] P. Ignazi, 'Italy in the 1970s between Self-Expression and Organicism', in: A.C. Bull and A. Giorgio eds., *Speaking Out and Silencing. Society, Politics and Culture in the 1970s* (London: Legenda, 2006), pp. 10-29, at p. 11. For elite cooperation between DC and PCI in the 1980s, see also: C. Carboni, 'Elites and the Democratic Disease', in: A. Mammone and G.A.Veltri eds., *Italy Today. The Sick Man of Europe* (London: Routledge 2010), pp. 19-33.

[54] Giovagnoli, *Il caso Moro*; Cotturi, 'Moro e la transizione interrotta'; Lupo, *Partito e antipartito*, pp. 257-266.

[55] S. Hellman, 'Italian Communism in the First Republic', in: Gundle and Parker eds., *The New Italian Republic*, pp. 72-84, esp. pp. 80-81.

[56] E. Cohen, 'A Dirigiste End to Dirigisme?', in: M. MacLean ed., *The Mitterrand Years.*, pp. 36-45.

lead directly to political instability.[57] Because the 'northern European job crisis was being re-exported to the Mediterranean', Italy was particularly affected.[58] The country battled with high levels of inflation, and it appealed to the IMF for financial support. In the worst year of the crisis, 1975, the economy contracted by almost four percent, while inflation rates topped seventeen percent.[59] As one *Financial Times* correspondent recounted in 1976: 'the country is not now on the verge of bankruptcy, it is theoretically bankrupt'.[60]

As a result of the economic downturn, the main political actors increasingly agreed on the way the economic dimension of the debate on democracy should be conceptualised, namely in terms of congruence between democracy and the free market.[61] This rethinking of the role of the state's responsibilities was most visible among the Christian democrats, but also affected the ideas of the Left.[62] This convergence does not exclude the continued expression of important differences on the role of the state and the desire of social equality, but it did entail that the question whether the free market and democracy were considered compatible was answered increasingly positive by political actors across the ideological spectrum. As a result of this increased convergence, the debate on the organisation of the economy was by and large disconnected from the debate on democracy, and individual liberty rather than social equality came to be understood as a core theme of the way in which political actors denoted democracy.

Christian democrats, liberals, Gaullists, and the rediscovery of the market economy

This ideological shift towards the free market and individual liberty was most obvious among the Italian and West German Christian democrat parties. Italy faced the worst economic recession of all states in the 1970s.[63] At least ideologically, the Christian democrats saw the market as a solution to these problems. As early as 1972, the party hosted a conference on the question of state intervention in the economy which proved

[57] Eichengreen, *The European Economy*, p. 268.
[58] Judt, *Postwar*, p. 457.
[59] Crainz, *Il paese mancato*, pp. 424-427.
[60] Quoted by: Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy*, p. 354.
[61] Müller, *Contesting Democracy*, ch. 6.
[62] Eley concludes that 'Left parties lost control over the crisis, adopting neoliberal economic policies even in power', see: Eley, *Forging Democracy*, p. 396. Even the French communists supported key elements of Mitterrand's U-turn before they left the government: J. P. Morray, *The Grand Delusion. François Mitterrand and the French Left* (Westport: Praeger, 1997), p. 155.
[63] G. Toniolo, 'An Overview of Italy's Economic Growth', in: G. Toniolo ed., *The Oxford Handbook of The Italian Economy since Unification* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 3-36, esp. pp. 23-26.

to be influential over the following decades.[64] The meeting concluded that in the conference 'a large consensus has been observed regarding the role of the enterprise and the function of the market', in contrast to the 'limited success of the past experiences with planning'.[65] Party-prominent Forlani added that the DC had opted to 'favour a market economy. For us the market economy means on the one hand recognition of the need of enterprises for autonomy and as place where the creative and innovative capacities of man are organised, and on the other hand that consumers enjoy a freedom of choice. [This] secures the general interest […] for all of society'.[66]

The re-evaluation of the market economy implied a rejection of economic planning in the DC's discourse and a re-evaluation of individual liberty. At the party's meeting in 1981 these two objectives came together: the DC declared that 'in comparison with the past, the conception of the role of "public intervention" [changes]', economic planning was now no longer 'intended as a vertical instrument to the productive structures, but as a horizontal instrument in the service of productive structures'. The party chose for 'the free economic initiative and the market to guarantee the enablement of free individual initiative and an efficient usage of resources'.[67] It is obvious that the Christian democrats did not practice what they preached in the 1980s, because public debt continued to rise and the state bureaucracy continued to expand.[68] Nonetheless, the DC, at least ideologically, made a renewed commitment to the concomitancy between individual liberty, capitalism, and democracy which suited the renewed dynamism of Italy's economy in the 1980s.

The tribute to this particular triangle was even more obvious among the West German Christian democrats. It was aided by the fact that the SPD had led the government since 1969 and was judged to take the FRG dangerously far to the left. The growing resistance against the SPD in the second half of the 1970s has been labelled a *Tendenzwende* in the West German debate, visible among intellectuals, but also in the

[64] See, most notably: P. Roggi, 'L'impegno della Dc nell'economia durante gli ultimi quarant'anni', in: Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia Cristiana. Vol. IV*, pp. 197-246, at pp. 235-236.
[65] D.C., *I problemi dell'economia Italiana superamento della crisi e nuove prospettive di sviluppo sociale. Convegno nazionale di studi DC. Perugia, 9-12 Dicembre 1972. Vol 3. L'assemblea generale* (Rome: Edizione Cinque Lune, 1973), pp. 323-325.
[66] *Ibid*., p. 343.
[67] D.C. *Per la società nuova. Un grande partito di popolo. Assemblea nazionale DC. Roma 25-30 Novembre 1981* (N.P. 1981), pp. 23-24.
[68] McCarthy, *The Crisis of the Italian State*, ch. 5; P. Ginsborg, *Italy and Its Discontents: Civil Society, Family, State, 1980-2001* (New York: Penguin, 2003), ch. 7.

fierce opposition of the Christian democrats against the Schmidt-government.[69] The Left-wing policies of the SPD were increasingly perceived as a threat to individual freedom and therefore to democracy. The West German *Rechtstaat* was based upon free individuals in the context of the rule of law and the constitution protected against what Strauβ called 'an equalising exercise of power'.[70] Strauβ claimed that 'an equality which levels everything, as socialism wants, will render human freedom meaningless'.[71] He held that the social democrats 'proclaim the reform of capitalist society and intend with this the termination of a free order'.[72]

The Christian democrats presented themselves as a liberal alternative to the social democrats, who 'have overwhelmed the finances and the economy. They have overloaded the system of social security'.[73] After the political *Wende* of 1982, in which the Christian democrats and the liberals formed a government coalition, the Christian democrats continued to emphasise that the economic policies of the SPD had brought the country many problems. The Christian democrats responded by endorsing the link between civic participation, individual responsibility, and the free market.[74] This triangle provided the ideological point of reference of the CDU which turned increasingly into a typical centre-right party which advocated budget cuts and lower taxes to strengthen individual liberties and decongest the state.[75] The renewed trust in the free market was put forward within the framework of the social market economy.[76] On the ninetieth birthday of the late Erhard in 1987, Kohl stated that the essence of the social market economy remained the fostering of freedom, personal responsibility and solidarity. Following these principles, it was the task of the CDU 'to always make clear that freedom of choice, decentralisation of decision-making, protection of minorities and thrifty control of limited resources are part

[69] See on the *Tendenzwende*: Müller, *Another Country*, p. 53; J. Herf, 'Demokratie auf dem Prüfstand. Politische Kultur, Machtpolitik und die Nachrüstungskrise in Westdeutschland', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 40 no. 1 (1992), pp. 1-28, at p. 12.
[70] F.J. Strauβ, 'Freiheit oder Abhängigkeit?' (1974), in: F.J. Strauβ, *Signale. Beiträge zur deutschen Politik 1969-1978* (Munich: Verlag Bayernkurier, 1978), pp. 147-150, at p. 148.
[71] Strauβ, 'Freiheit oder Abhängigkeit?', p. 148.
[72] F.J. Strauβ, *Deutschland deine Zukunft* (Stuttgart: Seewald Verlag, 1975), p. 13.
[73] H. Kohl, 'Handeln als Christliche Demokraten. Rede auf dem 31. Bundesparteitag der CDU in Köln' (1983), in: H. Kohl, *Der Kurs der CDU* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1993), pp. 205-227, at p. 208.
[74] A. Cole, 'Political Leadership in Western Europe: Helmut Kohl in Comparative Perspective', in: C. Clemens and W.A. Paterson eds., *The Kohl Chancellorship* (London: Port Class, 1998), pp. 120-142, at p. 123; Wolfrum, *Die geglückte Demokratie*, p. 361.
[75] Granieri, 'Politics in C Minor', p. 31.
[76] P. Hoeres, 'Von der "Tendenzwende" zur "geistig-moralischen Wende". Konstruktion und Kritik konservativer Signaturen in den 1970er und 1980er Jahren', *Viertaljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, vol. 61 no. 1 (2013), pp. 93-119, esp. 101-104.

of the political distinctive elements of the social market economy. There is no decision-making process which is more democratic and more powerful than the "invisible hand" of price and competition of our economic order, which brings together millions of different interests without force every day'.[77]

The French right also witnessed a renewed appreciation for the market economy around the turn of the 1980s, which was broadly similar to developments in West Germany and Italy. The election victory of Mitterrand pushed the right into a liberal direction and they criticised the U-turn of Mitterrand on the economy as insufficient to counter the problems of the country.[78] Raymond Barre, prime minister under Giscard, remarked that 'never have a country and a people paid such a high price for the blindness and irresponsibility of a political team', which had been subsequently forced to come back on its promises and launch 'such a radical change'.[79] In concordance with Christian democrats elsewhere, Barre did not advocate a French adoption of Reaganomics, but he simultaneously claimed that Keynesianism had become obsolete.[80] The changing economic climate required a redefinition of the role of the state, which 'should do as little as possible. […] This is my liberalism'.[81] Also for Barre, this reduction of the state responsibilities was phrased in terms of individual liberties, and he stated in 1984 that 'the state has invaded excessively in the most diverse domains of private activity; we should return to individual initiative and responsibility in as large a scope of action as possible'.[82]

This re-evaluation of the role of the state also counted for the neo-Gaullists of Chirac, who waged a fierce opposition 'without concessions to the socialist power and denounced it in all its aspects'.[83] Chirac switched from left to right in many of his policies during the last quarter of the twentieth century and also the manifesto of the neo-Gaullist *Rassemblement pour la République* was not unambiguous on where the party stood.[84] It

[77] H. Kohl, 'Das Erbe Ludwig Erhards – Herausforderung an die Wirtschaftspolitik' (1987), in: H. Kohl, *Reden zu Fragen der Sozialen Marktwirtschaft* (Bonn: Presse und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, 1990), pp. 7-26, at p. 17.
[78] J. Hayward, 'Moins d'État or Mieux d'État: the French Response to the Neo-liberal Challenge', in: M. MacLean ed., *The Mitterrand Years. Legacy and Evaluation* (Basingstoke: Palgrave McMillan, 1998), pp. 23-35, at p. 26.
[79] R. Barre, *Réflexions pour demain* (Paris: Hachette, 1984), p. 25.
[80] R. Barre, *La crise des politiques économiques et sociales et l'avenir des démocraties industrielles* (Rome: Banco di Roma, 1983), p. 41.
[81] R. Barre, *Une politique pour l'avenir* (Paris: Plon, 1981), p. 105.
[82] Barre, *Réflexions pour demain*, p. 36.
[83] Berstein, *Histoire du Gaullisme*, p. 438.
[84] *Ibid*., pp. 421-423 ; Knapp, *Parties and the Parties in France*, p. 239.

was evident, however, that Chirac advocated a different notion of liberalism which entailed a reduced role for the state and a rebalancing towards the free market.[85] In this re-evaluation, he tied a free market economy not only to individual liberty, but also to individual responsibility and the possibilities for participation in an active civil society. Chirac stated that 'we are supporters of cure of liberty for enterprises […] Our society should again become responsible, we will never accept again that individuals are nothing but checkers, without initiative, programmed from birth to death'.[86]

In conclusion, the economic recession of the 1970s led to a renewed emphasis on the concomitancy between the free market and democracy among Western European conservatives. The nexus between democracy and the free market was found in the notion of individual liberty, which had arguably become threatened by the state intervention and economic planning of the postwar era. This meant that especially the Christian democrats turned back to their founding phase in the 1940s, in which state control over the economy had been rejected especially for this reason. The conservatives had muted this weariness of state intervention increasingly in the 1950s and 1960s, but rediscovered it after 1973. As a consequence, democracy was connected more strongly to individual liberty and the state was increasingly seen as an obstacle to the development of democracy.

The Left and its endorsement of the market economy

Also the Left battled with the effects of a changed economic climate. It was in power for a significant period during the 1970s and 1980s. The SPD governed in West Germany until 1982, the PSI delivered the Italian prime minister in the person of Bettino Craxi between 1983 and 1987, and the French socialists won the presidential and parliamentary elections in 1981, and again in 1988. Next to the economic crisis, the Left also faced a second development which became ever more evident, namely the diminishing of the traditional working class and the weakening of class allegiances. This deeply affected the socialist conception of democracy, which had always, even if only remotely, been class-centred,[87] and considered social equality an intrinsic component of democracy.[88] During the 1970s, this started to change. The French and especially Italian communists endorsed

[85] Bell, *Parties and Democracy in France*, p. 66.
[86] J. Chirac, *La Bataille de France. Discours prononcée au Rassemblement du 11 Février 1978* (Paris: Création Publicité Impression, 1978) p. 16.
[87] Eley, *Forging Democracy*, pp. 397-404.
[88] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 449.

individual liberty, while all the Left-wing parties were forced to reconsider their traditional emphasis on state interference in times of economic crisis. But as the core components of the Left's understanding of the economic preconditions of democracy – the welfare state, nationalisation, economic planning – were discredited by its opponents, the Left failed to conceptualise novel or alternative ways of conceiving the relationship between democracy and capitalism beyond individual liberty and the market.[89]

The Italian socialist party was arguably the embodiment of this development. The socialist party had already pragmatically embraced the market economy at the turn of the 1960s, as long as this went along with state interference in the economy, but under Craxi's leadership the party dropped this reluctance – and with it its ideological legacy and references to Marxism.[90] Craxi held that that 'the utopia of the abolition of capitalism as point of arrival of the socialist transformation has led to an undervaluation of the problems that are important to determine the construction of a new society'.[91] The reconfiguration of the socialist understanding of democracy also entailed that democracy should no longer be defined in terms of social equality and the interests of the working class. The PSI not only considered the market as a key institution to overcome the problems of the Italian economy, but also responded to diminishing class loyalties in the 1980s, which enabled a conceptualisation of democracy disconnected from Marxist notions of class. For Craxi, social relations could no longer be conceived in terms of 'the separation of classes and categories neatly divided: today the world of labour is a world of citizens who try to lead the same life, tend to have common customs and desires. Strong economic differences persist, but the social differences have diminished in the broad framework of common duties and rights'.[92]

For the PSI, the Marxist commitment to massive state intervention in the economy was irreconcilable with democracy, because 'the monopoly over the material resources leads to the fusion between economic and political power, which means, to total power. Far from liberating the worker, the "state-isation" of the economy becomes the material

[89] Berger, 'Democracy and Social Democracy', p. 29; S. Berger, 'Communism, Social Democracy and the Democracy Gap', *Socialist History*, vol. 27 (2005), pp. 1-20, at p. 13; Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 457.
[90] M. Gervasoni, *Storia d'Italia degli anni ottanta. Quando eravamo moderni* (Venice: Marsilio editore, 2010), p. 10; Di Scala, *Renewing Italian Socialism*, p. 200; Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI*, p. 420; S. Gundle, 'The Rise and Fall of Craxi's Socialist Party', in: Gundle and Parker eds., *The New Italian Republic*, pp. 85-98;
[91] B. Craxi, *L'alternativa dei socialisti. Il progetto del PSI presentato da Bettino Craxi* (Milan: Edizione Avanti, 1978), p. 31.
[92] Craxi, *Una responsabilità democratica*, p. 25.

base of the one-party dictatorship'. [93] The championing of the free market followed logically from this rejection of state intervention. At the end of his premiership, Craxi stated that Italy could never have overcome its economic crisis 'without the contribution of the Italian entrepreneurship, without the dynamism and commitment of the big and small enterprises'.[94] Craxi envisioned a 'reformist socialism, democratic and secular' that countered 'the crisis of the assisting state, the social state'.[95]

Even if the PSI's transformation was rather far-reaching, it was broadly representative for the changes among the French socialists as well. Mitterrand had been elected on a platform of massive economic reform, which most notably involved the nationalisations of key industries, decentralisation of decision-making, and workers' autonomy.[96] Yet in two respects, the socialists did not deliver on these far-reaching promises. On the one hand, legislation on socioeconomic reform was often watered down. The Auroux laws, for instsance, which should strengthen instruments of *autogestion* on the workfloor were 'in effect above all the work of technocrats, far more moderate than the conceptions of the Left-wing of the Socialist Party which had drafted the electoral programmes during the 1970s'.[97] On the other hand, the socialist economic programme was based on the assumption that France would lead an economic revival. Instead, the French economy got deeper into crisis in the early 1980s, forcing the administration to abandon many of its proposals and make a 'U-turn' in its economic policy.[98] In practical terms, the U-turn entailed the end of the socialist programme of nationalisations and state interference. In ideological terms, it exposed that the fact that socialist thought was 'in crisis', as Rocard had noted already in 1979, because the socialists had no real alternatives to a more liberal approach to the economy.[99]

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[93] B. Craxi, *Marxismo, Socialismo e Libertà. Discorso pronunciato a Trevieri il 4 Maggio 1977* (Roma: Biblioteca Rossa, 1977), p. 13.
[94] B. Craxi, *Una responsabilità democratica. Una prospettiva riformista per l'Italia che cambia. Relazione introduttiva al 44 Congresso, Rimini 31 marzo-5 aprile 1987* (1987), p. 16.
[95] P.S.I., *Governare il cambiamento. Intervento alla conferenza di Rimini 4 aprile 1982* (Rome: Sezione propaganda e sezione del P.S.I., 1982), p. 6; p. 16.
[96] S. Berstein, 'The Crisis of the Left and the Renaissance of the Republican Model 1981-1995', in: Maclean ed., *The Mitterrand Years*, pp. 46-65, at p. 53.
[97] M. Tracol, *Changer le travail pour changer la vie? Genèse des lois Auroux, 1981-1982* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2009), p. 207.
[98] Winock, *La Gauche en France*, pp. 424-425; Moreau, 'Le congrès d'Épinay-sur-Seine du parti socialiste', p. 96; Bergounioux, 'Socialisme français et social-démocratie européenne', p. 102. See, from an economic perspective: Eichengreen, *The European Economy*, pp. 287-290.
[99] M. Rocard, 'La pensée socialiste est en crise' (1979), in: M. Rocard, *A l'épreuve des faits. Textes politiques 1979-1985* (Paris: Seuil, 1986), pp. 21-31, at p. 27.

The symbols of the U-turn were Mitterrand's prime ministers Laurent Fabius and, later, Rocard.[100] Both came from the progressive wing of the PS and aimed to reconcile the changes in economic policies with a new socialist discourse under the header of 'modernisation'.[101] In contrast to the 'rupture with capitalism' that had featured in the 1981 election, Fabius asserted that 'it is vital that France adopts a new practice of the role of the state' and that 'the modernisation rests mainly on the responsibility of enterprises'.[102] Rocard stated at the PS congress in 1985 that 'we have changed, because we have learned […] It has become evident that, nationalised for 100% or for 51%, a public enterprise remains an enterprise. In any case, we have verified that a mixed economy is in all circumstances preferable to a managed economy', because there should be 'harmony' between 'plan and market'.[103] Both shifts contributed to the reconciliation between the PS and the market economy in the 1980s.[104] Even Barre noted that among the socialists 'a liberal discourse has emerged',[105] and the socialists saw themselves increasingly as social democrats rather than socialists.[106] Direct references to 'democracy' were less frequently made in its discourse on the economy. Even the evaluation of the nationalisation policies of the French government in 1983 by Fabius did not connect these explicitly to democracy.[107] This meant that the PS saw the economy less as an instrument to create a truly democratic society of which social equality was a core feature, and concurred to the general trend towards the appreciation of the market economy. Indeed, by making monetary stabilisation, increased international competitiveness, and reduction of the budget deficit, the objectives of socialist economics, the party in fact accepted that 'there cannot be a distinctive socialist economic policy'.[108] This exposed the problem of the French Left: its conception of democracy lost diminished its attachment to social equality and the working class two core components, even if these were still strong in a comparative perspective. Yet nothing filled this gap, other than what Rocard called the 'rediscovery of the individual as final objective of life and social organisation'.[109]

[100] Berstein, 'The Crisis of the Left', p. 60.
[101] Bergounioux and Grunberg, *Le long remords du pouvoir*, p. 433.
[102] L. Fabius, 'Moderniser et rassembler. Discours d'investiture' (1984), in: L. Fabius, *Le Cœur du Futur* (Paris: Almann-Levy, 1985), pp. 49-62, at pp. 54-55.
[103] M. Rocard, 'Nous avons changé, osons le dire' (1985), in: Rocard, *A l'épreuve des faits*, pp. 37-49, at p. 43.
[104] See also: Winock, *La Gauche en France*, p. 426.
[105] Barre, *Réflexions pour demain*, p. 46.
[106] Bergounioux, 'Socialisme français et social-démocratie européenne', p. 102.
[107] L. Fabius, 'L'impact des nationalisations' (1984), in: Fabius, *Le cœur du Futur*, pp. 209-211.
[108] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, p. 461.
[109] M. Rocard, 'La redécouverte de l'individu' (1985), in: Rocard. *A l'épreuve des faits*, pp. 203-205, at p. 203.

Other than in France and Italy, the reconciliation between democracy and the market economy in West Germany had not been contested by the major Left-wing opposition party since the turn of the 1960s. During its stay in power, the SPD had followed the principles of the social market economy, even if it pursued a more interventionist economic agenda to transform the ageing industry of the country and put more emphasis on the co-decision of workers.[110] Generally, West Germany survived the first shocks of the first oil crisis rather well, and it did not lead to a reconsideration of the rather pragmatic approach to the economy of the SPD. Its relative economic success was used by Schmidt to claim the social democrat credits of the *Modell Deutschland*, which had brought unparalleled levels of economic and political stability and social peace.[111] Brandt claimed that 'the Federal Republic is economically, socially, and politically more stable than almost any other state in the world'.[112]

The increased commitment to the market economy in the programmes of the SPD became visible only in the 1980s. The West German economy experienced a deep recession in the early 1980s, which saw a sharp rise in unemployment and the budget deficit. It exposed increasing differences between the FDP and the SPD on the question of state intervention in the economy, and led to the fall of their coalition in 1982. As a consequence, like the Italian socialists and the PS, also the SPD embraced the concept of 'modernisation' as a way to mask the crisis of its thought and identity.[113] This commitment to the market economy in the 1980s meant that the economic principles of the Christian democrats were not principally contested by the SPD.[114] The SPD stayed true to its commitment to the market economy which it had expressed in its Godesberger programme, it was only made more explicit. Hans-Jochen Vogel, the party leader in the 1980s, still claimed that the central objective of social democratic economic policy was the development of each person's 'personality in freedom', which required a 'mixed [economic] order, in which both autonomous market mechanisms and state influence

[110] Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, pp. 510-513.
[111] W. Brandt and H. Schmidt, *Theorie und Grundwerte. Weiterarbeiten am Modell Deutschland. Reden von Willy Brandt und Helmut Schmidt* (SPD, 1976), p. 24.
[112] W. Brandt, 'Aus der Erklärung von Parteivorstand, Parteirat und Kontrollkommission der SPD zur Bundeskonferenz in Recklinghausen 17 Februar 1975' (1975), in: W. Brandt, *Berliner Ausgabe. Band 5. Die Partei der Freiheit. Willy Brandt und die SPD 1972-1992* (Bonn: Dietz Verlag, 2002), pp. 151-157, at p. 151.
[113] Lösche and Walter, *Die SPD*, pp. 119-128.
[114] The party is judged to have waged a 'constructive' opposition during the first years of the Kohl presidency: G. Brauntahl, 'Opposition in the Kohl Era: the SPD and the Left', in: Clemens and Paterson eds., *The Kohl Chancellorship*, pp. 143-162, at p. 146.

have their place'.[115] This continuity was reflected in the party's first main political programme since the composition of the Godesberger programme in 1959. The SPD's 1989 Berliner programme stated that 'within the framework of democratic laws, market and competition are indispensable. The market coordinates the vast quantity of economic decisions. […] Economic democracy requires entrepreneurial initiative and achievement, we recognise and foster these'. The SPD supported 'competition as much as possible, planning as much as necessary'.[116]

As the mainstream Western European Left failed to provide an ideological renewal in the way the relationship between democracy and capitalism should be conceived, and the PCF receded into marginality and orthodoxy, the PCI was the only Left-wing party which aimed to provide a genuine alternative. On the one hand, this entailed the acceptance of private economic initiatives and even the acceptance of deflationary politics of the DC. The PCI stated that 'the market should perform an important task as stimulator of efficiency and of entrepreneurship'.[117] On the other hand, the PCI gave a particular spin on its support for austerity policies at the end of the 1970s. For Berlinguer, the reform of the state intervention in the economy was a means to overcome both the immoral aspects of capitalism and to tackle the growing corruption of the Italian state and its influence over society.[118] From this perspective, austerity should be 'an instrument' in 'the overcoming of a system which has entered in a deep and structural crisis', because it meant 'rigour, efficiency, seriousness, and justice'.[119]

Whereas other Left-wing parties increasingly embraced capitalism, Berlinguer argued that, by contrast, the economic recession had exposed 'the ever more open contradiction between capitalism and democracy', visible in the increasing attempts 'to restrict the democratic life and to hurt the rights and powers conquered by the working class and workers'.[120] Berlinguer envisioned a 'third way' between a capitalist model in

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[115] H-J. Vogel, 'Politischer Ausblick' (1984), in: A Möller ed., *Wirtschaftspolitik in den 80er Jahren* (Bonn: Verlag Neue Gesellschaft, 1984), pp. 210-215, at pp. 212-213.
[116] S.P.D., *Grundsatzprogramm der Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (Berlin, 1989), p. 43. Found on: http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bibliothek/retro-scans/fa90-00398.pdf accessed on 10 June 2015.
[117] P.C.I., 'La proposta di alternative per il cambiamento. Documento politico con gli emendamenti approvati dal XVI Congresso' (1983), in: E. Berlinguer, *Economia, stato, pace: l'iniziativa e le proposte del PCI. Rapporto, conclusioni e documento politico del XVI Congresso* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1983), pp. 75-172, at p. 110.
[118] Lussana, 'Il confronto con le socialdemocrazie', p. 482.
[119] E. Berlinguer, *Austerità. Occasione per trasformare Italia. Le conclusioni al convegno degli intellettuali (Roma, 15-1-'77) e alla assemblea degli operai comunisti (Milano, 30-1-'77)* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1977), p. 13.
[120] E. Berlinguer, 'Ruolo ed iniziativa del Pci per una nuova fase della lotta per il socialismo in Italia ed in Europa' (1982), in: P.C.I. *Socialismo reale e terza via*, pp. 11-44, at p. 30.

crisis and the delegitimised 'real existing socialism' of the East in order to 'supersede capitalism in the stage which it has reached for us, in the industrialised and developed West, and to supersede it by constructing a socialism which realises itself in the guarantee of the protection of the democratic liberties already conquered'.[121] Yet, in his dual rejection of capitalism and a state-led economy, Berlinguer struggled to come up with a clear outline of how democracy and socialism could be reconciled: Berlinguer stated that the overcoming of capitalism should consist of the direct participation of workers in factories, emancipation of women, peace and disarmament, and liberation from exploitation, but failed to face the issue how the principles of receding the influence of the state, enhancing democratic liberties, and more social equality could be united. His appeal was moreover overdue, because the working class to which he appealed in the first place, diminished in size and political importance. Nonetheless, it was the only serious attempt to provide ideological innovation for the economic dimension of democracy which did not resort to orthodoxy or the adoption of Christian democrat or liberal ideas.

The free market as constitutive element of democracy in the 1980s

In the immediate aftermath of the War, the economic dimension of the debate on democracy had been dominated by the tensions between social equality and individual liberty, and the underlying question whether state interference nurtured or harmed democracy. Yet around the turn of the 1960s, politicians increasingly agreed on the balance between these two principles. This equilibrium was challenged first ideologically by the movements of '68, and then undermined materially by the economic downturn after 1973 and the diminishing of the working class. It resulted in a re-evaluation of the relationship between free market capitalism and democracy by virtual all political forces, albeit more evidently on the liberal and conservative side than on the Left.

This development in which the major political parties concurred on the link between democracy and capitalism was obviously most visible in West Germany, where the question of the economic order had been largely settled with the changes of the SPD around the turn of the 1960s. The *Berliner programm* of the party did not move on significantly from the principles outlined at Godesberg three decades earlier. The same counted for the CDU, which more than before emphasised individual freedoms and competition, but did so within the tradition of the social market economy. In France and

[121] Berlinguer, 'Ruolo ed iniziativa del Pci', p. 26.

Italy, the Christian and Gaullists democrats steered, albeit mostly rhetorically, away from state-led economic planning, and much the same counted for the socialist parties in both states. The challenge to this consensus became ever more marginal. The new – and last – PCI-leader Achille Occhetto asserted that 'the failure of real-existing socialism is not the failure of socialist ideals'- even if the PCI had a much more reform-minded approach than Marchais.[122] Marchais refuted the claim that he was living in an age of 'the death of ideologies', Marxism would 'prove its validity', he claimed at the PCF's congress in 1987. He continued to contest the current state of affairs in which power was in the hands of big capital and a 'real' democracy was unrealised.[123]

There were two major consequence of the increased agreement on the concomitancy between democracy and capitalism. First of all, with this agreement the discussion of the relationship between the economy and democracy moved to the background of the political debate on the qualities and principles of democracy. The question of the economy was debated of course extensively, but largely from the perspective of the sustainability of state finances, unemployment policies, prospects for entrepreneurs, and individual freedom of citizens in the face of bureaucracy. Although all these themes ultimately also relate to democracy, direct references with 'democracy' were less and less frequently made in this debate. Second of all, individual freedom, rather than social equality, came to figure as the dominant conception of democracy around the turn of the 1980s, whereas the balance between the two had been fiercely contested before. State intervention, which used to be conceived on the Left as the main instrument to foster the democratic content of society, was guarded increasingly with suspicion from this perspective.

Balancing representation and participation

The '68 protests had rejected 'representation' as undemocratic, because parties and parliaments were organised from above, entailed a gap between electors and elected, and hampered self-government. Democracy centred on active civic participation which was impeded by existing representative institutions. Whereas the most far-reaching elements

[122] A. Occhetto, 'La Relazione di Achille Occhetto', p. 6. See for the differences between Occhetto and Marchais: S. Pons, 'Western Communists, Mikhail Gorbachev and the 1989 Revolutions', *Contemporary European History* vol. 18 no. 3 (2009), pp. 349-362.
[123] P.C.F., *Justice, liberté, paix. Le chemin de l'avenir pour la France. Rapport de Georges Marchais. 26e Congrès Parti communiste français* (Paris: P.C.F., 1987), p. 53, p. 71.

of these plans were rejected by all parliamentary actors, the parliamentary Left was generally susceptible to cries for more civic involvement, because these concurred to the traditional progressive notion that democracy's force and vitality depended on its practice on the level of society. The fiercest opponents of the '68 movements could be found among conservatives, who conceived of democracy in terms of state authority, stability, and the articulation of the general interest through representative institutions. This dichotomy between the representative institutions and state authority on the one hand and self-government and active participation on the other hand was muted from the second half of the 1970s onwards, thanks to shifting ways of conceptualising democracy among the prime antagonists, the extra-parliamentary Left and conservatives.

The extra-parliamentary Left turns parliamentary

The first aspect of this convergence was that major figures of the extra-parliamentary Left who had rejected parties and competition in parliamentary elections in '68, such as Dutschke, Viale, and Cohn-Bendit, now endorsed representative institutions as legitimate and democratic means to conduct politics. The '68 protests marked the birth of a decade of social movement activity and collective action in Western Europe. The new social movements of the 1970s shared the notion that 'democracy' was a process which first of all should be practiced outside existing institutions. This was visible in new forms of communal living which were perceived as a way to practice democracy,[124] but also in the addressing of new issues such as the environment, nuclear energy, and disarmament.[125] However, the direct political influence of these initiatives was limited and changing the conception and practice of democracy based on 'spontaneous' actions proved an illusion in the eyes of many. 'Socialist politics cannot be made with naïve dreams', Dutschke claimed in 1977.[126] As a result, some of the most prominent leaders of the '68 movements adopted a new stance on representation and embraced the formation of political parties in order to compete for election in parliament.

In West Germany, the question of political organisation of social movements returned on the agenda at the end of the 1970s. This renewed sense of urgency to confront

[124] Brown, *West Germany and the Global Sixties*, p. 283.
[125] R.J. Dalton and M. Kuechler, 'The Challenge of New Movements' in: R.J. Dalton and M. Kuechler eds., *Challenging the Political Order. New Social and Political Movements in Western Democracies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 3-20; Horn, *The Spirit of '68*, ch. 5.
[126] R. Dutschke, 'Subkultur und Partei (Fragen der Organisierung)' (1977), in: Dutschke, *Geschichte ist Machbar*, pp. 164-171, at p. 170.

the organisational issue was triggered by pragmatic considerations, but also by the imperative to mark a clear demarcation with the Left-wing terrorism of the RAF.[127] Dutschke had previously remained ambivalent on the use of violence, but now unequivocally embraced peaceful means to contest political power. He stated that 'as a socialist I battle the representatives of the ruling political class with extra-parliamentary and parliamentary measures equally – not with the methods of individual terror that turns its back on the people'.[128]

The most obvious example of this shifting stance on the question of representation was the founding of the West German party *Die Grünen*. Although in terms of members and leaders there was no complete overlap between the movements of '68 and the national party founded in 1980, *Die Grünen* has been called a 'paradigmatic example' of the institutionalisation of the extra-parliamentary Left.[129] Apart from campaigning for peace and the environment, the Greens also advocated democratic renewal and presented themselves as a 'social movement party'.[130] The Greens had fierce internal debates over how to reconcile the ideals and practices of a social movement with parliamentary politics.[131] In their initial phase, the Greens were an 'arm' of the social movements, and the party was for one of the founders, Petra Kelly, both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary.[132] The Greens claimed to be an 'anti-party party' and claimed that 'our internal organisation and relationship with the people who support us and vote for us, is the exact opposite of the established parties in Bonn'.[133] The way it distinguished itself

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[127] S. Mende, *"Nichts recht, nichts links, sondern vorn". Eine Geschichte der Gründungsgrünen* (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2011), pp. 279-285; U. Wesel, *Die verspielte Revolution. 1968 und die Folgen* (Munich: Karl Blessing Verlag, 2002), p. 308; Hanshew, *Terror and Democracy in West Germany*, p. 240; Thomas, *Protest Movements in 1960s*, p. 201.

[128] R. Dutschke, 'Kein Mensch ist austauschbar. Über Gewalt und Gegengewalt', in: Dutschke, *Mein langer Marsch*, pp. 97-106, at p. 104.

[129] E.G. Frankland, 'Germany: The Rise, fall and recovery of *Die Grünen*', in: D. Richardson and C. Rootes eds., *The Green Challenge. The Development of Green parties in Europe* (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 17-32, at p. 17. See also: Hockenos, *Joschka Fischer and the Making of the Berlin Republic*.

[130] H. Mewes, 'A brief history of the Green party', in: M. Mayer and J. Ely eds., *The German Greens* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), pp. 29-48.

[131] See for instance: L. Klotzsch et al., 'What has happened to Green principles in Electoral and Parliamentary Politics?', in: M. Mayer and J. Ely eds., *The German Greens* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), pp. 97-127.

[132] P. Kelly, 'Schwerter zu Pflugscharen – ohne Systemgrenze!', in: M. Coppik and P. Kelly eds., *Wohin den Wir. Texte aus der Bewegung* (Berlin: Oberbaumverlag, 1982), pp. 7-16. See for a study of the Green as an arm of the social movements: F. Schieder, *Von der sozialen Bewegung zur Institution? Die Entstehung der Partei DIE GRÜNEN in den Jahren 1978 bis 1980. Argumenten, Entwicklungen und Strategien am Beispiel Bonn/Hannover/Osnabrück* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 1998).

[133] Die Grünen, *Das Bundesprogramm* (1980), p. 5. Found on: https://www.boell.de/sites/default/files/assets/boell.de/images/download_de/publikationen/1980_001_Grundsatzprogramm_Die_Gruenen.pdf, accessed on 10 June 2015.

most notably from other parties was by its notion of 'base democracy'.[134] A 'base democracy' was a form of democracy in which 'the control of all representatives, office holders and institutions [takes place] at the base', and which should guarantee a maximum of transparency, accountability and direct democracy.[135] The party proposed open and transparent meetings, limited terms of re-election, and the rotation of representative functions. For the country at large, it proposed the elimination of the 5% threshold and 'unrestrained' freedoms of association, demonstration and speech, as well as referenda and other means of direct democracy.[136]

Despite these attempts to distinguish itself from the 'established parties' of the FRG, the main heir to '68 no longer denounced parties and parliaments in principle, but only condemned the way in which party democracy functioned. The measures the Greens proposed to rejuvenate West German democracy and its endeavours to bring the agenda and practices of the social movements into parliamentary politics were complementary to existing representative practices and institutions. Representative democracy was no longer considered to be fundamentally at odds with democracy, but instead endorsed as a legitimate way of conducting politics. The Greens stated that even 'base democracy requires a comprehensive organisation and coordination' – which captures the changing way in which representation was conceived of since the SDS dissolution a decade earlier.[137] When the party entered the federal parliament in 1983, Kelly stated that 'an autonomous, exclusively extra-parliamentary movement does not have as many opportunities to enforce proposals, for instance for a new security policy, as when the proposals are also made, imaginatively and peacefully, in parliament'. She concluded that 'facing the power relations in society, there is no other option than to relate to the political system as it is'.[138] This shift also meant the acceptance of parliament as the place 'where decisions are taken about political problems'.[139] In other words, parliament was no longer rejected as an authoritarian institution and parties were accepted as a justified and legitimate instrument to conduct politics.

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[134] Mende, *"Nichts recht, nichts links, sondern vorn"*, pp. 460-467.
[135] Die Grünen, *Das Bundesprogramm*, p. 5.
[136] *Ibid*. The Greens brought these measures also into practice, most famously by allowing the press at their internal party meetings, also after the party entered parliament in 1983: Hockenos, *Joschka Fischer and the Making of the Berlin Republic*, p. 175.
[137] Die Grünen, *Das Bundesprogramm*, p. 5.
[138] P. Kelly, *Um Hoffnung kämpfen. Gewaltfrei in eine grüne Zukunft* (Berlin: Lamuv Taschenbuch Verlag, 1983), pp. 20-21.
[139] *Ibid*., p. 21.

Like in West Germany, the development of the practices and conceptions of democracy of France's social movements was characterised by an acceptance of the institutions of representative democracy. The social movement *La voie* claimed that 'as long as it was clear what to do, spontaneity proved to be a good system'.[140] But after '68, the objectives for which social movements could rally spontaneously became less evident. Even Cohn-Bendit, known for his emphasis on spontaneity, therefore returned on his rejection of organisations. While he ultimately joined the German Greens in 1984, also the formation of the French Green party, *Les Verts,* can be conceived as an example of the way in which the social movements after '68 moved from extra-parliamentarianism to parliamentarianism. After having run into the limits of the protests, the ecologist movement overcame its resistance to a structural party organisation in the early 1980s.[141]

This change was perhaps even more explicit in the case of the PSU. In 1968, the PSU was an important bridge between the world of high politics and that of the social movements. Indeed, '[w]hatever aspect of "the 68 years" one looks at, from immigration to the environment, from *autogestion* to student unionism, one so often seems to find the PSU centrally placed in the background somewhere'.[142] By the early 1970s, however, the party was battling with an internal crisis and sought to establish ties with the established parties of the Left. Rocard, who had been one of the prominent figures of the French May, now joined the PS. As for the West German Greens, the aim to realise political objectives gained priority over the imperative to establish innovative participatory and anti-hierarchical modes of decision-making. This resulted in support of parliamentary politics, even if that meant that original principles had to be sacrificed. Looking back on the previous years in 1978, Rocard stated that 'absolute priority was given to the political sphere and to elections, which replaced the disdain for the political sphere and the exclusivity given to social struggle which had characterised the previous period'.[143] The acceptance of representative institutions as democratic, and competition within them for political power, became the norm for those who had most fervently supported the ideals of '68.

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[140] La Voie, *Elections bourgeoises ou action révolutionnaire* (1968), p. 7. Found on: http://edocs.lib.sfu.ca/projects/mai68/pdfs/POST_May_Perspectives.pfd, accessed on 4-11-2013.
[141] B. Villalba, 'La genèse inachevée des Verts', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire*, no. 53 (1997), pp. 85-97.
[142] Gordon, 'A "Mediterranean New Left"?', pp. 312-313.
[143] 'M. Rocard, 'L'avenir de Mai 68' (1978), in: M. Rocard, *Parler vrai. Textes politiques* (Paris: Éditions de Seuil, 1978), pp. 97-101, at p. 99.

The development of the largest movements of the Italian extra-parliamentary Left after '68 was akin to its counterparts in France and West Germany, and the movements made concurrent attempts to enter the parliamentary system. *Lotta Continua* epitomised this conversion from a decentralised and anti-hierarchical social movement to a centralised organisation competing in elections. The movement was initially federalist in structure and ambivalent on the question of the use of violence to achieve its objectives. It cheered the killing of police officer Luigi Calabresi – for which Adriano Sofri, a leader of the movement would be convicted in 1988 – and sometimes only tactically condemned the Red Brigade violence in the early 1970s.[144] But as the Red Brigades attacks grew more lethal and frequent over the course of the 1970s, *Lotta Continua* faced a choice between 'an often violent *spontaneismo* and the search for institutional legitimacy'.[145] This raised ideological and organisational questions on *Lotta Continua*'s stance on parliamentary democracy. Concerning ideology, the movement slowly shed its Marxist-Leninist orientation and settled more on 'generic Left-wing positions on the social questions of the day'.[146] Concerning its organisation, the movement was divided on the question how to reconcile its spontaneous, decentralised and participatory character with a more fruitful strife for political power.

The result was a process of centralisation and institutionalisation which turned the decentralised and loosely organised movement into a national organisation with a strong and central command.[147] In 1975, the movement staged its first national congress and was transformed into a political party. It emphasised that this move was caused by pragmatic considerations and did not mean that it cut its ties with the grass-roots supporters.[148] In other words, like the Greens, *Lotta Continua* endeavoured to be firmly rooted in society and retain the character of a social movement, while it simultaneously held that the party platform 'constitutes a common base of political action much more efficient in its organisation'.[149] This process of accepting parliamentary politics as democratic became more evident when the PCI moved closer to the DC. *Lotta Continua* considered the major political parties as increasingly indistinguishable, because 'the major parties of the Left,

[144] R. Drake, 'Catholics and the Italian Revolutionary Left of the 1960s', *The Catholic Historical Review*, vol. 94 no. 3 (2008), pp. 450-475, at p. 471. Calabresi was held responsible for the death of an innocent anarchist suspect in the wake of the Piazza Fontana bombing in 1969.
[145] Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence and the State*, p. 92.
[146] Drake, 'Catholics and the Italian Revolutionary Left', p. 474.
[147] Bobbio, *Storia di Lotta continua*, p. 77.
[148] 'Sul partito, tattica e statuto', *Lotta Continua*, 11 January 1975, p. 2.
[149] 'Concluso il congresso nazionale', *Lotta Continua*, 14 January 1975, p. 4.

PCI and PSI, in fact, do not present themselves at these elections with the demand of a Left-wing government, but propose a government of "national unity"'.[150] *Lotta Continua* consequently went further along the 'transformative' road to political power and decided to compete in parliamentary elections. It reached a tactical agreement with other parties of the far Left and presented a common list under the symbol of the *Democrazia Proletaria* for the general elections of 1976.[151] The congress of the *Democrazia Proletaria* claimed that 'the choice between party and movement is a false choice, without a party able to gather the imminence of the movements […] the movements risk closing themselves off'.[152] So former social movements now sought democratic legitimacy by adhering to the rules of the democratic game as formulated by political parties which they had previously rejected, and accepted that political power was contested primarily, albeit not exclusively, by the ballot box rather than on the streets. Indeed, *Lotta Continua* now stated that 'Voting [in parliamentary elections] has to be an instrument to reinforce the class movement'.[153]

Like Rocard and the West German Greens, *Lotta Continua* had given prevalence to the contestation of power over the questioning of the way in which power should be contested. During this process, the conception of democracy of the movement had underwent a significant change in two aspects: *Lotta Continua* transformed from a decentralised movement based on working class-student collaboration into a party with strong top-down structures of command, and from a social movement which questioned the institutions of representative democracy in principle to a political party which competed in parliamentary elections. These changes were too radical in the eyes of many grass-roots members, because they deprived the movement of its original identity. The electoral failure of the *Democrazia Proletaria* in the 1976 elections caused an existential crisis for *Lotta Continua* in which the question of organisation once again topped the agenda. *Lotta Continua* was consequently dissolved soon after the electoral defeat. Leader Adriano Sofri stated at its final congress that 'The clash that has occurred at this congress is exactly analogue to the clash that made the revisionists on the one hand and the students and workers on the other hand oppose each other in 1968-1969. We find

[150] 'Votare democrazia proletaria. Votare i candidati di Lotta continua', *Lotta Continua*, 20-21 June 1976, p. 2.
[151] Bobbio, *Storia di Lotta continua*, pp. 163-168. Even though running under a common symbol, the candidates of the various movements fought their campaigns by and large independently.
[152] Democrazia Proletaria, *Costituente del Partito di Democrazia e Proletaria. Contribuiti alla preparazione dell'assemblea congressuale* (N.P., 1975), p. 17.
[153] 'Votare democrazia proletaria. Votare i candidati di Lotta continua', *Lotta Continua*, 20-21 June 1976, p. 2.

ourselves repeating that clash today, with the only difference that instead of Longo, Berlinguer and Amendola, it are Sofri, Viale and companions who suffer the same role'.[154] In other words, *Lotta Continua* had come to resemble the PCI in its worst aspects.

The re-evaluation of civic participation by Gaullists and Christian democrats

The second dimension of the convergence on the balance between representative institutions and civic participation was the way in which conservative politicians reconfigured their appreciation for, and understanding of, the importance of civic commitment and participation.[155] Faced with social changes, an economic downturn, and the continued advocacy of a form of democracy more open to civic involvement by the Left, both inside and outside parliament, leading Christian democrats and Gaullists, especially in West Germany and France, increasingly paid tribute to a more participatory conception of citizenship in the 1970s. The more positive stance on civic participation by Gaullists and Christian democrats meant that this concept was reconfigured in the spirit of the age: it denoted personal responsibility and individual liberty, but it nonetheless fostered an increased agreement between different ideological families on the benefits and necessity of political participation of citizens, as long as participation was limited to civil society rather than direct involvement in political decision-making, considered a valuable aspect of a vital democracy.

In France, Pompidou disputed the extra-parliamentary critics' claim that ordinary citizens should practice self-government as much as possible.[156] Democratic government, he stated, meant 'to guide the people collectively towards objectives that can seem to them neither natural, nor clearly discernible, nor according to their immediate aspirations'.[157] This changed under the presidency of Giscard.[158] The dependence on public services impeded participation and saw an 'erosion' of community life which could be countered by a 'non bureaucratic state' and more 'private initiatives'.[159] 'Participation' therefore meant in practice individual responsibility and coincided with efforts to trim

[154] Quoted by: Bobbio, *Storia di Lotta continua*, p. 178.
[155] See also about the more 'encompassing' notion of democracy in the 1970s: Maier, 'Democracy since the French Revolution', pp. 146-147; Kaelbe, *The 1970s in Europe*, pp. 13-14; Gassert, 'Narratives of Democratisation', p. 314.
[156] G. Pompidou, 'Conférence au cercle français de Genève' (1969), in: G. Pompidou, *Entretiens et discours 1968-1974* (Paris: Flammarion, 1984), pp. 53-58, p. 55.
[157] G. Pompidou, *Le nœud gordien* (Paris: Plon, 1974), p. 58.
[158] Cohen, 'L'ombre portée de Mai '68', p. 24.
[159] V. Giscard d'Estaing, *Démocratie française* (Paris: Fayard, 1976), pp. 32-35; p. 148.

the size of the state. Giscard d'Estaing stated that a modern democracy was about giving 'power to the citizen'.[160] This re-evaluation of participation and civic involvement developed further during the 1970s. In comparison with the discourse of about ten years earlier, Gaullist visions on democracy now increasingly included the appreciation of an active civil society. For Jacques Chirac, the institutions of the republic could not be questioned in themselves, but he stated that all citizens should participate in these institutions more than before.[161] 'One of the essential missions of the *Rassemblement*', Chirac stated, 'will be to facilitate this participation: we will organise it so that there will be a place for reflexion, for consultation, for suggestions and, if necessary, for critique'.[162] For Chirac, 'people want democracy on a day-to-day basis', and he claimed that participation, even in enterprises was therefore of crucial importance.[163] He assured that 'We want to engage resolutely on the road of participation with the objective of giving our citizens a clearer notion of their rights, of their duties, of their responsibilities'.[164] This re-evaluation of participation paved the way for a conception of democracy closer to that of the traditional advocates of political participation found on the Left. In the words of Chirac, Gaullism had even 'absorbed' its traditional antagonists, the Mendésists, fervent advocates of civic involvement in politics, because it was 'clear that the mission of the Radical Party – a more efficient State, remaking democracy in the state and the battle against oligarchies, is now found in Gaullism'.[165]

A very similar development occurred among the Christian democrats in West Germany, despite initial resistance within the Christian democrats against a conception of democracy more open to civic participation.[166] This resistance was led most of all by Franz-Jozef Strauβ, who continued to contest the way in which the SPD-FDP coalition aimed to democratise West German society. Strauβ held that 'this "new democracy" is no longer democracy, even though more democracy is always talked about, it rests upon the contrary of these principles'.[167] Whereas Strauβ embraced the general will and the

[160] *Ibid*., p. 151.
[161] See also: Berstein, *Histoire du Gaullisme*, pp. 422-424.
[162] J. Chirac, 'L'action politique', in: J. Chirac, *Discours pour la France à l'heure du choix. La lueur de l'espérance. Réflexions du soir pour le matin* (Paris: Éditions Stock, 1978), pp. 27-31, at p. 28.
[163] J. Chirac, 'Les Buts' (1976), in: Chirac, *Discours pour la France*, pp. 15-26.
[164] Chirac, *La Bataille de France*, p. 16.
[165] J. Chirac, 'La lueur de l'espérance. Réflexion du soir pour la matin' (1978), in: Chirac, *Discours pour la France*, pp. 217-409, at p. 265.
[166] Bösch, 'Die Krise als Chance'. See on the reform of the party also: Kleinman, *Geschichte der CDU*, pp. 423-425.
[167] F.J. Strauβ, 'Zeit im Wandel – Auftrag für uns' (1975), in: Strauβ, *Signale*, pp. 160-166, at p. 162.

responsibility of the state, the 'ideological blindness' of the SPD led to the illusion that 'democracy in the state and democracy of society are the same thing. With this stance they are moving step by step further away from parliamentary democracy in its classical sense'.[168] This accusation was particularly made in the context of the terrorist attacks of the late 1970s. The tolerant stance of the SPD on extra-parliamentary activities had allegedly sowed the seeds of terrorism, because, in Strauβ's view 'from the marshy ground of the "New Left" of the mid-1960s there is a direct line that today with violence, extortion, and murder destroys our state and wants to abolish the free order'.[169]

In the end, however, the reciprocal acceptance of SPD and CDU as democratic actors, established since the early 1960s, was not jeopardised by the question of participation nor by the terrorist attacks of the German Autumn. First, the SPD was increasingly determined to use force to protect the democratic order, more in tune with the way in which the CDU envisioned a militant defence of democracy. This brought 'clarity' about the principles on which this order was based.[170] Second, the Christian democrats also altered their appreciation of civic participation during the 1970s, which enhanced the party's identity as a 'modern' people's party open to an active civil society.[171] The new party leader Helmut Kohl, a fierce opponent of Strauβ who launched the re-organisation of the CDU, was decisive in this shift.[172] Kohl argued that 'we are committed in our party programme to a dynamic democracy, which means a further development of this democracy. Especially in this understanding of democracy, which stems from the demand for democratic organisation and decision-making in all spheres of society and the state, we need to ensure further development'.[173] This new line was confirmed in the party's new political programme launched in 1978, where the CDU declared that it 'understands democracy as a dynamic and developing political order that guarantees the cooperation of citizens and secures their freedom by separation and control of power. This order must be transparent for the individual and can only be realised if citizens feel responsible for its organisation and are actively involved in it by

[168] Strauβ, *Deutschland deine Zukunft*, p. 47.
[169] F.J. Strauβ, 'Die Zeit der Entscheidung ist da (1977), in: Strauβ, *Signale*, pp. 201-208, at p. 202.
[170] Hanshew, *Terror and Democracy in West Germany*, p. 9; K. Hanshew, 'Daring more Democracy? Internal Security and the West German Fight against Terrorism', *Central European History* vol. 43 no. 1 (2010), pp. 117-147.
[171] Bösch, 'Die Krise als Chance', pp. 303-305.
[172] Granieri, 'Politics in C Minor', p. 31; Cole, 'Political Leadership in Western Europe: Helmut Kohl in Comparative Perspective', p. 123.
[173] H. Kohl, 'Aufbruch in die Zukunft' (1973), in: H. Kohl, *Der Kurs der CDU* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt GmbH, 1993), pp. 37-55, at p. 45.

making sacrifices'.[174] It added that 'our democratic state also requires free initiatives and groups […] such civic initiatives contribute to the vitality of democracy and can give it new impulses'.[175]

Among Christian democrats in Italy, this trend towards a new balance between representative institutions and civic participation was less visible. At the moment when the inability of political parties to counter the deepening sentiment of crisis of Italian democracy became ever more evident, the leading national party answered with embracing the institutions of party democracy rather than those of civic participation.[176] Even though the DC claimed to be 'an open party for an open society',[177] the party did not embrace civic participation as explicit as a feature of its vision on democracy as was the case with conservatives in France or West Germany. In the face of a more assertive civil society, the DC increasingly remained committed to the political party as the exclusive institution that should facilitate civic involvement in politics.[178] Indeed, in contrast to West Germany and France, 'participation' of citizens and the instruments of representative democracy were still considered two different, even possibly antagonistic entities by Christian democrats in Italy. At its party congress of 1982 the DC stated that 'the ageing of the traditional model of mass party', was 'made more evident by the strong demand of "participation", […] the crisis of political parties, as we have noted, has opened up new spaces and prospects to those […] often antagonistic to the interests of the nation'.[179] Participation was often seen as a threat rather than an opportunity for the development of democracy.

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[174] C.D.U. *Grundsatzprogramm "Freiheit, Solidarität, Gerechtigkeit" 26. Bundesparteitag 23.-25. Oktober 1978 Ludwigshafen* (1978), p. 155. Found on: http://www.kas.de/upload/themen/programmatik_der_cdu/programme/1978_Ludwigshafen_Grundsatzprogramm-Freiheit-Solidaritaet-Ger.pdf accessed on 9 June 2015.
[175] *Ibid*., p. 157.
[176] See, also: Scoppola, *La Repubblica dei partiti*, p. 423.
[177] F. Piccoli, 'Un grande partito di popolo per una rinnovata iniziativa di pace, di libertà e di solidarietà sociale. Relazione del Segretario Politico al XV Congresso Nazionale' (1982), in: D.C., *Atti del 15 Congresso nazionale della Democrazia cristiana, Roma 2-5 Maggio 1982* (Rome: Edizione Cinque Lune, 1982), pp. 59-84, at p. 72.
[178] Castellani, ' La Democrazia Cristiana dal centro-sinistra al delitto Moro', p. 77; Malgeri, *L'Italia democristiana*, p. 106; Ignazi, 'Italy in the 1970s', p. 16; R. Cavedon, 'Cronaca politica di un decennio: la DC dal delitto Moro alla segretaria Forlani' (1979-1989), in: F. Malgeri ed., *Storia della Democrazia cristiana. Volume V. Dal Delitto Moro alla Segretaria Forlani 1979-1989* (Rome: Edizione Cinque Lune, 1989), pp. 3-31.
[179] Piccoli, 'Un grande partito di popolò', pp. 64-65.

The acceptance of limited participation and the Italian exception

The question how to evaluate extra-parliamentary activity occupies a central role in the different views which were expressed on the quality of democracy in the 1970s. Some point to the continued contestation of the political establishment by extra-parliamentary groups, whereas others emphasise the more encompassing notion of citizenship which developed in this decade. These two visions were already discernible at the time, and came closer together. Social movements remained prominently visible in the 1980s, but their actions were less contentious than in the 1970s.[180] Some of their most prominent leaders gathered and formed parties which competed in parliamentary elections, which was increasingly seen as a legitimate complementary political platform. Simultaneously, these movements contributed to a broadening of the conceptions of democracy among parliamentary actors. Conservative actors now increasingly embraced active civic participation as a crucial element of democracy. In this way, the model of participation traditionally advocated by the parliamentary Left was broadly accepted by extra-parliamentary and conservative actors at the end of the 1970s.

This general development had different political consequences. In France and especially West Germany, the newly found balance between representation and participation was broadly accepted. This was aided not only by the shift of the Christian democrats and Gaullists, but also by the fact that the extra-parliamentary Left was much less connected to the working class, and that the parliamentary Left had proven quite susceptible to the conceptions of democracy of the '68 movements.[181] In fact, the '68 movement *La Voie* had already noted that the protest movement 'never succeeded in separating itself completely from parliamentary Left'.[182] Both the *Mehr Demokratie wagen* of Brandt, the tribute to *autogestion* of Mitterrand, and the discourse of Rocard, resonated with themes advocated by the extra-parliamentary Left. The formation of Green parties in both countries, and the integration of the extra-parliamentary Left in the SPD and PS, additionally gave the themes of the extra-parliamentary Left a structural representation in parliament and contributed to a changing conception of democracy within the political

[180] Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence and the State*, pp. 33-47.
[181] Schönhoven, 'Aufbruch in die sozialliberale Ära', p. 137; Tolomelli, '1968: Formen der Interaktion zwischen Studenten- und Arbeiterbewegung', pp. 98-99; Koenen, *Das rote Jahrzehnt*, p. 203; Gordon, 'A "Mediterranean New Left"?', pp. 312-313; Bergounioux and Grunberg, *L'ambition et le remords*, p. 311.
[182] La Voie, *Elections bourgeoises ou action révolutionnaire* (1968), found on: http://edocs.lib.sfu.ca/projects/mai68/pdfs/POST_May_Perspectives.pfd, accessed on 4-11-2013.

establishment, more open to alternatives in addition to parties and parliaments and a more active conception of citizenship.

In Italy, by contrast, participation and representation were considered largely antagonistic to democracy by political elites around the turn of the 1980s. The country saw a similar attempt of the extra-parliamentary Left to enter the parliamentary system by accepting the principles of representative democracy. Viale noted that the 'disintegration of the Christian democratic regime' required 'centralisation' and that as an almost natural consequence '*Lotta Continua* [became] a party'.[183] But in contrast to West Germany and France, this course of the extra-parliamentary Left failed. The '68 values did not make headway among the major political parties and the entrance of the movements into parliament was unsuccessful.[184] Thanks to their strong sense of class-consciousness, the Italian extra-parliamentary claims were more far-reaching than that of extra-parliamentary movements elsewhere. Various movements were relatively radical in their methods and justified 'offensive violence' against the police during strikes and demonstrations, because their 'objectives were greater dignity and democracy'.[185] It provided political elites with arguments to blur the difference between violent radicals and peaceful protesters and seemed to confirm the importance of political parties and representative institutions in the democratic development of the country. The far-reaching demands of the social movements were the result of the closed nature of the political class in the era of the historic compromise – which bred strong resistance against the ostensible lack of parliamentary opposition – but was simultaneously a cause of their failure to enter the system.[186]

Consensus on the principles on democracy in a comparative perspective

The main political actors, both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary, converged around a few core principles around the turn of the 1980s: the free market economy, representation, civic participation as long as this was limited to civil society, and, especially in West Germany and Italy, the importance of political parties. As a

[183] G. Viale, *Il Sessantotto. Tra rivoluzione e restaurazione* (Milan: Mazzotta Editore, 1978), p. 244.
[184] See for a comparison between West German and Italian social movements most notably: Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence and the State.* For the rigid organisation of *Lotta Continua*, see: Viale, *Il Sessantotto*, p. 244.
[185] Lumley, *States of Emergency*, p. 235.
[186] Tolomelli, *Terrorismo e società*, p. 210; Tranfaglia, 'Parlamento, partiti e società civile nella crisi repubblicana', pp. 827-835.

consequence, political actors of various ideological backgrounds increasingly accepted each other as democratic, more so than at any previous point since the War. The mutual acceptance as 'democrats' and overlapping conceptions of democracy of the main political actors that has been a feature of West German politics since the 1960s, thereby also extended to France and Italy.

West German democracy was by and large considered a success by its main political actors, and its institutions were credited with integrating the protest movements of the 1960s and 1970s.[187] The Greens did not change parliamentarianism, but current practices of parliamentary democracy instead changed the party.[188] This de-ideologisation of the debate on democracy could not mask a certain discontent with the state of affairs in West Germany in the 1980s, which came to the surface in various debates such as the *Historikersstreit*, the growing criticism on the power of political parties, or the mass protests of the peace movement.[189] Yet it is crucial that this dissatisfaction did not affect the conceptions of democracy of the main political actors nor jeopardised the common ground of their conceptions of democracy. Indeed, constitutional patriotism had become 'very much part of a West German liberal consensus'.[190]

The convergence between the major political parties went even so far that they endorsed the same three core concepts in their political programmes: freedom, justice and solidarity, and explained these terms in largely similar ways.[191] The CDU and the SPD praised each other for having played an indispensable role in the forging of the democratic order since 1949, because the 'solidarity of democrats stood at the beginning of the constitution'.[192] The SPD made its conservative counterparts co-responsible for the alleged success of the *Modell Deutschland*, which was ostensibly a haven of political stability and economic prosperity in the Europe of the 1970s and 1980s. Brandt stated that 'Our constitutional order […] has developed as such that we can name it the freest order that we have had in Germany. All democratic forces have contributed to this fundament of our country: social democratic, Christian-social, liberal and conservative

[187] In fact, they were credited with the integration of the protest movements, see: A. Rödder, 'Das "Modell Deutschland" zwischen Erfolgsgeschichte und Verfallsdiagnose', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* vol. 54 no. 3 (2006), pp. 345-363.
[188] Wesel, *Die verspielte Revolution*, p. 312.
[189] Müller, *Another Country*, pp 60-61; A. Wirsching, *Abschied vom Provisorium 1982-1990* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2006), pp. 199-203.
[190] Müller, *Another Country*, p. 97.
[191] S.P.D., *Grundsatzprogramm*; C.D.U. *Grundsatzprogramm*.
[192] H. Kohl, 'Das Grundgesetz. Verfassung der Freiheit. Rede in der Frankfurter Paulskirche' (1974), in: Kohl, *Der Kurs der CDU*, pp. 68-77, at p. 69.

forces'.[193] After the fall of the Berlin Wall there was therefore little doubt among politicians that this model of democracy should become the model for a united Germany.

Measured by the standards of its contemporaries, the state of French democracy was less universally praised in the 1980s.[194] The critical assessment of French democracy came partially from the side of intellectuals.[195] Another sign of dissatisfaction was the electoral breakthrough of the Front National in 1984, which captured on a growing dissatisfaction with political elites among French citizens.[196] Yet even if the state of French democracy was less universally cheered upon than in the FRG, the main French political actors still increasingly conceptualised democracy in similar terms.[197] Indeed, the *Front National* did not contest the principles of the Fifth Republic, but rather profited from its possibilities.[198]

The result was a de-ideologisation of the main themes which had dominated the debate on democracy in postwar France. This was visible in the legitimation of the U-turn on the economy by the socialists after 1983, the different connotation to participation given by the Gaullists of Chirac, and the perhaps surprising resilience of party democracy, even if especially the Gaullists of Chirac retained their traditional weariness of the party and its organisation as practiced on the Left.[199] But it was most clearly visible in the settlement of the dispute which had divided Gaullists and anti-Gaullists in France since 1945: the balancing of the power of the executive with that of the legislative, which was resolved by the broad acceptance of the Fifth Republic. This convergence of conceptions of democracy was epitomised by President Giscard d'Estaing. He remarked in 1976 that France was going through 'a politically exceptionally stable period. Our institutions, established in 1958 and 1962 under the leadership of general De Gaulle, after having been violently fought over by a fraction of the political forces, do no longer appear to be really

[193] Brandt and Schmidt, *Theorie und Grundwerte*, p. 10.
[194] Giscard d'Estaing blamed it on the character of the French public debate, allegedly more prone to dramatisation: Giscard d'Estaing, *La démocratie française*, p. 154.
[195] See for instance: A. Peyrefitte, *Le mal français* (Paris: Plon, 1976).
[196] E. Rydgren, 'France: The Front National, Ethnonationalism and Populism', in: D. Albertazzi and D. McDonnel eds., *Twenty-first Century Populism: the Spectre for Western European Democracy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Mcmillan, 2007), pp. 166-180, p. 174.
[197] Broche, *Une histoire des antigaullismes*, p. 563.
[198] Fieschi, *Fascism, Populism and the French Fifth Republic*, p. 187; Bell, *Parties and Democracy in France*, p. 127.
[199] Berstein, *Histoire du Gaullisme*, pp. 420-421. See for the adaption of the party system to the Fifth Republic's institutions: Hanley, *Party, Society, Government. Republican Democracy in France*, ch. 7.

contested'.[200] This was confirmed after Mitterrand's election in 1981.[201] Even his antagonist Raymond Barre stated that 'concerning the institutions, the least we can say is that the constitutional practice of power since 1981 is not inspired upon the anathemas of *Le coup d'état permanent*'.[202] Mitterrand and his enemy Chirac even collaborated during the Fifth Republic's first *cohabitation*, which demonstrated how previous antagonistic political families joined forces and were able to work within the framework of the Fifth Republic's institutions.[203] Throughout his presidency, Mitterrand defended the Gaullist principles of the Fifth Republic, even when the primacy of the president seemed to be threatened by Chirac during the *cohabitation*.[204]

It is obvious that also in Italy the main political actors converged on some key principles of postwar democracy around the turn of the 1980s. The 'democratic turn' of the PCI ensured that the party increasingly conceptualised democracy akin to the Christian democrats and the socialists. There was subsequently a broad agreement among these actors over the principles of party democracy, representation, as well as, increasingly, the free market. The major political parties were weary of too much civic involvement and contended that participation should be managed by the political parties. Despite this broad agreement, the major Italian political actors continued to debate solutions to a perceived crisis of Italian democracy. There are four peculiar dimensions to this Italian debate, which set the discussion there apart from debates in Bonn and Paris.

First of all, the main political parties still did not accept each other as completely democratic. The DC combined its two previous main coalitions, the centrist one and the centre-Left, in the so-called *pentapartito*, the five-party alliance which condemned the PCI to perpetual opposition. Their attempts to delegitimise the PCI became increasingly difficult, thanks to the transformation the communists had undergone under Berlinguer's leadership. Even DC-party leader Flaminio Piccoli acknowledged that 'the communist party has lost its ideological point of reference: the October Revolution and the socialist

[200] Giscard d'Estaing, *La Démocratie Française*, p. 28.
[201] See for instance: Winock, *La gauche en France*, p. 427.
[202] Barre, *Réflexions pour demain*, p. 25.
[203] Even if Chirac stated that the only reason for him to give in to the *cohabitation* were the dire economic prospects, see: J. Chirac, 'Notre nouvelle frontière, ce doit être l'emploi' (1986), in: J. Garrigues ed. *Les grands discours parlementaires de la Cinquième République* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2006), pp. 271-278. The cohabitation moreover considered less problems for the governability and democracy of France than previously expected, see: Broche, *Une histoire des antigaullismes des origines à nos jours*, p. 560; Atkin, *The Fifth French Republic*, p. 179.
[204] W. Northcutt, 'François Mitterrand and the Political Use of Symbols: The Construction of a Centrist Republic', *French Historical Studies*, vol. 17 no. 1 (1991), pp. 141-158, at p. 150.

society of the East are no longer accepted models'.[205] Nonetheless, the DC continued to justify the exclusion of the communists from government by pointing to its lack of democratic credentials. In election time, the DC claimed that the Christian democrats and communists were mutually exclusive alternatives, and that the DC protected Italy against 'authoritarian government' and an 'ambiguous international neutralism'.[206] The same counted for the socialist party, which under Craxi's leadership launched a fierce attack on the democratic credentials of the PCI.[207] Simultaneously, the democratic credentials of the *pentapartito*, and its leading party in particular, were scrutinised by the PCI. The DC was held responsible for the problems of Italian democracy and Berlinguer claimed that 'the country no longer supports this leaded blanket of power and this Christian democrat bullying, this is exactly what is limiting the liberal functioning of democratic institutions and which threatens to suffocate them'.[208] The PCI portrayed itself as the 'democratic alternative' to the Christian democrats and Berlinguer advocated 'the complete overcoming of the deformation and distortions that have rendered the Italian democracy lame and difficult'.[209] This included corruption and links between organised crime and politics which, in the words of Berlinguer, 'has by now become an internal challenge to the political system and the state'.[210]

Secondly, despite this mutual contestation of democratic legitimacy, there was much stronger and broader political resistance against the consensus among the main political actors than in France and West Germany. Indeed, notwithstanding the opposition of the PCI against the DC in the 1980s, the changed relations between the parties, epitomised by the historic compromise, were in fact a sign that the crisis of the party system in Italy could only by faced by the collaboration of the two previous archenemies.[211] As the voting share of the PCI and DC declined over the 1980s, the 'historic compromise' and its aftermath were seen as the hated symbol of the *partitocrazia* which had brought Italian democracy all its problems and had resulted in a system dominated

[205] Piccoli, 'Un grande partito di popolò', p. 75.
[206] Democrazia Cristiana, *Un programma per l'Italia. Elezioni politiche 14-15 Giugno 1987* (Rome: Agi, 1987), p. 6.
[207] S. Colarizi and M. Gervasoni, *La cruna dell'ago. Craxi, il partito socialista e la crisi della Repubblica* (Bari: Laterza, 2005), pp. 79-82. Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI*, p. 444; Vittoria, *Storia del PCI*, p. 139.
[208] E. Berlinguer, 'La crisi della politica di solidarietà' (1979), in: E. Berlinguer, *La crisi italiana* (Rome: l'Unità, 1985), pp. 125-129, at p. 126.
[209] E. Berlinguer, *La nostra lotta dall'opposizione verso il governo* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1979), p. 59.
[210] P.C.I., 'La proposta di alternative per il cambiamento', p. 128.
[211] Tolomelli, *Terrorismo e società*, p. 282.

by political parties detached from civil society.[212] Former communist Rossana Rossanda stated that the PCI's identification with the DC deprived the country of any opposition. Left-wing terrorism was part of what she famously called the 'family album' of the PCI. It was related to the fact that the PCI under Togliatti claimed that the DC wanted to install an authoritarian and clerical regime, but and now suddenly contended that the DC was an antifascist and popular force.[213] The MSI, Italy's fourth largest party in the 1980s, claimed that the entrance of the PCI to the governmental majority had created 'an elephant-size majority' in parliament and left the country without opposition: 'choosing PCI nowadays equals choosing DC, and vice versa'.[214] Similar arguments were put forward on the progressive side of the political spectrum. The Radical Party voiced concerns about the lack of opposition now that the PCI supported the DC in 'a unanimous parliament'.[215] Its leader Panella claimed that 'the country and the people are tired, they do not understand anymore. The parties close themselves ever more in themselves'.[216] The 'most corrosive threat of all' was arguably the rise of the *Lega Nord* at the end of the 1980s, which not only posed a challenge to Italian unity, but first of all defied the party system.[217]

Thirdly, the dissatisfaction with Italian democracy was not expressed solely by fringe parties or intellectuals, but a major concern for the large Italian political parties themselves.[218] In contrast to the way in which the major actors united around the flexible theme of French republicanism, embodied by the Fifth Republic, or the *Modell Deutschland* with its own constitutional patriotism, Italian political forces saw a democracy in crisis and conceived the postwar transformation of Italian democracy in terms of setbacks and problems. The historic compromise, which was posed as the answer to what Moro called 'the most difficult moment' in postwar history, because it was not only an economic and social crisis, but also 'a crisis of the democratic order, a latent crisis,

[212] P. Grillo di Cortona, *Dalla Prima alla Seconda Repubblica. Il Cambiamento politico in Italia* (Rome: Carocci editore, 2007), p. 46.
[213] R. Rossanda, *L'album di famiglia* (1978), http://www.archivio900.it/it/articoli/art.aspx?id=4048, accessed on 28 April 2014.
[214] Movimento Sociale Italiano, 'Il programma del M.S.I. 1979. Camera, Senato, Europa', *Fondazione Ugo Spirito*, Rome, Fondo movimento sociale italiano. Busta 1. Materiale di propaganda elettorale 1948-1983
[215] M. Panella, 'L'unica opposizione', (1976), in: M. Pannella, *Scritti e discorsi 1959-1980* (Milan: Gammalibri, 1982), pp. 300-313, at p. 302.
[216] M. Panella, 'Esarchia, Partito radicale, informazione' (1978) in: M. Pannella, *Scritti e discorsi*, pp. 458-462, at p. 458.
[217] Ginsborg, *Italy and Its Discontents*, p.174. See also: M. Tarchi, 'Italy: A Country of Many Populisms', in: Albertazzi and McDonnel eds., *Twenty First Century Populism*, pp. 84-99; Grillo Di Cortona, *Dalla Prima alla Seconda Repubblica*, pp. 60-61;
[218] See, for instance: Grillo di Cortona, *Dalla Prima alla Seconda Repubblica*, pp. 62-65; Cotturi, 'Moro e la transizione interrotta', p. 504; Paggi, 'Violenza e democrazia nella storia della Repubblica', p. 949.

on some points acute'.[219] But the collaboration had arguably exacerbated the problems of Italian democracy.[220]

By forces on the Left, inside and outside parliament, the crisis of Italian democracy was blamed on the continuing power of the DC. Mario Capanna, an influential figure of the extra-parliamentary Left, claimed that 'the system of power of the DC has permeated the structures of the state until the point of identifying with it. In this sense, it is justified to talk about a Christian democratic *regime*'.[221] Berlinguer talked about 'a profound degeneration of the institutional mechanisms and the state, caused by the Christian democrat system of power, which has constituted a mutual infiltration between DC and the State […]. The particular gravity and extension of the corruption of public life has its origin here'.[222] Giorgio Napolitano remarked that various corruption scandals 'have represented a devastating, emblematic synthesis of the identification of the dominant party, over the course of thirty years, with the state apparatus, of the arbitrary use of power of the Christian democrats and, in varying means in different circumstances, by its government allies'.[223] The Christian democrats turned the argument around: it aspired for a system with government alternation, but this was impeded by the lack of a democratic alternative as opposition party. Moro had noted already in 1973 that 'the problem of our democracy is the impossibility of alternative'.[224] This was confirmed despite the 'historic compromise'. DC's party secretary Ciriaco De Mita noticed a decade later that 'the lack of this possibility [government alternation] has generated the crisis, which, in absence of adequate politics, got worse'.[225]

Fourthly, as an almost natural conclusion of these crises, the theme of constitutional revision entered the debate on Italian democracy.[226] So at a time when after West Germany also in France broad agreement was established on the constitution, in Italy a new debate on the value of the constitution and institutional principles of

[219] A. Moro, 'Garanzia e limiti di una politica' (1978), in: A. Moro, *Scritti e discorsi. Vol.VI*, pp. 3781-3796, at p. 3785; p. 3794.
[220] Lupo, *Partito e antipartito*, p. 9.
[221] M. Capanna, *Monopoli, DC, Compromesso Storico* (Milan: Mazzotta editore, 1975), p. 257.
[222] P.C.I., 'La proposta di alternative per il cambiamento', p. 126.
[223] G. Napolitano, 'I problemi del partito nell'attuale fase politica' (1981), in: G. Napolitano and E. Berlinguer, *Partito di massa negli anni ottanta. I problemi del partito al comitato centrale del PCI 7-8 gennaio 1981* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1981), pp. 7-46, at p. 13.
[224] Moro, *Per un'iniziativa politica*, p. 127. See also: Malgeri, *L'Italia democristiana*, p. 112.
[225] C. De Mita, 'Per la democrazia nella trasformazione', (1982), in: D.C., *Atti del 15 Congresso nazionale*, pp. 832-882, at p. 862.
[226] See also: Hine, 'Italian political reform in comparative perspective'.

democracy came to the surface around the turn of the 1980s.[227] The socialist party played a key role in the debate on constitutional reform.[228] Craxi stated that 'the system has had no answer to the two correlated demands of more efficiency and more democracy […]. Democracy should therefore be renovated and this is the most urgent objective'.[229] The problems of Italian democracy for Craxi contrasted ever sharper with the renewed dynamism of its economy in the 1980s, which only made the crisis of the country's democracy more evident. 'The question of institutional reform has by now become unavoidable', because 'there is the lack of a project which, assuming the values of our 1947 constitution, can renovate our institutions in the light of the necessary changes and past experiences'.[230] The socialists put forward a list of sometimes sweeping reforms, such as the replacement of the bicameral system with a unicameral system, more local autonomy, a reform of the country's bureaucracy, and a direct election of the president.[231] Concerning the DC, De Mita called institutional reform necessary, but was much more dedicated to the centrality of parliament than Craxi.[232] Reform of the bicameral system, for instance, was denounced: 'The utility of unicameralism in respect to bicameralism seems indisputable, [but] in reality the question implies delicate problems of the political order and of democratic guarantees'.[233] The PCI, by contrast, claimed that in the reform of Italy's democracy the reform of the state gained precedence, and claimed that the party proposed 'not solely adjustments, but profound acts of reform' of the bureaucracy.[234] None of these institutional reform projects materialised, thanks 'to the impossibility of an agreement between the parties on a comprehensive renovation of the institutions'.[235] It resulted in what historian Pietro Scoppola has called the 'paradox of institutional reform' in which the parties that had most to lose from such a reform blocked any attempts to it,

[227] S. Köppel, 'Italy's Constitutional Odyssey. Failed Attempts at Constitutional Reform in the 1980s and 1990s', in: L. Risso and M. Boria eds., *Politics and Culture in Post-war Italy* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006) 223-236;
[228] Degli'Innocenti, *Storia del PSI*, p. 402; S. Colarizi and M. Gervasoni, *La cruna dell'ago. Craxi, il partito socialista e la crisi della repubblica* (Bari: Laterza, 2005).
[229] Craxi, *L'alternativa dei socialisti*, p. 83.
[230] Craxi, *Una responsabilità democratica*, p. 31.
[231] See the contributions in the volume: P.S.I., *Una costituzione per governare. La "grande riforma": proposta dai socialisti* (Venice: Marsilio editori, 1981).
[232] Ginsborg, *Italy and Its Discontents*, p.148.
[233] De Mita, 'Per la democracia nella trasformazione', p. 846.
[234] P.C.I., 'La proposta di alternative per il cambiamento', p. 127.
[235] Colarizi and Gervasoni, *La cruna dell'ago*, p. 163. See also: Di Scala, *Renewing Italian Socialism*, p. 223; Ginsborg, *Italy and Its Discontents*, p. 173.

which in turn made the necessity of reform even higher – and party resistance to it ever stronger.[236]

In conclusion, in contrast to West Germany and France, political actors in Italy saw a deepening of the crisis of their democracy to which within the system no real alternative seemed available. This was at least partially caused by the fact that the parties refused to address what was considered perhaps the biggest problem of Italian democracy to those immediately outside parliamentary circles: their own position in Italian democracy.[237] Indeed, despite their continuous display of their sense of urgency of institutional reform and their qualms about the rift between politics and society, the major parties frequently restated their commitment to the principles of party democracy as they operated in Italy at the time. The communists epitomised this with their claim to be committed to 'expanding democratic involvement of citizens and thus in expanding political participations', on the condition that 'the principle organs of participation are and remain the political parties, they are and should be the spinal cord of Italian democracy'.[238]

As a consequence of this failure to reform, Craxi talked of 'the sick Italy of today' in the 1980s, and remarked that in Europe there was no other 'institutional system as incapable in adapting and innovating itself in the face of social change'.[239] The socialists claimed that the parties had failed in their most fundamental task. They stated that 'the basic problem which was posed for the political forces of the republic was and is the task in which both the liberal system and the fascist regime failed: admit, or better, integrate the masses in the state […] either the political system addresses this fundamental issue or, otherwise, or the appearance of this unsolved question becomes ever more visible'.[240] The DC agreed on the socialist analysis. Its party prominent Forlani noticed that 'a serious fracture has opened between the people and the institutions and the political parties. A serious commitment is required commensurate with the extent and gravity of this situation'.[241] It was in these days, therefore, that in the country emerged 'a feeling that

[236] Scoppola, *La repubblica dei partiti*, p. 430.
[237] See, on the crisis of party democracy in Italy in the 1980s: S.Z. Koff and S.P. Koff, *Italy From the First to the Second Republic* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 31-32; Scoppola, *La repubblica dei partiti*, p. 427; Gualtieri, *L'Italia dal 1943 al 1992*, p. 227.
[238] P.C.I., 'La proposta di alternative per il cambiamento', p. 136.
[239] Craxi, *L'alternativa dei socialisti*, pp. 82-83.
[240] P. Farneti, 'Il Sistema dei partiti dalla costituzione a oggi', in: G. Amato ed., *Attualità e attuazione della costituzione* (Bari: Laterza, 1979), pp. 3-15, chiocciola pp. 9-11.
[241] A. Forlani, 'Dichiarazione d'intenti politico-programmatici', (1982), in: D.C., *Atti del 15 Congresso nazionale*, pp. 818-823, at pp. 818-819.

favoured a kind of summary trial, which culminated in a condemnation without appeal of the entire leading class of the country': the fall of the First Republic in the early 1990s.[242]

Democracy at the turn of the 1980s

The developments of Italian politics since the 1980s demonstrate that the fact that political elites increasingly agreed on the principles of democracy should not be simply regarded as an indication of democratic success. Put simply, the increased consensus on the meaning of democracy did not signify any increase in democratic performance, nor did it equate increased popular satisfaction with democracy. The era saw indeed many developments which pointed to the contrary, most notably a broad variety of mass political protests on a range of issues, from the environment to nuclear disarmament and peace. The decade was therefore also a period of discontent with the status quo, which was visibly challenged both inside and outside parliament. Indeed, apart from the protests of social movements, the era saw also the electoral breakthrough of the Greens in Germany, the Front National in France, and the formation of the various Northern Leagues in Italy, which were all signs that the electoral hegemony of the parties which had dominated the postwar era could no longer be taken for granted.

With the benefit of hindsight it is easy to see these political challenges as an early sign of the current levels of high dissatisfaction with politics. At the time, however, this was far less obvious. On the contrary, the most visible and significant development was the growing consensus among political elites on the way in which democracy should function, and the way in which they accepted each other as allies and democratic partners. From this perspective, the fact that the social movement activity in the 1980s was markedly distinct from that of the 1960s and 1970s is highly important, because it underlines that social movements increasingly played by the rules of democracy as they had been agreed upon by politicians, instead of contesting the legitimacy of those rules.[243] Yet at the same time, the signs of dissatisfaction were also a response to the increased consensus on political elites and the way in which they guarded the boundaries of what they considered democratic. The increased consensus thereby opened up space for competing democratic narratives which contested the status quo, because they claimed that it failed to uphold important democratic values. The increased consensus among

[242] Malgeri, *L'Italia democristiana*, p. 111.
[243] Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence and the State*, p. 33.

political elites from the 1970s onwards is therefore certainly related to the signs of dissatisfaction at the time – and in subsequent decades.

Finally, the developments from the second half of the 1970s onwards also demonstrated that changing conceptions of democracy and the structuring of political power relations were deeply related. Politicians could only forge alliances or cooperate with those who enjoyed some degree of democratic legitimacy and accepted similar political principles as democratic. This relationship between converging notions of democracy and political alliances was visible in the *cohabitation* between Mitterrand and Chirac between 1986 and 1988, and in the collaboration between communists and Christian democrats in Italy at the end of the 1970s. Paradoxically, the aftermath of '68 and the economic crisis of the 1970s thereby strengthened the consensus on the principles with which democracy had increasingly become associated in the postwar era, most notably parties, representation, individual liberty, and capitalism.

Conclusion. Democracy as a problem in the postwar era

Democracy in the postwar era as an object of historical research

Political elites increasingly agreed on a set of democratic principles and progressively established the dominance of this conception of democracy over the course of the postwar era. They increasingly agreed that democracy denotes representative democracy in which political decision-making is placed at some distance from the people and which bars their direct participation in political affairs. Civic participation was nonetheless increasingly tolerated and even gradually appreciated, as long as this occurred in the atmosphere of civil society and constituted a counterweight to, rather than a component of, the practice of democracy of the world of high politics. This almost naturally implied that this conception of democracy also centred on the prominence of political parties. Finally, individual liberty was a crucial component of this model, and this was connected to free market capitalism and limited state intervention in the economy.

The establishment of this conception of democracy has led to the delegitimation of alternative conceptions of democracy and this has made many victims among advocates of alternative understandings of democracy along the way, who have either largely conformed to the dominant conception of democracy based on representation, individual liberty and capitalism – or been marginalised. This model is based upon a strong generalisation between the three cases, and it is easy to see that Germany fits this model best. The conceptualisation of democracy in terms of social equality in the French case and the problematic position of political parties in Italian democracy provide only two of the various objections one could made against this image. Yet it serves to capture the main points of agreement among political elites which was the major outcome of their debate on democracy in the postwar age.

In terms of the outcome, this model resembles the characterisations of postwar democracy which have been put forward by historians such as Martin Conway, and, to a lesser extent, Jan-Werner Müller.[1] Yet neither the definite shape of this model, nor the variations which existed between the three states were a foregone conclusion. In contrast to the dominant interpretation in historiography of the postwar era as consensual, the focus on the political debate *on* democracy, rather than *in* democracies, has revealed that

[1] Conway, 'Democracy in Postwar Europe'; Müller, *Contesting Democracy*, pp. 128-145.

it took years, and sometimes even decades, before the major parties fully accepted each other as democratic partners and shared similar understandings of democracy. Different notions of democracy structured political power relations, because it was unimaginable to forge alliances with parties whose democratic credentials were questioned. This was particularly clear in the 1950s, in which stark divisions between government and opposition often pointed to the opposite of consensus. These divisions were legitimised by those in government by pointing to the questionable democratic credentials of the opposition parties – while those in opposition turned the argument around and challenged the democratic legitimacy of those in government. Similarly, changing notions of democracy were related to the forging of political alliances or political collaboration in the following decades, whether between Mollet and De Gaulle, Mitterrand and Chirac, the PCI and the DC, or the SPD and the CDU. This approach, which assumes that democracy not only featured in debates on the separation of powers, but had many other dimensions as well, demonstrates that the debate on democracy had a deep impact on political events and relations. This relation becomes evident thanks to the study of the discourse of politicians and other actors who competed directly for political power. Politicians usually feature only marginally in the history of ideas, but especially in ideas on forms of political organisation, such as democracy, they are essential to unveil the contestation of political concepts and the way in which this conceptual struggle had a direct impact on the question how societies were governed.

The focus on politicians in three states is essential to unveil the problematic formation of the postwar democratic order. Yet while this approach corrects the image of consensus and uniformity, it necessarily also disregards other main questions which could, and should, be asked about the development of postwar democracy. A major question is obviously to what extent this development of the debate is applicable to other Western European countries.[2] The comparison between France, West Germany, and Italy has revealed major differences in chronology, content, and effect of the development of a consensus among political elites on the meaning of democracy. Domestic political power relations, most notably the presence and strength of Gaullism and communism, were key factors in the explanation of these differences. This suggests that other countries,

[2] Indeed, as Conway already suggests, the question of communist parties and the collapse of the Fourth Republic where an exception to the way in which many Western European countries stayed on a 'centrist and parliamentary' course: Conway, 'Democracy in Postwar Europe', p. 79.

especially smaller democracies in which communism was less powerful and which were characterised by coalition governments between rival political ideologies, such as Belgium, the Netherlands, and Austria, were characterised by a stronger consensus on the principles of democracy. This in turn marks the limitations of the applicability of the findings of this research to the characterisation of postwar democracy in Western Europe as a whole, although additional research into other countries is necessary to assess the validity of this hypothesis.

The focus on debates in national contexts has served to highlight crucial differences between the three major continental democracies, but has also had two major limitations. First, the study of the expression of ideas on democracy in national contexts has obscured the question how various notions of democracy influenced each other across borders. Many politicians were part of formal or informal transnational networks in which notions of democracy circulated and influenced each other.[3] The dedication to the relationship between the contestation of political power and notions of democracy which lies at the heart of this research has obscured possible transnational roots of various notions of democracy. The same counts for the notion of European integration, which has undeniably emerged as a major constitutive element of the way in which political elites denote democracy. European integration is a process with long historical roots, but it intensified in the 1980s and 1990s, and as such falls largely outside the scope of this study. Yet the question how notions of Europe featured in conceptions of democracy is pressing in the face of the current state of the European project, and arguably merits a study of its own.[4]

Second, the methodological approach which studies political parties as domestic actors also risks disguising the influence of international circumstances. For instance, the question how the United States influenced ideas on democracy in Western Europe has largely been obscured by the attention devoted to the political debates among political parties. This focus on the content and political effect rather than the roots of conceptions of democracy also counts for the ideas of the large French and Italian communist parties, which were tied to Moscow, and received Soviet funding and instructions. For these

[3] For Gaullism as a political model across borders, see, for instance: Bösch, 'Die Krise als Chance. Die Neuformierung der Christdemokraten in den siebziger Jahren'; Chiarini, 'La fortuna del gollismo in Italia'. For transnational roots of Christian democracy, see for instance: W. Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the Origins of the European Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). For the Left see: Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*; Eley, *Forging Democracy*.

[4] The most notable contribution seems: L. Siedentop, *Democracy in Europe* (London: Penguin Press, 2001).

parties, events in the Soviet bloc were of crucial importance in the development of notions of democracy. As noted, the Hungarian Uprising influenced the 'Italian road to socialism' elaborated upon by Togliatti, and the Prague Spring contributed to the integration of the PCF and PCI in the French and Italian party systems. However, this study has lacked a more detailed investigation of the influence of Moscow on the political ideas and actions of these parties, because, again, notions of democracy and the way they interacted, rather than their roots, have been the object of research. Yet as the diverging paths of both major communist parties, especially since the 1970s, demonstrate, these parties were also domestic actors. Even neglecting the fact that it would be unthinkable to write a political history of postwar France or Italy without taking their roles seriously, studying them as actors in domestic arena has also shed a light on how the Cold War influenced domestic relations in the West. In this way, it has become clear how this domestic Cold War had been largely settled by the early 1980s, as the communist claim to democratic legitimacy had become either largely marginalised in the case of the PCF, or largely lost its distinctiveness in the case of Italy.

Given these limitations, this study on political parties in domestic debates on democracy in three countries should therefore by no means be seen as exhaustive or conclusive. As the worries over the state of contemporary democracy continue to grow, the question how this model came into being, and how we can account for key differences in the state of democracy between various countries, only increase in importance. This conclusion proceeds by capturing the main traits of the development of postwar democracy and highlights the key differences between the three major states. It finally concludes by offering an interpretation of how the drawn-out formation of the postwar consensus has influenced current debates on the state of democracy in Western Europe.

The formation of the postwar model of democracy

There is an intricate connection between the way in which political actors shaped the understanding of democracy in the first decades after the War, and the sentiment of crisis which haunts political debates nowadays. This connection also weaves together the disparate historiographical readings of the history of democracy since *Tendenzwende* of the 1970s, in which scholars disagree whether there has been a 'victory' of one model of

democracy or, by contrast, a loss of consensus on the principles of democracy.[5] A long-term historical perspective is essential to understand this nexus. The Second World War was a watershed in the history of democracy, and democracy indeed emerged 'transformed' from the struggle with fascism.[6] All actors claimed to be democrats, and even those who accepted the new rules only reluctantly and formally, were forced to do so thanks to the overwhelming support which the democratic ideal enjoyed among political elites. Postwar democracy also saw the rise of new political parties with an interclass appeal, most notably the Christian democrats,[7] while the communists lost some of their pre-war militancy, most notably visible in the attempts of the Italian and French communist parties to become 'new' parties which accepted the rules of political pluralism.[8] Yet these attempts to make a clear rupture with the ills of Interwar democracy could not conceal that 'transforming democracy' was far from a consensual and harmonious enterprise. Diverse readings of the rise of fascism, and the mutual distrust which the Cold War incited, meant that politicians aimed to 'transform' democracy in disparate directions, and were deeply divided on the question of capitalism, the way in which representative institutions should be responsive to popular sovereignty, and the relationship between parties and democracy. So there was nominally an agreement, expressed in postwar constitutions, that postwar democracies should unite social security with individual liberties and parliamentary control with a stable executive, but the questions on how these ideals should be achieved – and which ideal gained priority – was a matter of intense disputes in the first fifteen years after the War.

These differences ran roughly along the dividing line between the Left on the one side and Christian democrats and Gaullists on the other. The most vocal supporters of popular sovereignty and civic participation could traditionally be found on the Left.[9]

[5] See for instance: Vinen, *History in Fragments*, p. 404, who asserts that the consensus 'was even more secure from the 1970s onwards'. Müller holds that the challenges of '68 and neoliberalism did not significantly affect the dominant understanding of democracy in Western Europe, which was exported to the East after 1989: Müller, *Contesting Democracy*, ch. 6. Compare with those who emphasise the loss of consensus: Stone, *Goodbye to all that?*; M. Conway and P. Romijn, 'Introduction to theme issue: political legitimacy in mid-twentieth century Europe', *Contemporary European History*, vol. 13 no. 4 (2004), pp. 377-388; Conway. 'The Rise and Fall', p. 87; Eley, *Forging Democracy*, p. 8.

[6] Maier, 'Democracy After the French Revolution', p. 138; Dunn, *Setting the People Free*, p. 156; Mazower, *Dark Continent*, p. 287.

[7] E. Lamberts, 'Christian Democrats and the Constitutional State in Western Europe 1945-1995', in: T. Kselman and J.A. Buttigieg eds., *European Christian Democracy. Historical Legacies and Comparative Perspectives* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), pp. 121-137.

[8] Judt, *Postwar*, p. 47.

[9] Eley, *Forging Democracy*, pp. 5-7.

Democracy should for the Left be representative, but a powerful parliament which represented the people should ideally not be complemented by intermediate institutions which were not elected by universal suffrage. Conservatives were often much wearier of direct influence of popular sovereignty. They surely paid tribute to the notion that all state power derived from the people, but thereby held that this power should be checked by strong checks-and-balances, because the 1920s and 1930s had taught how volatile the will of the people could be. Additionally, both the communist and the non-communist Left questioned – or, to be more precise, often flatly rejected – the relationship between democracy and capitalism. Indeed, to secure German democracy, Kurt Schumacher argued that it was his task to form the country 'in its economy socialist and in its politics democratic'.[10] Even though also the Christian democrats were committed to socioeconomic reforms, they saw the link between democracy and the economy in the limitations rather than the expansion of state power.[11] Democracy had to be both politically and economically 'liberal', which implied that it had to be capitalist. The sweeping social reforms advocated by the Left required a measure of state intervention which Christian democrats regarded dangerously close to dictatorial. Indeed, as Adenauer remarked in reference to the SPD 'everywhere socialism […] leads to a total state as it concentrates power in the hands of a few'.[12]

In Italy and West Germany, these ideological differences were reflected in the constitutions, which secured the protection of individual liberties and provided for extensive socioeconomic reforms. In the eyes of the Left-wing opposition, the Christian democrats refrained from utilising the full scope of socioeconomic reforms, which is why they were accused of breaching the spirit of the postwar settlement. But despite these disputes over the constitution's interpretation, the fact that these constitutions had been a compromise between ideologically diverse factions contributed to the institutional resilience which both countries have experienced. Indeed, the common obligation to the constitution of the Left and Christian democrats not only provided a lowest common denominator in the debate in West Germany, but, more remarkably, in Italy as well, where the communists rejected the supposedly still fascist character of the Italian state, but distinguished this always clearly from the constitution which they continued to cherish.[13]

[10] Schumacher, 'Aufgaben und Ziele der deutsche Sozialdemokratie', p. 86.
[11] Conway, 'The Age of Christian Democracy'.
[12] Adenauer, 'Wahlrede bei einer CDU/CSU Kundgebung am Heidelberger Scloβ', p. 147.
[13] Paggi, 'Violenza e democrazia nella storia della repubblica', p. 951.

From this perspective, the triumph of the French parties over De Gaulle in 1946 was a Pyrrhic victory, because it did not foster a broad cross-party consensus on the political outline of postwar France. Instead, the possibility to construct a shared democratic framework failed to materialise and institutional instability was its inevitable result.

These observations provide a rather paradoxical picture of democracy in the heart of the Cold War. On the one hand, democracy was perhaps less stable then it is with the benefit of hindsight. Democracy was a problem for many politicians, an ideal which was unrealised in practice, and which seemed permanently threatened by forces who aimed to abuse or even overthrow the democratic settlement. Governments in all three states adapted the electoral system in their own advantage in the early 1950s, with the aim of 'protecting', or 'stabilising' democracy. The exclusion of the Left from government in Italy and West Germany, and the antagonism between the Third Force and the Gaullists and communists in France, deprived the postwar settlements everywhere of legitimacy, and made them also the topic of a deeply ideological debate on what democracy was and required. This not only casts doubts upon the interpretation of a 'deep longing to normality' and the rejection of ideology in the wake of the War,[14] but also on the 1950s as the core of one of the 'exceptional periods', in which the meaning of democracy seemed to have achieved a single definition.[15]

Yet these different and competing narratives of what democracy was, embodied by the major parties – socialist, communist, Gaullist, Christian democrat –, and the heated debate which was their result, paradoxically also contributed to democracy's deeper entrenchment after the upheavals of the previous decades. Indeed, the various conceptions of democracy which were continuously expressed, and the way in which political actors used democratic principles to contest and establish political legitimacy, ensured that different conceptions of democracy balanced each other. In other words, there were certain limits to the indeterminate range of meanings of democracy which also limited the scope of political action actors could still credibly claim as democratic. This not only led to a vigorous debate on what counted as 'democratic', but it more crucially also guaranteed a certain level of democratic accountability when things appeared to go wrong and the novel democratic structures were put to the test. This was visible even in Italy, for instance in the ultimate fate of the Scelba-laws which the DC enacted in the

[14] As argued by: Mazower, *Dark Continent*, p. 291.
[15] Conway, 'The Rise and Fall', p. 88.

1950s, the motivations behind the PSI's rupture with the communists after 1956, and in the backfiring of the government legitimation of the neo-fascists in 1960. But this balancing between various competing democratic paradigms and the way in which they held each other accountable was even evident in the most acute crisis of those years, in France in 1958, where an army coup seemed a real possibility. This was not solely averted, but the 'republican' parties were in the midst of the crisis even able to commit De Gaulle to play partially by their rules of the game and commit him to the principles of parliamentary democracy. After all, before becoming the Fifth Republic's first president, De Gaulle became the last prime minister of the Fourth Republic which he had always despised, and made an effort to present its successor as a parliamentary regime.[16]

Rather than being an instance of French exceptionalism, the fall of the Fourth Republic and the establishment of its successor concurred to a general trend in which the stark divisions of the aftermath of the War were increasingly bridged from the turn of the 1960s onwards, which in turn paved the way for coalition governments comprising forces which had previously denied each other's democratic credentials.[17] The Fifth Republic was presented as the compromise between a presidential and parliamentary regime and as such as the conclusion of the perpetual French debates between executive and legislative conceptions of democracy.[18] This epitomised the emergence of a set of key features of a postwar model of democracy broadly endorsed by political elites, aided by the quick socioeconomic changes and diminishing Cold War tensions. In West Germany and Italy, the antagonism between the Left-wing opposition and the Christian democrat governments was overcome, partially, it should be recognised, thanks to the economic growth which reduced social inequalities and made the 1960s the finest hour of the Western European middle class,[19] but partially also because the principles of state intervention in the economy and social security had become part of the repertoire of Christian democrats,[20] whereas individual liberties were unequivocally endorsed by the socialists. The clearest example of this interrelationship between these factors remains the drawn-out building of the Centre-left coalition in Italy, which coincided exactly with

[16] Berstein, *Histoire du Gaullisme*, pp. 216-217.
[17] The establishment of the Fifth Republic was indeed seen as an attempt to establish consensus: Vinen, *History in Fragments*, p. 360. The governments led by De Gaulle in the period 1958-1962 are referred to as resembling governments of national unity, see: Berstein, *Histoire du Gaullisme*, p. 220.
[18] Jennings, *Revolution and the Republic*, p. 568.
[19] Conway, 'The Rise and Fall', pp. 80-81.
[20] Kleinmann, *Geschichte der CDU*, p. 171; Roggi, 'L'impegno della Dc nella storia italiana', pp. 220-225.

the *boom economico* of 1958-1963.[21] However, this agreement from the turn of the 1960s onwards came only more than a decade after the end of the War and should not obscure the deep tensions that had marked the intermediate period, in which the character of democracy's postwar transformation – or even the postwar constitution as in the case of France – had been the topic of a heated debate on democratic values.

From a comparative perspective, the turn of the 1960s also marked the moment in which the debate on democracy in Italy diverged ever more evidently from France and West Germany. It was the moment when the main divides in France and West Germany which had characterised the postwar period were bridged. The deep divisions between SPD and Christian democrats on the relationship between democracy and the economy, foreign policy, and civic participation became a relic from the past, while the disputes about the separation of powers between Gaullists and anti-Gaullists also diminished in importance. In Italy, the two cleavages of the political debate, between 'party' and 'anti-party', and between communists and the Christian democrats, were not resolved by the political changes of the early 1960s, which saw the formation of a coalition government between socialists and Christian democrats and the onset of the integration of the communists in the party system. The slow rapprochement between communists and Christian democrats was too weak to contribute to a true reform of the functioning of Italian democracy, yet strong enough to contribute to the strengthening of the way in which political parties asserted their absolute dominance on the political sphere.

There are many perspectives from which to evaluate the Centre-left coalition which was formed in the early 1960s and one frequently taken is its failure to enact socioeconomic reforms.[22] However, on a more fundamental level the Centre-left stands at the cradle of the later crisis of the First Republic.[23] The continuing sentiment of crisis which not only determined the political outlook of political outsiders and opposition figures, but also those of leading Christian democrats, underlined the gravity of the crisis of Italian democracy in a comparative perspective. The parties increasingly viewed alternative means of political participation as antagonistic to democracy, and the Centre-left coalition also strengthened the Italian tendency of political elites to display a certain

[21] Giovagnoli, *Il partito italiano*, p. 109.
[22] Crainz, *Storia del miracolo italiano*, pp. 223 ff.
[23] Tranfalgia, 'Parlamento, partiti e società civile', p. 827; Giovagnoli, *Il partito italiano,* p. 121; Orsina, 'The Republic after Berlusconi, p. 78.

pedagogic stance towards ordinary citizens.[24] DC-secretary Mariano Rumor exemplified this in his speech at the DC-congress in 1967. He claimed that the central problem of Italian democracy was the lack of faith in the political party system, which led to a gap between *paese reale* and *paese legale*. Rumor called upon political elites to go against this trend, but for him the real problem lay 'not in political institutions, but in how political parties are linked to society. We have to acknowledge that the civic development has not caught up with the economic development. We are all responsible for this and in this regard all, the parties in the first place, have to make a commitment'.[25] It was this paternalistic stance towards civic involvement, combined with institutional weakness, which bred distrust among citizens and widened the gap between state and society.[26]

Yet even if the dramatic tone of the Italian debate reflected a genuine and continuing crisis in the relationship between the state and citizen there, Italy was still part of a broader development in which political elites displayed an increased consensus on the meaning of democracy. This was also visible in how the changes around the turn of the 1960s led to the marginalisation of the political fringes: the MSI in Italy was now permanently banned from governmental influence,[27] and the Poujadists in France declined with the fall of the Fourth Republic. There was naturally resistance against this development towards uniformity, exemplified for instance by the PSU and PSIUP, people like Mitterrand and Mendès France, and the, increasingly only formal, communist resistance against 'bourgeois democracy'. Also, this consensus was certainly less obvious for contemporaries. But from a long-term perspective this resistance proved to be marginal in the face of the firmer entrenchment of the cross-ideological agreement on democracy.

Paradoxically, this trend towards consensus among political elites was buttressed by the disruptive events of '68 and '73. The extra-parliamentary protests of the end of the 1960s may be conceived as a generational revolt, and the students' conceptions of democracy were in some respects a more radical form of the way in which the Left had originally propagated 'co-decision' after the War. But these protests were also undeniably 'a crisis of postwar political culture'. The protests were geared exactly against the core features of the way in which political elites increasingly agreed on what was to be

[24] Orsina, *Il Berlusconismo nella storia d'Italia*, ch. 2.
[25] Rumor, 'Iniziativa dei democratici Cristiani per il rinnovamento dello Stato', p. 424.
[26] Orsina, *Il Berlusconismo nella storia d'Italia*, ch. 2-3
[27] Ferraresi, *Minacce alla democrazia*, p. 57.

understood by democracy, namely by claiming that the conception of politics held by the traditional parties was not democratic at all.[28] Indeed, as one German student noted at the time, what the students did was 'to turn the claim of democracy *against* the *formierte Gesellschaft*' – the vision of democracy endorsed by ruling Christian democrats – and this counted for the French and Italian variants as well.[29] However, the main political parties proved united in their commitment to capitalist representative party democracy, and the more radical the resistance against the political class became, the more convinced it seemed in persisting that democracy was the affair of professional politicians only. This was most dramatically shown in Italy, the country which harboured the richest array of social movement activism, but these had comparatively the smallest impact on the conception of democracy of the major political parties.[30]

The economic downturn after 1973 also contributed to a stronger consensus among political elites, because it led to a diminished conceptual struggle between social equality and individual liberty. Virtually every political force stressed individual liberty, and regarded state intervention with increased suspicion.[31] Obviously, this consensus was partially result of the delegitimation of some of the core features of the Left-wing understanding of politics related to Keynesianism, whether or not part of the demise of social democracy.[32] But the disconnection between democracy and social equality was also visible in the opportunistic switching between liberal and state interventionist discourse of neo-Gaullists, and in the changes among Christian democrats, who in West Germany became a typical centre-right party in favour of small state,[33] and who in Italy ultimately disappeared and whose electoral base partially flocked to the 'business-firm party' *Forza Italia*.[34]

Yet even though it upset the politics of Keynesianism, the economic downturn was not a complete rupture with the postwar mode of conceiving democracy. Indeed, the weariness of state intervention from the perspective of protection of individual freedoms – and thus of democracy – had been a dominant theme of the Christian democrats in the aftermath of the War. Adenauer stated in 1948 that 'personal freedom is and remains the

[28] Eley, *Forging Democracy*, p. 407.
[29] Bergmann, Dutschke, Lefèvre and Rabehl, *Rebellion der Studenten*, p. 174. My emphasis.
[30] Horn, *The Spirit of '68*, p. 233.
[31] Berger, 'Democracy and Social Democracy', p. 29.
[32] T. Judt, *Ill fares the land* (New York: Penguin Press, 2010).
[33] Granieri, 'Politics in C Minor', p. 31.
[34] F. Raniolo, 'Forza Italia: A Leader with a Party', *South European Society and Politics*, vol.11 no.3-4 (2006) pp. 439-455, p. 439.

highest value of the people […] when we reject that the state becomes too powerful and consequently an enemy of individuals, we also turn against, and will continue to turn against, *collectivism* in whatever form, because it is a bigger enemy of personal freedom than anything else'.[35] The economic downturn brought these underlying assumptions to the surface, and made the Left concur to the trend which guarded the state with suspicion and heralded individual liberty. It thereby broke the precarious balance between social equality and individual liberty which had been established in the debate on democracy during *les trente glorieuses*.

The postwar debate on democracy and its relevance for the present

As a result of the way in which political elites were united in their reaction to '68 and '73, the main ideological currents more firmly established their consensus on the meaning of democracy. Yet their consensus did not equal a definite triumph, and the dominant model of democracy at the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall should not be regarded as an unequivocal success. This was arguably most clearly visible in Italy, where the main ideological currents that inspired the postwar debate on democracy not merely cumulatively muted their traditional ideological differences on the right conception of democracy, as was the case in France and (West-) Germany, but entirely disappeared with the fall of the First Republic in the early 1990s. There were of course many causes for this overhaul which lay outside the scope of the 'republic of the parties', but the prime cause remains the failure of political elites to reform the principles of Italian democracy and make them concurrent with changes in Italian society.[36] As a consequence, the muted discontent with the principles of postwar democracy which was unable to express itself under the First Republic has surfaced.[37] The result is a continuous debate in which the principles of Italian democracy are renegotiated and reconfigured, without a broad agreement on how democracy should be reformed. One could argue that for these reasons Italy has a much more vital debate on the reform of democracy than elsewhere, which shows that disagreement on the renovation and transformation of political institutions is an intrinsic part of political debate in democratic society. On a more realistic note, it

[35] Adenauer, 'Eine Hoffnung für Europa', p. 124.
[36] See for instance: G. Crainz, *Il paese reale. Dall'assassino di Moro all'Italia di oggi* (Rome: Donzelli editore, 2012), pp. 330-331.
[37] Capozzi, 'La polemica antipartitocratica'; Orsina, *Il Berlusconismo nella storia d'Italia*.

testifies only to the gravity of Italian crisis, in which First Republic fell, and the promises of a Second Republic have failed to materialise.[38]

Even though Italy stands out as a rather disheartening example, the country is still part of general trend in which de-ideologisation of the debate on democracy among the traditionally largest political parties, and their failure to conceptualise a reform of democracy, has created room for voices that question the democratic credentials of an increasingly homogeneous way of conceptualising democracy.[39] In other words, the consensus among the mainstream parties has opened up ideological space for new parties which accuse political elites to display a certain 'sameness', and blame them to disregard any political visions outside the political mainstream as antidemocratic. These accusations hold a grain of truth if one regards a discussion about the 'rules of the game' an important aspect, or perhaps even the most important feature, of what any political debate should be about. These new voices are often captured under the header of 'populism', mostly of right-wing variant.[40] Their relationship with democracy is a topic of growing academic interest, in which it is emphasised that they juxtapose their commitment to the force of the *volonté general* with what Jan-Werner Müller has called the 'constraint civilian democratic administrative statehood' of postwar liberal democracies.[41] Whereas this is without doubt a main feature of these new parties, they are however largely studied by political scientists rather than by historians, which leaves the question how they relate to the various expressions of discontent with the consensus on political elites on the meaning of democracy in the postwar era still largely unanswered.

It is hard to disagree with Müller that these alternative visions have not yet markedly affected the shape of political institutions, even though they slowly erode the principles which have underpinned them.[42] Their politics are at times far from coherent, realistic, or desirable, but this should not impede historians from seeing them as the part

[38] M. J. Bull, 'The Italian transition that never was', *Modern Italy*, vol. 17 no. 1 (2012), pp. 103-118
[39] M. Lazar, 'Testing Italian democracy', *Comparative European Politics*, vol. 11 no. 3 (2013), pp. 317-336.
[40] Even though that is not necessarily the case, see for instance: F. Decker, 'Germany: Right wing populist failures and Left-wing successes', in: Albertazzi ed. *Twenty-first century populism*, pp. 119-134.
[41] J-W. Müller, 'Research note: The triumph of what (if anything)? Rethinking political ideologies and political institutions in twentieth century Europe, *Journal of Political Ideologies*, vol. 14 no. 2 (2009), pp. 211-226, at p. 222. See for the 'populist' conception of democracy most notably: M. Canovan, 'Taking Politics to the People: Populism as the Ideology of Democracy', in Y. Mény and Y. Surel eds., *Democracies and the Populist Challenge* (Basingstoke: Palgrave McMillan, 2002), pp. 25-44; M. Canovan, 'Trust the People? Populism and the two Faces of Democracy', *Political Studies* vol. 47 no. 1 (1999), pp. 2-16.
[42] Müller, 'Research note'.

of the 'struggle between contesting models of democracy, including ideologies of the left and right which one might not automatically associate with democracy'.[43] On the level of political rhetoric, the current debate displays many similarities with the way in which political actors in the heat of the Cold War accused each other of being anti-democrats who should be excluded from any kind of government. These similarities dissolve on a more substantial level, because the new parties are not motivated by the desire to transform democracy away from the experiences of the Interwar era, but, rather, to contest the way in which political elites have shaped the meaning of democracy. In this regard, they attack the core features of the democratic paradigm now shared by the main political parties. They question the importance of the principle of representation and party democracy, the distance between political elites and citizens, the emphasis on the rule of law rather than popular sovereignty as distinctive feature of democracy, and also, as recently argued by Dan Stone, accuse political elites of valuing economics over politics and hollowing out social security arrangements in the name of individual liberty.[44] In that sense, these movements are not solely sign of discontent with the consensus model, but also an attempt to "re-ideologise" the debate on democracy and reconfigure democracy's meaning.

In a long-term historical perspective on the debate democracy, this confirms that the history of democracy is indeed the history of competing democratic paradigms in which no end of ideology can ever be proclaimed. The meaning and principles of democracy were deeply contested throughout the postwar era, notwithstanding a broad common tribute to the democratic ideal and an increased consensus among the major political parties. If one strips this postwar debate to its bare essence, the continuing attempts to reconfigure democracy's meaning actually emerges as one of its most distinctive characteristics, and democracy means simply the possibility to renegotiate the meaning of democracy. It is this attempt of continuous renegotiation which has become obscured by the growing agreement among political elites over the last decades, whereas the contestation of this trend has demonstrated that democracy has remained a perpetual problem which asks for continuously changing solutions and new ideas. Indeed, as the

[43] Conway, 'The Rise and Fall of Europe's Democratic Age', p. 88.
[44] Stone, *Goodbye to all of that*, ch. 5, ch. 7; C. Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), ch. 6; P. Mair, 'Populist Democracy vs Party Democracy, in: Mény and Surel eds., *Democracies and the Populist Challenge*, pp. 81-98, at p. 91.

prominent Christian democrat Guido Gonella remarked in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, 'Democracy is not a virtue in itself, but it is the *possibility* of virtue'.[45]

[45] Gonella, 'La DC per la nuova costituzione', p. 503. Italics in original.

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Samenvatting

De geschiedenis van democratie in de eerste decennia van naoorlogs West-Europa wordt vaak beschreven als een succesverhaal, waarin een brede consensus onder politieke elites bestond over de vraag hoe politiek gezag legitiem georganiseerd kon worden. Dit proefschrift brengt echter aan het licht dat het decennia duurde voordat dit naoorlogs model van democratie gevormd was, en dat er na de oorlog diepe meningsverschillen bestonden over de vraag hoe democratie na de crisis van het Interbellum tot een succes kon worden getransformeerd. Bovendien laat het proefschrift zien dat het huidige crisissentiment over de democratie in West-Europa zijn historische wortels heeft in de manier waarop politieke elites in steeds grotere overeenstemming democratie conceptualiseerden.

Het onderzoek is gebaseerd op een analyse van het publieke politieke debat in Frankrijk, West-Duitsland en Italië in de periode 1945-1989. Door het publieke discours van politici centraal te stellen, wordt inzichtelijk hoe de strijd om de betekenis van democratie ook altijd de strijd om politieke macht beïnvloedde. Immers was 'democratie' de enige vorm van legitieme politieke autoriteit, en was het in de strijd om politieke macht dus essentieel om een eigen opvatting van democratie als de meest geldige voor te stellen – en de democratieopvattingen van politieke tegenstanders te delegitimeren. Democratie was daarmee niet alleen een problematisch, maar ook een bemind concept in naoorlogs Europa, en de strijd om de betekenis van democratie structureerde politieke machtsrelaties. Coalities en politieke samenwerking tussen antagonistische politieke partijen werden dan ook altijd voorafgegaan door veranderende democratieopvattingen, omdat politieke samenwerking pas mogelijk was wanneer partijen elkaar als democratisch accepteerden.

In de analyse van publieke debatten van politici is gekozen voor een vergelijkende benadering, waarin de nationale politieke debatten van Frankrijk, West-Duitsland en Italië met elkaar worden vergeleken. Buiten het feit dat het hier gaat om de drie grootste continentale democratieën, alle met een republikeinse regeringsvorm, lenen bij uitstek deze staten zich voor een studie die beter begrip van de ontwikkeling van het naoorlogs democratiedebat moet opleveren. Het waren immers deze West-Europese staten wier democratische stelsels opzichtelijk faalden in het Interbellum, en die om deze reden na de Tweede Wereldoorlog een nieuwe grondwet schreven, waarin de aspiratie werd

uitgesproken een nieuwe democratische start te maken en democratie na de oorlog opnieuw uit te vinden.

Het proefschrift bespreekt de ontwikkelingen in het democratiedebat vanaf het einde van de Tweede Wereldoorlog in vijf chronologisch geordende hoofdstukken. Binnen deze vijf hoofdstukken staan verschillende thema's die het democratiedebat in een bepaald tijdsgewricht domineerden centraal. Over de loop van de vijf hoofdstukken wordt inzichtelijk gemaakt hoe politieke elites in alle staten elkaar langzaam als volledig democratisch accepteerden en hoe zij democratie steeds meer op gelijke wijze conceptualiseerden.

Deze uitkomst was niet vanzelfsprekend. In directe nasleep van de Tweede Wereldoorlog, zoals in het eerste hoofdstuk wordt betoogd, werd het debat in alle drie de staten gekenmerkt door diepe meningsverschillen tussen politieke partijen. Hoewel iedere politieke actor hulde aan het democratische ideaal betuigde, werd 'democratie' op uiteenlopende wijze uitgelegd. Politieke elites deelden de overtuiging dat democratie representatie betekende, en dat de directe invloed van burgers op het politieke proces moest worden beperkt. Buiten deze overeenstemming waren er grote verschillen van mening, in het bijzonder over de relatie tussen democratie en kapitalisme, de vraag of de massa uiteindelijk geïntegreerd moest worden in de staat of dat representatieve instituties moesten worden beschermd tegen volksinvloed, en op de vraag hoe politieke partijen zich verhielden tot democratie. Deze vragen brachten ook de scheidslijnen aan het licht die de politieke relaties en het debat over democratie in de drie staten de komende decennia bepaalden: in Italië tussen Marxistisch links en de Christendemocraten, maar ook tussen de verdedigers van de dominantie van politieke partijen en de uitdagers van de status quo; in Frankrijk tussen de Gaullisten en anti-Gaullisten over de scheiding der machten; en in West-Duitsland tussen de SPD en de Christendemocraten over het economische systeem. In West Duitsland en Italië bereikten deze partijen toch een compromis over de grondwetten, die daarmee verschillende ideologische principes verenigden en verschillende krachten aan de grondwet bond. In Frankrijk was de grondwet uit 1946 de overwinning van de partijen op De Gaulle en dit legde de kiem voor grote instabiliteit.

De spanningen die de naoorlogse periode bepaalden, beheersten ook een groot deel van de jaren vijftig. De eerste naoorlogse parlementaire verkiezingen bezegelden de machtsverhoudingen voor het komende decennium, waarin vervolgens geen grote

veranderingen in de samenstelling van regering en oppositie voortkwamen. Deze strakke machtsverdeling werd door de regeringspartijen gelegitimeerd door te verwijzen naar de ogenschijnlijk ontbrekende democratische beginselen van de oppositie – en door de oppositie om omgekeerde reden in twijfel getrokken. De jaren vijftig waren daarmee een decennium van diepe verdeeldheid over de vraag wat democratie was, en het concept werd door politici verbonden aan verschillen van inzicht over de economie, de rol van partijen, en buitenlands beleid.

Rond 1960 kwam aan deze starre tegenstelling langzaam een einde. In Frankrijk was dit het gevolg van de politieke omwenteling van 1958, waarin De Gaulle terugkwam aan de macht. De Vijfde Republiek deed echter veel om zich in een parlementaire traditie te plaatsen en bood zo oude antagonisten de gelegenheid zich met de nieuwe constitutionele orde te verzoenen. Dit gebeurde niet direct, en politici als Mitterrand en Mendès France verzetten zich hevig tegen De Gaulle's hervormingen. Niettemin bracht de nieuwe orde stabiliteit. Deze bood aan links ook bijzondere mogelijkheden tot het veroveren van de macht, en dit vergemakkelijkte de acceptatie van de constitutie van 1958. In Italië en Duitsland verenigden, onder invloed van economische voorspoed en wendingen in de Koude Oorlog, socialisten en Christendemocraten zich met elkaar achter een gezamenlijke democratische noemer. Dankzij deze politieke veranderingen werden een Keynesiaans kapitalisme, individuele vrijheden, en de vertegenwoordigende democratie gemene delers van deze partijen. In Italië zorgden deze veranderingen ook voor een voorzichtige integratie van de communisten in het partijbestel. In beide staten nam het verzet tegen de 'partijstaat' en het gebrek van alternatieve vormen van democratie evenwel toe.

Deze ontwikkelingen zetten zich door in de jaren zestig: enerzijds een sterkere consensus onder politieke elites over de betekenis van democratie, anderzijds een verzet hiertegen binnen en buiten het parlement. De verschillen tussen staten worden in dit verband ook steeds duidelijker: waar de Bondsrepubliek onder Brandt zich succesvol een breder democratiebegrip eigen maakte en het discours van parlementair links in Frans veel thema's van de '68 bewegingen overnam, bleven Italiaanse politieke elites behoedzaam voor meer burgerparticipatie, en hielden zij vast aan de dominante rol van partijen als bemiddelaar tussen staat en samenleving. Buitenparlementaire bewegingen droegen bij aan een hernieuwde interesse bij progressieve partijen voor thema's als zelfbestuur en participatie, maar de kern van de buitenparlementaire

democratieopvatting, het afwijzen van representatie als ondemocratisch, werd door politieke elites overal afgewezen.

In deze zin versterkte ’68 daarmee ook de overeenstemming onder politieke elites dat democratie representatieve en kapitalistische partijdemocratie behelste. Aan dit begrip werd door de economische crisis van 1973 nog een versterkt geloof in de vrije markt als waarborg van individuele vrijheden toegevoegd. Zowel Christendemocratische als linkse partijen kwamen terug van het naoorlogse Keynesianisme, en de balans die vanaf de jaren zestig tussen sociale gelijkheid en individuele vrijheid tot stand was gekomen, werd verstoord en verlegd in het voordeel van het laatste ideaal. Het omarmen van individuele vrijheid paste bovendien in een herwaardering van burgerparticipatie door conservatieve partijen, waarin participatie aan eigen verantwoordelijkheid en een terugtrekkende staat werd verbonden. Veel voormalig sociale bewegingen uit de jaren zeventig overwogen tegelijk een parlementaire weg te bewandelen, en erkenden hiermee de legitimiteit van representatie als democratisch – een verband dat in ’68 nog fel bestreden was. De Duitse Groene partij is hier het bekendste voorbeeld van, maar ook in Italië en Frankrijk kozen leiders van sociale bewegingen ervoor om het spel om de macht mee te spelen, in plaats van de regels van het spel ter discussie te stellen.

Een laatste ingrediënt in deze consensus was de vereenzelviging van de linkse partijen in Italië en Frankrijk met de naoorlogse orde. Waarin in Frankrijk links de Vijfde Republiek omarmde onder Mitterrand, vereenzelvigden de Italiaanse communisten zich met de Christendemocraten en de Italiaanse staat tijdens de Italiaanse crises eind jaren zeventig. Dit leidde nooit tot een volledige legitimatie van de communisten door de Christendemocraten, maar zorgde wel voor een versterking van het beeld van een homogene politieke klasse waarin partijen in het land de dienst uitmaken.

Het Italiaanse voorbeeld toont hiermee in extreme wijze aan wat ook voor de andere staten geldt. Ondanks dat er een grote consensus was gegroeid onder elites over de betekenis van democratie, moet dit model waarmee West-Europa de Val van de Muur tegemoet trad niet zonder meer als succes worden beschouwd. Het was niet alleen een model dat tot stand was gekomen door een lange politieke strijd, maar vooral een model waarvan de kernelementen nu ter discussie staan. De afstand tussen kiezer en gekozene, de positie van politieke partijen, de macht van de vrije markt; het zijn alle thema’s die door nieuwe politieke bewegingen sinds de jaren negentig op de agenda worden gezet en die allemaal historische wortels hebben in de manier waarop democratie sinds de oorlog

vorm gekregen heeft. Deze bewegingen dagen daarmee niet alleen de gevestigde orde uit, maar trekken ook de democratische legitimiteit van die orde in twijfel. Op deze manier wordt duidelijk dat ook het huidige democratiedebat een strijd is om de macht die met verschillende opvattingen van democratie wordt gevoerd – en dat de geschiedenis van democratie in naoorlogs West-Europa geen succesverhaal is, maar een voortdurende strijd tussen verschillende concepties van democratie.

Curriculum Vitae

Pepijn Corduwener (1986) studied History and European Studies at the University of Amsterdam from 2005 until 2009 (both with distinction), followed by an MA in History of Politics and Culture at Utrecht University (with distinction), and graduated with an MA in European Society at the Centre for European Studies at University College London in 2011. He has been working as a PhD Candidate and junior lecturer at the Department of History and Art History at Utrecht University since 2011. His research interests include the contemporary political history of Western Europe, in particular fascism and its legacy, nationalism, and theories, practices and ideas of democracy from the late nineteenth century until the present. He has published articles in the *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis*, the *Journal of War and Culture Studies*, the *Journal for Contemporary European Research*, and the *Historical Journal*.