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Italy's interaction with the European project, from the First to the Second Republic: Continuity and change

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Abstract The chapter addresses the question of the discontinuity and continuity in Italian discourse about European integration after WW2. On the one hand, discontinuity is shown by the changing approach to EU by Mr S. Berlusconi (three times Prime Minister from 1994 to 2011) and the leaders of the ruling centre-right coalitions of the 2nd Italian Republic starting in 1992 as well as by the effects of the economic crisis in underpinning populism. On the other hand, by a historical institutionalist approach, the author stresses that the weight of the anti-fascist origins of the Europeanist streams, the rich cultural heritage and the lack of any practical nationalist alternative explain the comparatively high rate of continuity in Italian support for EU integration.
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Introduction

The relationship between the Italian transition and the process of European integration is a key variable for the study of the evolution of the Italian Republic and of its history, from the First to the Second Republic. On the one hand, the relationship between Italy and Europe is an essential component of the balance between the national and the international dimensions of Italian politics: every process of political and economic change at national level interacts in the globalized world with the international dimension and with the international relations system emerged from the great evolution of 1989 with the end of the bipolar system. On the other, the process of European integration, which started in 1947–1951 with the creation of the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) and especially the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), is for most EU member states and particularly for Italy the institutional framework of the economic reconstruction and of the consolidation of the fragile democracy that followed 20 years of fascist dictatorship. The European integration constitutes the context of the reconstruction of the country and of the elaboration of its new role within the group of the Western great powers.

The hypothesis developed in this chapter is that the historical change that occurred at the end of World War II, with the end of fascism and the emergence of the Italian Republic, is a turning point still acting as an explaining factor of the subsequent institutional development. With the hypothesis that the events around 1945 are the independent variable of the Italian transition, this chapter frames the construction of the Italian Republic within the European context, focusing the attention to the degree of continuity of the relationships between Italy and Europe, in the long-term perspective, beyond superficial changes or conjunctures due to cyclical crises and to the turnover of political elites.

Apparently, the republican history seems to be typically characterized by elements of discontinuity and change. In 1989, the consensus among the parliamentary parties on the constitutional and federal perspective on the European project, or, if you will, 'the Italian Europeanist ideology', represented by the European federalist thought of Altiero Spinelli, reached its peak (Spinelli, 1975,

1986 and 1989). The referendum on the possibility to give constitutional powers to the European Parliament succeeded with the support of all parliamentary parties – 89.1 per cent voted 'yes', 10.9 per cent 'no' (with a 81 per cent participation rate). Only Belgium and Germany showed a level of consensus in favor of a federal construction of the European Union that can be compared with Italy.

On the contrary, the Second Republic started in 1992–1994 with the clear opposition of the majority parties to the Euro, the core of European integration since the Maastricht Treaty (1992). For example, in his famous Bruges speech of 1994, the Foreign Minister Martino proposed to refuse the entry of Italy in the Euro zone, a symbolic rejection with Thatcherite traits of 'Berlusconi's revolution' (Martino, 1994).

The main research questions of this study are the following: How do we explain the elements of continuity and discontinuity between the First (1947–1992) and the Second Republic (1992–2012) with regard to the role of Italy in Europe? What are the potential scenarios of evolution for the early decades of the twenty-first century? After decades of Euro-enthusiasm and those of Euro-scepticism, is it possible to foresee a third Italian pro-Europe choice, and under what conditions? We will be able to answer these questions through an assessment of the long-term perspectives of the European policies of Italian governments.

The First Republic (1947–1992): The Roots and Weaknesses of the European Convergence

The widespread image of the first Italian Republic as being centered on the European consensus needs a clarification. In fact, this supposedly common position of Italian political actors was not something granted at first, and it was only through rather a difficult process that it has been possible to overcome dialectically the political, ideological and social conflict that characterized Italy since the first decades after the war. Between 1950 (Schuman Declaration) and the late 1970s, the union of Europe of the Six had constituted a deep cleavage in internal politics between the center-right majority and the left, mainly represented by the Italian Communist Party (PCI). The gradual rallying around pro-European positions, which became almost unanimous regarding the fundamental choices for European integration and which was driven after the Second World War by the center-right leaders such as A. De Gasperi, U. La Malfa and L. Einaudi, requires the mobilization of internal and external explanatory factors in order to be understood.

One of the main external factors that determined this process of convergence was the international framework of the Cold War, which has been defined by Kaplan (1959) as a 'flexible bipolarity' and which enabled the Western allies (NATO) to tolerate a small margin for maneuver to be left to the European states, generally requiring, in the Italian case (as well as in the German one), a strong European institutional framework. This margin for maneuver was more relevant with regard to the relationship both with the Eastern countries (that is, CSCE) and with the Arab world. In short, a united Europe offered opportunities for a more autonomous and civil foreign policy.

Second, from a socioeconomic perspective, the gradual opening toward liberalization through the implementation of the regional common market (ECM) seemed to lead toward more prosperity while preserving the national specificities and strengths such as the Italian Keynesianism (welfare state) and the Western context of the 'embedded capitalism' (Ruggie, 2009). The Italian political and ideological forces found in Europe – in its institutions and politicocultural forces – a dynamic field of appreciation and increased convergence.

The most important internal factors explaining the centripetal rallying in favor of European integration are the following:

(a) The consensus among all anti-fascist parties (DC (Christian Democrats), PCI, Italian Socialist Party (PSI), Italian Liberal Party (PLI), Italian Republican Party (PRI) in favor of the peace treaty, and of the Constitutional

Treaty of 1947 and in particular of the Article 11 (allowing for possible devolutions of national sovereignty, under conditions of parity and for the sake of peace).[1]

298 r 2013 Macmillan Publishers Ltd. 1472-4790 Comparative European Politics Vol. 11, 3, 296–316

(b) The influence of the Catholic Church under the guide of Pius XII, who was actively committed to European integration, by being driven by several reasons such as his rejection of nationalism; an aspiration of revenge against the secular nation-states in the name of Christian Europe; the will to strengthen the alliance with the United States combined with the rejection of their model of society; his strong opposition to Communism and the USSR. In fact, the Christian Democrats run all six Member States in the early years of EU integration and defended those interests and position in the process (Chenaux, 1990).

(c) The pro-European commitment of most part of the Italian industry, including Fiat, under the leadership of the Agnelli family, although initially they constituted a minority among Italian economic elites because of the negative influence of 20 years of autarchy (Castronovo, 1977).

(d) The pro-European conversion of the Italian left between 1945 and 1978. First Nenni's PSI, then the largest trade union, the CGIL, and the Berlinguer and Napolitano's PCI changed their ideological position to open pro-Europeanism.[2] This process can be explained by the pressure of functional centripetal dynamics of the Italian party system. These dynamics pushed the two left parties toward more pro-European positions because of their progressive legitimization of the government (particularly on European issues), the search for a third pole different from the two global powers but also because of their increasing necessity to differentiate their identity from Communist positions that followed the break-up of the relations with the USSR (caused by the events in Hungary in 1956 for the PSI, while for the PCI this happened only after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, Afghanistan in 1979 and the Soviet threat to Poland in 1980).

(e) The EC was considered by Moscow and the international communist movement as an instrument of the Cold War. The EC was also considered by several parties of the European left (except for the Belgian party of P.H. Spaak) as a 'Vatican Europe', although it was defined as 'papist' project by the Labour Party in the 1950s, and as the three 'K' Europe (kristlich, kapitalist, kriegerisch) by K. Schumacher's SPD (pre-Bad Godesberg and pre-W. Brandt) (Telo` , 1989). If, in Italy between 1978 and 1984, this bureaucratic and technocratic construction became – paradoxically and suddenly – the optimal framework for the advancement of the PCI's 'Italian road to socialism', it was due to multiple factors, partly very specific to the Italian political context and partly intertwined with the parallel pro-European evolution of the major parties of the European social democracy (which met in the European parliamentary assembly before 1979).

(f) The first factor is the quest for internal legitimacy of the main Western Communist Party, which after having been marginalized for 30 years was repositioning itself closer to the government in the late 1970s. Another factor is represented by the functional consequences of the strengthening of European parliament, where the PCI's elected representatives started to interact with the European social democratic left in evolution. A third factor is the PCI's identity crisis that became significant as the breakup with Moscow reached its peak and when Euro-communism proved to be a dead end. European integration became an ideological alternative, an opportunity for convergence with French socialists and German social democrats, notably in full convergence with Spinelli's project of political union that boosted the expectations for a European active role in East–West relations (Helsinki process and Ostpolitik) and North–South as well (following the work of F. Mitterrand and W. Brandt).

(g) The exceptional influence of the federalist movement in favor of the United States of Europe, led by A. Spinelli. The latter developed an extraordinary career that started with the 'Ventotene Manifesto' of 1941 and went on with being the advisor to the Christian Democrat Prime Minister A. De Gasperi and to P. Nenni (Socialist Minister of Foreign Affairs in the sixties), and later to leading the reconciliation with the leader of Italian 'Euro-communism' E. Berlinguer, who put him in the party's lists as an independent candidate to the European Parliament in 1984 (Scoppola, 1977). The idea of a political Europe is the main theme and the core concept of the Italian contribution to the construction of a federal Europe: from the Article 38 of the Treaty of the European Community and the defense of the 'Spinelli Project' between 1981 and 1984 to the referendum of 1989.
(h) The pro-European pluralistic convergence of most of the major intellectual currents of the first Italian Republic, both Catholic and secular, also illustrates the extent of the European consensus among Italian elites. For decades, Europe is seen as a symbol of modernity, of the desire to consolidate democracy – despite internal terrorism and organized crime, of the aspiration toward peace between former enemies and toward the achievement of the international role of Europe as power of peace. After the initial distrust, the European internal market is perceived as an opportunity for the prosperity of Italian economy and social wealth. Europe is presented as the best framework for the recovery of the international role of the country, associating Occidentalism, Europeanism and openness to East and South.
(i) Certainly, discourse analysis on this topic is open to critiques, deriving from the gap between the Europeanist rhetoric and the non-European practice of the public administration and the major socio-economic groups. This gap between the European discourse of the elites and the implementation of EC/EU public policies is striking both at the national level, as well as the regional (European) one. The limited (and late) rates of implementation of European directives (despite the improvements made by the La Pergola Law) and the deplorable rate of spending capacity of structural funds, especially in the South, negatively affected the Italian rhetoric on Europe. This is the exact opposite of the situation in Britain where Euroscepticism is in its official discourse and the very European in its practices (Fabbrini and Piattoni, 2008). This critical factor is also linked to the gradual rise of several Eurosceptic political currents.

The Second Republic (1992–2010): From Euroscepticism to Europe by Necessity

The changes that occurred in the way that many Italians relate to the European integration since the early 1990s cannot be adequately explained without taking into account the changing international context and the role of Italy in Europe after the end of the ColdWar. The main explanatory factors with regard to this dimension are the following:
(a) Despite its proximity to Central and Eastern Europe, and its increased commercial ties with 'MittelEuropean' countries, Italy struggles to adapt to the post-Cold War Europe, whereas Germany benefits from the change: national unification and eastern enlargement. The geopolitical implications of the 1989/1991 historic turning point are not all positive for Italy: it is no longer the indispensable ally of the United States, a kind of gigantic aircraft carrier projected in the Mediterranean, as it was in the context of the Cold War. On the contrary, Italy is directly exposed to the troubles of the Mediterranean neighborhood, but is unable to profit from it through a strategic plan, which would include the two major geopolitical issues of immigration and energy. Last but not least, Italy is in double trouble in the context of an accelerated economic globalization (low levels of competitiveness and growth) and of the gradual emergence of a multipolar

world, and not only because this limits its previous role, notably being a member of the G7.

(b) With the adoption of the Treaty of Maastricht (1992), the European regulatory power is institutionally strengthened (EU and EMU) and the center–periphery cleavage becomes rather clear with respect to the European role of Italy and, to some extent, turns into a form of de facto hierarchy among Member States within the new EU. The EMU invalidates the traditional instrument of the Italian adaptation to the challenges of competitiveness in the market, the devaluation of the lira. The traditional internal debate between 'the party of government spending' and 'the party of budgetary austerity' evolves dramatically between the moment of accession into the EMS (1979) and the implementation of the monetary union (1997). The publication in 1994 by two leaders of the German CDU, Lamers and Scha¨uble, of a paper in favor of the Kern-Europa – the core – and against Mediterranean countries joining the Euro indicates the constant relevance of the key issue dealing with the position of Italy in Europe. The publication of this paper shows the extent of the dramatic change from the leading role exerted by Italy in the period 1950–1989 and also of the transformation of the old alliance between De Gasperi's Italy and the Franco-German couple into Italy's submission to the 'external constraint', meaning the scenario of Rokkan's center–periphery cleavage.

(c) The enlarged EU radically changes its nature from the small community of the first decades. On the one hand, the European dimension remains the condicio sine qua non for the effective adaptation of the old continent to the new global context. On the other, the 'European federalist faith' of all the founding states of the EC is strongly affected during the process of European enlargement from 12 to 27 countries in 15 years, if the extent of this impact varies according to national contexts. The German 'Normalisierung' is part of a process of dynamic change within the Council and the European Council where Italy does not fit well.

Within this context, the rise of Euroscepticism during the early years of the Second Republic is best explained. What are its most important political and cultural expressions?

First, we should speak of 'Euroscepticisms' in the plural form, as political, territorial (regional), socio-economic and cultural factors play a role. First of all, the government 'Berlusconi 1' (1994) constitutes a decisive catalyst for the rise of Euroscepticism in Italy. An example of the symbolic importance of the change is constituted by the above mentioned statement of the Foreign Minister A. Martino (Foreign Minister and member of 'Forza Italia') against the adoption of Euro in Italy and reverse the political position of the founding country – the same country that 4 years earlier had led to a majority decision of the European Council of Rome in favor of adopting the single currency, with the support of Andreotti. As the balance within the European Council is concerned, the Prime Minister Berlusconi's Italy joins the side of Britain.

Second, the other governing party, Bossi's 'Northern League' openly positioned itself in favor of localism and regionalism in the 'Padania' – not only against the national state but also against the 'European superstate, centralized and technocratic'.

Moreover, the third party of the government coalition, the post-fascist 'Alleanza Nazionale' of Fini asked for an integrated Europe based more on national interests, reminding us of the Gaullist approach in the 1960s. An example of the party's positions is represented by the fact that in that period the Italian government has threatened to veto on several occasions, particularly with regard to the timing of the European implementation of the international negotiations for emission reduction standards (from the 'Kyoto process' to the negotiation for limiting climate change of Copenhagen, Cancun and Durban). Immigration policy, media and European cooperation in criminal issues provide other examples.

Beyond the area of Italian domestic political conflict, in the mid-1990s there were deeply rooted tendencies toward the rise of Euroscepticism in Italy, which

were radically changing the political landscape and culture of the First Republic. The most important issue is the economic and monetary policy: the confrontation between, on the one hand, the European strategy represented by the former governor of the Central Bank, Guido Carli, who, following the tradition of Einaudi, interpreted the Treaty of Maastricht as a strengthening of the external constraint, necessary for reforms (Carli, 1993; De Felice, 2003), and, on the other, the broad internal consensus in favor of the rise in public spending, that had pushed the national debt in excess of 100 per cent of GDP, was dramatically revived.

It is known that following the sudden political defeat of Berlusconi and the action of the center-left governments headed by L. Dini (1994, again a former director of the Bank of Italy), R. Prodi (1997), M. D'Alema (1999) and G. Amato (2000), Italy finally passed the examination for accessing the Euro zone (1997), also thanks to the success of the consultation with the organized socioeconomic stakeholders carried out by the Minister of Economy C.A. Ciampi, former Director of the Bank of Italy and later President of the Republic (Napolitano, 1992 and 2002; Padoa Schioppa, 2004; Amato, 2007). Also the figures of Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa, Mario Monti and Mario Draghi symbolize the strength and prestige of this cultural trend.

This explains the fact that the 'Berlusconi 2' government (2001–2006) never questions again the Italian membership to the Euro zone. However, it will introduce some of the classic political streams of Euroscepticism, which were already present in other European countries, but unheard of so far in the Italian case.

The first stream is represented by the attempt to build an UK–Italy alliance within the European Council, opposed to the Franco–German axis, and a shift from the traditional affiliation of Italy to the group of founding members, to the centrality of the Atlantic Alliance during the G.W. Bush's administration. After 2001, the fracture with EU's hard core (Germany, France and Belgium) during the war in Iraq, in alliance with the United Kingdom, constitutes the peak of this process of transition.

The second dimension of Italian Euroscepticism is represented by the support of further enlargement. Sharing the approach – traditionally Thatcherite – for an unlimited expansion of the EU, Italy started to claim for the accession of Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Israel, thus turning enlargement into a weakening factor of the deepening of integration.

The third dimension of Italian Euroscepticism is constituted by the diffusion of populist critiques to the EU in the country, originating, on one side, in free market anti-regulation and, on the other, in an incoherent mix of nationalism and localism.

The last dimension is represented by the proliferation of tensions with the supranational regulatory agency represented by the European Commission concerning a wide set of issues: on the excessive concentration of media ownership, on the design of an immigration policy at times purely based on law enforcement, on the revolt of the League's grassroots against the 'quota of milk production', and also on the significant delays in the construction of a knowledge-based society, known as the 'Lisbon Strategy', launched in 2000 and not implemented by Italy, (see the 2004 'Kok Report', the report of the Luxembourg presidency in 2005 and that of the German presidency in 2007), resulting in the lowest level of investments in research and higher education in Western Europe.

Although before that period Italy had not shown excellent results in consistently implementing EU legislation, the political change is rooted in a new sense of lack of guilt and almost pride in the weak compliance with EC/EU law, which is paradoxical in a country where European federalism had marked the first Republic. This climate of indifference toward the EU is accompanied with the emergence or revival of anti-integration currents in the Italian culture, although of moderate impact and intensity compared with other European countries, but significantly showing a profound transformation in civil society. These cultural currents can be summarized as follows:

- The rediscovery of 'geopolitics' or, in other words, a vision of international

relations based on political realism and territorial proximity.
- A quest for the Italian identity, sometimes as complementary with European identity (Rusconi, 2003), sometimes as a rhetorical alternative to the European one. With regard to this point, the Italian identity is then the subject of a series of studies (as, for instance, a 50 volumes series edited by Galli Della Loggia and published by Il Mulino), as well as cultural identity and the specificity of Italian literature.
- The rehabilitation of the localism of small enterprises and of the local and populist democracy against Brussels' European technocracy.
-The various forms of anti-cosmopolitanism and anti-globalization (both right wing and left wing) converge in the rejection of the EU, while the emergence of far left parties opposed to the European Treaties.[3] Nationalism with fascist origins acquires an intellectual dignity with Veneziani and Fisichella[4] (Veneziani, 2002).
- The opinion campaigns of the Catholic Church against the secularization of the European institutions in the name of 'Christian Europe' (Weiler, 2007).

Analogies and Differences with Germany

Italy is not the only country with a 'federalist' European tradition that has experienced a strong Eurosceptic internal pressure following the end of the bipolar world. It is then relevant to compare Italy with the country more similar with regard to three crucial historical factors: the delay in national unification, as opposed to France and Great Britain (Italy and Germany became nationstates in 1861 and 1866, respectively); top-down industrialization processes, driven by the central government; and the traumatic experience of the fascist regimes that determined their tragic defeat in World War II. In both countries, the strong rejection of extreme nationalism explains the psychological, cultural and constitutional predisposition toward European integration along with the adoption of a federal model for four decades after 1945. Habermas and other scholars have examined the potentially 'cathartic', radically innovative, traits of this shift from an aggressive nationalism to pacifism and civil power(Telo`, 2006).
Yet both countries have experienced, after 1989, a historical phase that could be defined as the least Euro-enthusiastic with regard to their EU membership, in intergovernmentalist terms. Despite the various differences, particularly with regard to economic and international policy, we consider that it is worth exploring the similarities between Italy and Germany, particularly in the period that followed the one of the Chancellors who led Europe (Adenauer, Brandt, Schmidt and Kohl) and which took place during the leadership of Schroeder. The latter, as a result of two successes, namely, the obtainment of unity and national sovereignty in 1990, asserted the Normalisierung of Germany's role in Europe, especially between 1997 and 2002, thus weakening its commitment toward European integration. This implied the adoption of a way less proactive approach toward the European project, comparable with that of France or with the British instrumentalism. A more utilitarian participation to the EU was the implemented, based on national interests calculated on the short term along with a more assertive stance in world politics.
Thus, the questions that arise here are the following: To what extent the two post-fascists countries, which had turned the dissociation with the respective periods of dictatorship and aggressive nationalism into a factor of national identity after 1945, and also into the foundations of a strong supranational EU idea (Adenauer and Kohl matching de Gasperi and Prodi), have become Eurosceptic? Or had they gradually reached 'Europeanism' of necessity?
It may be early for a definitive answer. But several factors point toward the answer 'no'. Despite the rhetoric, these trends have not determined key policy choices, they have not resulted in a solid alternative balance, they did not affect the two essential features, crucial in the European scenario: the ratification of the treaties and the commitment of the Italian and German delegations at the time of treaties' reforms toward a greater integration (strengthening the legislative powers of the EP, of the Commission, of the qualified majority vote

within the Council of Ministers). Other examples could be drawn from the two Conventions of 2000 and 2002/2003. The number of negative votes on the council remained very marginal.

Of course, in Germany, the rulings of the Karlsruhe Constitutional Court (in 2003 and in 2009) show an 'integration fatigue', but they can also be ultimately interpreted as a constitutional consolidation of European progresses. In Italy, concrete policy actions in favor of the EU go largely unnoticed among the public and in the media, but they are nevertheless essential, as, for instance, the measures adopted for respecting the convergence criteria of the euro zone, at least formally. Italy and Germany are potentially on opposite fronts. In both countries, the anti-Euro currents (with opposite motivations) have emerged, particularly in 2009/2011, but the conclusion that we can draw in 2011 is rather in favor of the European convergence of the two countries' political and economic elites.

Why? The answer that emerged in 2009, in the framework of the conference 'European stories'[5] in Oxford, concerned both the German and the Italian case: some parallelismbetween the two countries exists, despite the huge differences. An alternative to EU membership has not been developed because it is not historically possible: simply, it does not exist, neither for Germany, nor for Italy.

In Germany, we witnessed a revival of the debate on the scope of the 'Sonderweg', namely, the peculiar and solitary path of Germany's power at the center of Europe, which has been reactivated not only by political actors seeking media effect (Garton Ash, 1993). Germany returned to Bismarck's Realpolitik, going beyond the DM-Patriotismus described by Habermas in the 1980s, and destabilized the European institutions. The literature quickly showed that, in 1991, Germany had delegated to Maastricht's new EU the sovereignty that it had regained in 1990 and its valuable currency. After the turning point of 1989, the choice of the newly unified Germany – as well as Italy's – pointed clearly in the direction of strengthening the institutions of European cooperation (Keohane, 1993).[6]

If elements of discontinuity emerged in Germany and Italy's European policy, they appeared later. For example, while Schroeder was Chancellor, the request of a permanent membership on the Security Council of the United Nations was formulated, together with the creation of a global lobbying called 'G4', in association with Japan, Brazil and India and in clear conflict with many other countries, including Italy and Spain. This is indeed a turning point with regard to the idea of a single common representation of the EU within international organizations. This claim was always advocated by Italy with an internal bipartisan consensus, and has been also raised by Germany in the past.

The comparison leads us to emphasize the importance of analogies, on the one hand, and the higher rate of continuity of Italy's European policy, on the other. Italy and Germany backed similar positions during the debate on the Treaties' reform, which took place from 2001 to the European Convention of 2002–2003 and from the 2004 Constitutional Treaty to the Lisbon Treaty of 2007.

With the exception of the abovementioned element of national pride, Angela Merkel's Germany appears to have returned to a clearer European commitment in particular during the economic crisis of 2008–2011 (which has been an upsetting factor also of Italian internal politics). Despite the internal debate (*Frankfurter Allgemeine* and other newspapers) concerning the potential evolution toward a new structure of the EU system that was defined as Transferunion, namely, an European Union that transfers financing instruments from economically well-performing countries to less economically effective countries, in antithesis with the Treaties, the establishment of a 700 billion Euros Anti-Crisis Fund (ESM) and the advancements toward a European economic governance reflect these progresses.

Unlike in the past, in this difficult evolution toward further European integration the Minister of the Economy Scha¨ uble played an important political role. We can see here another similarity with Italy: we should emphasize the transition of the Italian Minister of Economic Affairs Tremonti from

a hypercritical approach toward the European Commission (Tuccari, 2002; Tremonti, 2008) to the role of pillar of the Euro area's orthodoxy in Italy between 2009 and 2011. This evolution entailed also some refusals by Tremonti to adapt to the Prime Minister's decisions, which earned him the trust of important European institutions, the Council Ecofin and the ECB. This double conversion is yet another example of the centripetal power increasingly exerted by the European institutions of the EU, which has reached its maximum level of economic integration in its history.

For both countries, but also for the other 25 member states, the main criteria that can be applied for explaining the strength of their European roots can also explain these fluctuations in each country's positions toward European integration. The evolution of the Berlusconi government from Euroscepticism to a realistic acceptance of the EU and the EMU's binding framework, and A. Merkel's new European leading position, are only the latest examples of the effective external pressure of the common institutional configuration, as well as of the influence of multiple associations and coalitions of cross-cutting interests, which exist in a context of economic globalization.

Explaining the Continuity of Italy's European Policy: The Europeanization Factor

The comparative literature has studied these complex processes experienced by Italy and Germany in parallel in the framework of the concept of 'Europeanization' (Schmidt, 2006), which is a top-down process that is intertwined with bottom-up processes. Concerning this framework, problems often emerge with regard to legitimacy. Often Europeanization is perceived as a 'policy without politics', which can only imply remarkable costs in terms of internal consensus, of supranational legitimacy of administrative, technological and legal nature for citizens and organized interests. Polls show the deterioration of the European consensus among citizens, notably during the last economic crisis. However, Europeanization is quickly evolving and strengthening its effects: the EU, from the 'Lisbon Strategy' to 'EU 2020', encourages, for example, a social dialogue among social partners. The choice of the second Berlusconi government (after 2001) and of the third (after 2008) was to negotiate with the trade unions rather than to break the consultation mechanism created by Ciampi in 1993, as he had tried unsuccessfully in 1994.

Europe's external relations with the great powers are also affected. During the Italian Presidency of the European Council in 2003, Berlusconi signed in Beijing a strategic partnership agreement with China against the will of G.W. Bush and Rumsfeld and despite the US administration's pressures against it. The assessment of the outcomes of Europeanization processes shows strengths and also multiple limits: on the one hand, the institutional system of the EU is now a mature and consolidated polity, exerting a strong counterbalancing influence with regard to national fluctuations in European policies. In many policy fields, the institutional system of the EU operates daily both in the sense of continuity and stability. On the other hand, at the same time, when it demands innovation from the national systems, it encounters extraordinary obstacles, although more in southern Europe than in northern Europe.

How can we explain the evolution of the center-right parties' positions toward Europe after 1994, leaving Euroscepticism aside? Among the complex and multiple reasons of the relatively rapid decline of the political Euroscepticism between 1994 and 2008, we should mention the fact that, generally, there is increasing evidence of the increased efficiency of the pressure of the European institutions on national governments in terms of centripetal moderation, marginalization of extremes positions, depoliticization of issues at stake.[7] Moreover, Italy's access to the Euro zone and its access to the government led to a shift in the Northern League's stance, from 'secessionism' and radical claims to moderate claims in terms of a federalist reform of the State and to the ratification, although unwillingly, of the European Treaties.[8]

Much ado about nothing – as Shakespeare would say. The explanation for

this gradual centripetal rallying can be found in this widely shared view: there is no alternative to the European choice for a country like Italy. Even in Great Britain, France and Germany there is none, despite the very high internal pressures against integration. In a comparative framework, Italy is still in the most pro-European group. As seen from Brussels, during the post-Cold War period (which coincides with the second Italian republic), EU's problems came from France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, Poland, the Czech Republic, Greece as so on, but not from Italy.

During the 20 years since the inquest 'Mani Pulite' (Clean Hands), which caused the collapse of the parties of the First Republic in 1992, Italy's approach toward Europe experienced numerous fluctuations. On the one hand, the explosion of Eurosceptic currents, on the other, the emergence of complex factors of maturation of a more grown-up balance between Italian interests and European membership. Moreover, the process of Europeanization is a partial success. The weight of the EU on national legislation, administration and development of political parties has increased considerably. Partly, it was a failure. The practices (internal policies) and the application of European directives are often inconsistent: public debt, disappointing usage of structural funds, non-application of the 'Lisbon Strategy' of modernization and structural reform; in this context, the degradation of quality of democracy (excessive 'mediacracy', degree of 'kleptocracy' and corruption, significance of organized crime) increases during the Second Republic.

The Importance of the Factors Dealing with the 'Long-term' Perspective

The lack of alternatives in Italy's European policy is more pronounced than elsewhere in Europe also because of deep historical circumstances. What we could define as history's 'deep layer' has an impact in relation to the fragility of Italian nationalism and on the country's 'cultural–national' traditions, marked by its 'one hundred cities' since the age of Dante and Machiavelli, and since the cosmopolitanism of intellectuals, both conservatives – Counter-Reformation – and progressive – Renaissance and anticipation of the Enlightenment (Croce, 1932; Chabod, 1961; Leopardi (1972 [1830]); Gramsci, 1975; Machiavelli (2005 [1513])).

The weakness of nationalism was confirmed by the fragility of the liberal and democratic currents during the 'Risorgimento' and after the unification – achieved in 1861 – and under threat of delegitimization by the church (Duggan, 2008). The disastrous results of the fascist nationalism caused the emergence of the idea of Europe as an anti-fascist myth (Pistone, 1975) and, since 1945, allowed for the affirmation of internationalist, liberal, Christians and socio-communist political trends that gave origin to the Republican Constitution of 1948, which is still in force. The continuity between the first and the Second Republic, despite the great internal and geopolitical changes of the last decades, can be explained primarily through the vitality of this 'path dependency', a route determined by reference to a precedent historic fundamental turnaround.

Of course, the economic and social interdependence within the single market since the 1960s, as well as the strengthening of European institutions and the economic and institutional Europeanization (although partial), contributed to the abovementioned too. However, this continuity was particularly evident in the role of ideas, notably in the existence of the idea of Europe among intellectuals and the maturation of an intellectual debate. We should mention some examples:

- The rather exceptional influence (comparable with Belgium and Germany) of the European federalist thought: aside from the exceptional personality of Spinelli, we should mention the greatest political philosopher of the twentieth century, Norberto Bobbio.
- The Italian contribution to the debate on a common European culture: for example, the search for a common identity despite the linguistic pluralism carried out by Eco (2000) and Cacciari (1994).
- The openness to the Mitteleuropa and the enlargement to an expanded Europe even before 1989 and the decisions of Copenhagen (Magris, 1986).
- The Italian contribution to new thinking routes on Europe as an international

power (De Giovanni, 1992).
- The non-anti-European approach of numerous neo-republicans (Rusconi, 1993).
- The gradual legitimization of European studies in various academic circles beyond the small circle of activists for a federal Europe: in the fields of political science, history, social sciences, economics, law, comparative literature.

All these cultural trends have helped to put into perspective and contextualize the weight of the purely instrumental view of the EU, the drift toward an approach toward Europe as a cow to be milked and the opportunity for the states to negotiate the interests of the national lobbies through exchanges and short-term maneuvers. Of course, this approach affects the behavior of numerous actors, but compared with various other Member States, the 'Thatcherite' approach against EMU and any further deepening of the EU becomes increasingly marginal in the years 1990s and 2000s. In fact, the internal policy is increasingly influenced by European institutions, supranational parties like the EPP and the ESP, and EU's medium- and long-term policies.

However, instrumentalism survives in EU's design as a 'necessary evil', a tool to legitimize unpopular choices, a substitute for weak governments. Italy's instrumentalism of the 'European vocation', as well as of the previous idealistic legacy, was at work several times: during the Prodi government of 1996–1997 (a tax for Europe) and during the Berlusconi government of 2009–2011 (budget cuts in the framework of the Euro zone crisis).

The costs of the relative shift toward short-term perspectives and the instrumental approach are obvious. First of all, a bottom-up Europeanization of social behaviors is largely unsuccessful, and the 'other type of democracy' (Morlino, 2005) remains on paper. Second, the fluctuations of Italy's European discourse limit the effectiveness of its policies within the European institutions. Finally, the perceptions of its partners, with regard to Italy's European role, significantly deteriorated between 2000 and 2010.

Conclusions: Three Scenarios

This chapter gives great importance to the long-term perspective, the continuity between the phases of Italian history and the catalyst moment consisting of the fundamental turning point of 1945. However, part of the literature emphasizes the importance of what A. Panebianco called the 'Berlusconi-an revolution' (since 1994) and of its effects, which, according to the great writer Claudio Magris, were of political, economic, cultural and even anthropological nature. Relatively to the European comparative framework, the factors of deterioration are at work and sometimes seem to reach a deeper layer, beyond political squabbles.

The perspectives are therefore not determined mechanically. There are several alternatives and the future is open. What are the scenarios for Italy's role in Europe for the decades ahead? What is the balance between the external constraints and the clean up of the state, of public finances and of society?What is the new relationship between the internal and external factors of transition and recovery?

Three scenarios are possible: an adjusted continuity with the First and the Second Republic, Italy's 'dropout' of European further integration, or the third scenario, a new beginning for Italy that, in order to work, should also mean a new beginning for the EU as part of a globalized and multipolar world.

The scenario of continuity reminds us of Tomasi di Lampedusa's famous novel, 'Il Gattopardo', and the ability of Italian elites to adapt to change through insignificant reforms and self-preservation. Despite the low competitiveness of the system, the endurance of the banking system, the social dialogue and the SMEs' dynamism would allow for a small modernization in Italian style (low levels of productivity and innovation). The continuity would prevail over the discontinuity, in the light of the six or seven decades after 1945, despite the domestic and international changes. The policy of European engagement would be preserved, but subject to regular tensions and uncertainties. Surely, on the

one hand, the rare resources accumulated in the past decades would continue to be at work: the weight of history of being a founding member of the small EC and the success of the accession to the Euro in 1997. Membership of the Euro zone and the legal and political framework of the EU would play an enhanced role for fiscal policy. But a gradual degradation is inevitable: What are the unexpected internal effects of the policy 'EU¼straitjacket' with regard to the legitimacy of the EU in Italy? Would the European commitment of the deep stratum of Italian citizens be affected? And, apart from legitimacy, would the core of the Italian national identity in Europe negatively upset?

We defined the scenario of marginalization and division of the country a 'dropout' scenario. It is the expression used by several historians, including Prosperi, about what happened to Italy following the decline of the Renaissance and the failure of national unity in the sixteenth century, with three centuries of provincial decline and an accumulated setback compared with Northern Europe. Indeed, this 'dropout' scenario reminds us by analogy the era opened by the Council of Trent and the isolation of Italy from the Europe of the Reformation, the Dutch Golden Age and the Enlightenment (Prosperi, 1996 and 1999; Pierangelo Schiera e Gabriella Zarri and A.Prosperi, 2007).

Of course, it is a metaphor, as history never repeats itself in exactly the same way. However, analyses of the dramatic state of the Peninsula are increasing, in various political and cultural environments (for example, Attali, Padoa-Schioppa, Panebianco and so on) with regard to the economy, politics, society and customs: the deterioration of the quality of democracy and of the productivity of the 'Italian system' even leads to the questioning of the country's unity. The question of national unity re-emerges, paradoxically, 150 years after unification. The recurrent early elections, the development of territorial parties, both in the north and in the south, and the crisis of national parties, show a conflict between democracy and national unity, as in Belgium. The revival of the Italian specificity is intertwined with patterns existing elsewhere in Europe. Both the Italian crisis and the Belgian crisis (and the Spanish one) send messages to the European Union and question the future of European democracy and its role in the world. And the EU would no longer be able to counter the secessionist and populist tendencies with its successes.

Which are the structural elements, on the one hand, and the conjunctural aspects, on the other, of the Italian crisis? Could Italy's long-term European vocation be affected? The announced fracture with previous policy positions would have the same scope of that of 1945–1950, but in the opposite direction, with that is disintegration. This dramatic scenario of division and marginalization would become tangible by the possible exit from the Euro zone, a radical defeat of the national leadership, although we would also witness the opposite discourse (The Euro is against Italy). What is worse is that this dropout, threatening the national unity, would also affect the position of the Italian nation in a globalized world; an Italian black sheep in a setting where the West and Europe are also in trouble, given the dynamism of the emerging markets and its internal divisions.

The key to a possible third scenario, centered on reforms, can be found partly in Italy and partly in Europe. On the one hand, it can be found in Italy, as only a better-functioning unitary nation state and a better quality national democracy can draw benefits from the EU's support and, in turn, proactively contribute to the European project: the challenge is to build a reformist majority bloc, composed of diverse interests and political movements, but agreeing on a new choice in favor of innovation and Europe. As it has been argued by Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa and Mario Draghi, the emergencies to be addressed are the decline in citizen participation, the federal reform of the state, the reorganization of the justice system and the effective fight to crime and corruption.

The resources for this choice may exist: the decisions of 1945–1957 and the European vocation of Italy, of its civil society, its culture and several of its political currents.

However, on the other hand, the external variable will also be decisive: the

evolution of the EU after the crisis of 2008–2011. Is there a credible path between the new version of the German model of Europe, Scha¨ uble-Lamers's 'Kern-Europa' of 1994 (excluding Italy and the Mediterranean countries from the core of integration) and fragmentation? This could happen only if the EU were able to reform and evolve in its mechanisms of economic governance. Within this new framework, Italy can contribute to a transformed European Union (even without reform of the Treaty): an EU as an effective and legitimate framework for the effective coordination of national economic policy, socioeconomic modernization, immigration, media regulation, waste treatment and so ony. A more mature and structured 'Europeanization' is needed and Italy would benefit from it.

The EU would no longer be an external, international variable, but almost an internal one. On the one hand, several factors call for a change in the EU, which is generally facing difficulties in the context of globalization. The continent is characterized, in contrast to the Americas and East Asia, by fear, the dominance of internal security issues and the inability to manage the consequences of immigration in terms of integration.

Italy in particular is facing difficulties, but it is part of a continent in distress in the context of an accelerated globalization. The Italian anomalies partly remind us of the anomalies in the European context of globalization. Thus, also the EU needs to adapt to globalization as M. Draghi suggested in his farewell speech in June 2011 to the Bank of Italy, on the eve of his new role at the ECB. This represents an innovative contribution of a country – Italy – undergoing internal renovation. And Italy needs a Europe capable of supporting the developments in member states in smarter ways than in the past. There have been very honorable pleas for a more stringent EU. This option could dramatize the issue of national unity, especially regarding the reform of the Stability Pact. The EU can be more relevant without necessarily being more legally binding. Several studies on international and supranational governance attest to possible results in the absence of legal constraints and threats of sanctions. A deep multilateralism can be effective without being more restrictive. One can obtain significant results even in the absence of external legal constraints. If the deep layer is not fundamentally affected, Italy suggests to turn the consolidated framework of the Lisbon Treaty into a strong European organization, both as a community and multilateral, capable of more effective coordination of the national paths toward modernization. Thus, instead of a 'Leviathan EU', an imperative super state, capable of threats, Italy hints toward an EU able to coordinate national policies in a 'smart' way, a cadre of lasting inputs and accompanying measures.

In other words, we are dealing simultaneously with a national modernization and a European project to be renovated: the fate of the Italian nation in Europe is linked to the fate of Europe in the context of globalization.

Notes

1 Drafted to correspond to the expectations raised by the UN San Francisco Charter, the Article11, stating Italy's availability to delegate, under conditions of parity, parts of its sovereignty to international organizations aiming at peace, allowed for 60 years of integration of the European treaties in the Italian institutional system, without having to go through the constitutional amendments as in France or the rulings of the Constitutional Court as in Germany. See: Costituzione della Repubblica Italiana, Art 11, Rome 2007.

2 G. Napolitano, future President of the Republic, is the author of the parliamentary resolution on foreign policy in 1978 by which the PCI explicitly recognized for the first time the EC and NATO, as part of the conciliation between PCI and DC (known as the 'historic compromise') and the need to consolidate and stabilize Italian democracy, affected by domestic terrorism (the 'Moro affair' occurred in 1978) and the economic crisis that followed the oil shocks. There were deep roots, namely, the awareness of the importance of European integration, which had matured during the 1960s and 1970s. See on this point: A. Ranney and G. Sartori, Eurocommunism. The Italian Case, Washington, 1978 and G.R.Urban, Eurocommunsm. Its Roots and Future in Italy and elsewhere, Washington, 1978 and G. Napolitano-E.Hobsbowm, Dialogue about the PCI, London 1974. See also: Donald Sassoon, Contemporary Italy, London, Longman, 1986; D. La Palombara, Democracy Italian Style, Yale University Press 1987 et M. L. Salvadori, La sinistra nella storia d'Italia, Bari, Laterza, 1999. E. Berlinguer has given an interview to the 'Corriere della sera', regarding 'NATO as a protective shield for the PCI's reforms', which was followed by a matching parliamentary

resolution, the first since 1947 that was elaborated and voted by all the democratic parties.
3 Even if, contrary to the far left in France and other countries, key figures such as R. Rossanda the ‘Manifesto’ and even A. Negri have argued in the French press in favor of ‘Yes’ in the French referendum of 2005.
4 But in their search for a European legitimacy through the admission to the EPP, the right does not dare to take an explicitly anti-EU position.
5 The proceedings were published in K. Nikolaidis and J. Lacroix (eds.) European Stories, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2011, and the two chapters on Germany and Italy were, respectively, written by J. Mu¨ ller and M. Telo` .
6 A similar interpretation is also developed by M. Telo` and R. Seidelmann in ‘Where is Germany going?’ Special issue of the Journal Europa-Europe, 1999.
7 Which does not prevent the outbreak of occasional conflicts and serious failures in several policy areas: the Lisbon Strategy, CAP, environment, media, immigrationy
8 This article has been written in July 2011. However, the withdrawal of the Berlusconi’s government (November 2011) and the arrival in office of Monti’s government is providing some additional empirical evidence confirming the thesis of the prevailing ‘continuity’ of Italy’s European policy: see, for example, the Senate Resolution of 25 January 2012, voted by an unprecedented majority of PDL, PD and Center parties (Mozione unitaria sulla politica Europea) and also the convergence of all main Italian parties on the Intergovernmental treaty proposed by Germany as a ‘Fiscal compact’ and signed by 25 European Union’s member states.

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