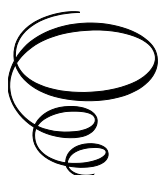# The Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions and Citizens' Action in Italy and Quebec

The Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions and Citizens' Action in Italy and Quebec

By

Emanuele Achino

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Over the last three decades, social structure has deeply changed, worldwide. From Thatcherism and Reaganism to neoliberal politics; from communism and socialism to welfare cuts; from the fall of the Berlin Wall to Brexit and Corbyn; from national to supranational politics, and from a decline of political parties to the rise of a new, global, social, movement. Political participation has also changed, influencing forms of contention and participation, nationally and internationally. This new global social movement - also described as the no-global social movement, or alter-globalized social movement (*mouvement altermondialiste* in French) – is a heterogeneous movement that combines a diversity of political cultures and backgrounds. And yet, the mixture of different political cultures and backgrounds has been described by scholars as the strength of the movement, which can claim a new world and more equal socio-economic relations (Mayo 2006). However, this new global social movement seems not to have had the desired effects, and after a protest-cycle characterized by massive participation, a latent-cycle seems to be in action at present. The duality between the protest-cycle and the latent-cycle is not new, and this field research is concerned with what remains, and which political options will be able to open the doors to those left-wing groups and organizations from within national and international civil society. At present, right-wing populist movements and political parties have grown, and, on this basis, it also remains to understand where the left-wing political parties, social movements and organizations have gone, on national and international scales.

The main political and economic transformations that are described above have not cancelled the left-wing political culture, which is still able to influence the political agenda by providing suggestions for a more equitable and sustainable society. In fact, left-wing organizations are not asleep. Rather, some cleavage between institutional politics and society have not been adequately taken into consideration, and I propose that representative democracies and the bipolar politic cannot fully satisfy those interests and identities which are, to date, still outside the political system (Sanders

2012).[1] Interests and identities outside the system require the ability of western democracies to open the doors, include in the political space those required changes not yet in the agenda, and, on this basis, to convert these political demands into coherent political outputs (policies). As of now, a vast number of left-wing organizations work outside the system, and several political demands have not yet been considered, while inequalities have not been resolved and free market competition has not been able to succeed in doing so.

Market competition cannot, by itself, guarantee equal opportunities, and liberal democracies cannot adequately represent those interests, especially those of minority (and often majority) groups (Brown 2003). However, several left-wing organizations across the globe are still active and pushing on the system, claiming recognition and political effectiveness. Among many left-wing groups and organizations, the international network of ATTAC plays a significant role in terms of critical and constructive economics, and of equal opportunities for everybody. While the alter-globalized social movement has been silent, individuals and organizations have been recently mobilized again on the environmental issue. The "Black for Fridays" protests have become a milestone, and ATTAC is part of it. ATTAC is in fact, the acronym for the Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions and Citizens' Action, and the international network of ATTAC has local branches in different countries from Europe to Africa, and from Japan to North and South America. On national and international scales, ATTAC, as opposed to other social movement organizations, has neither disappeared nor fallen asleep, but continues to pay a high level of attention to economic and politic transformations.

In this context, the international network of ATTAC is considered part of this new global social movement, and this network has not been developed on its own (Achino 2005). Instead, the political and organizational culture of militants played a role in providing each national branch of ATTAC with the political culture they have already learned elsewhere. This political culture also adds to, and sustains, the political organization of ATTAC on a national scale, even though interactions between local branches of ATTAC and the political system mutually influence each other.

At present, there are some critical political issues unsolved internationally, and the need for answers is promptly required. In this book, I aim to discuss

---

[1] Although this paper focuses only on the Canadian political system, it will also be theoretically useful when applied to all the so-called 'western democracies'.

how ATTAC is doing, nationally and internationally. On the one hand, I wish to provide an insight into what ATTAC-Italy and ATTAC-Quebec (the North Axis) will be able to do, and also to highlight the political backgrounds of the militants involved. On the other hand, the political opportunity structure will also be taken into consideration and the interactions between both sides of the political opportunities (inside and outside political options) will be compared.

Although ambitious, this attempt to fill gaps has been useful in providing analytical and political discussion. By analyzing strengths and weakness, this work has also contributed to creating bridges between the academic world and civil society, and to crossing the borders that exist among different fields of knowledge. In order to do this, I developed mix-methodology field research on the Italian and the Quebecoise branches of ATTAC. I collected quantitative data (survey research) in both countries by adapting a well-established structured questionnaire on political participation and social movements on a local level. In addition, and based on quantitative data analysis, I developed the list of questions later used during interviews and focus-groups. By cooperating with members of ATTAC-Italy and ATTAC-Quebec, I also established a connection between the European and North American organizations, and this book is intended as a tool for creating bridges in this direction.

In Chapter 1, I provided a theoretical discussion about the opening of the political opportunities structure and the organizational paradigm in social movement. The political recognition approach has been included in the discussion. I considered political recognition as the core of political participation, due to the fact that, with no positive political recognition, there is no political inclusion or political participation as a consequence. In fact, recognition implies that individuals and groups of individuals are considered to be competent to act politically by those in charge. The power dynamic and the legitimating processes are also part of the story, and only a positive (legitimate) recognition will allow this process.

In Chapter 2, I provided a definition of the political culture. Although largely debated by scholars in the field, there is not a consensus about what the political culture should be. As a matter of fact, political culture is not only what people concretely do (vote, attend political meetings, discuss politics with relatives, friends, and colleagues etc.). Political culture is also well integrated (intertwined) with the political biographies of those involved in groups, organizations, political parties, and trade-unions. Political culture

and political biographies work together by providing an interaction of beliefs, expectations, and emotions between people on this basis.

Previously, I stated that social movements seem to be having a relatively latent moment. On this basis, in Chapter 3, I questioned where the challenging codes paradigms (Melucci 1996) have affected the political culture of those involved in ATTAC-Italy and ATTAC-Quebec. To do so, I asked the militants where the main transformations which occurred in economics and politics over the 1980s (e.g., Reaganism and Thatcherism) have influenced the political culture and the agenda of those involved in ATTAC at present. I have supposed that the political biographies which provided inputs to ATTAC were well rooted in the late 1960s and 1970s, but became inactive over the 1980s. In other words, the present political culture available to ATTAC has taken a step backwards, towards the 1960s and 1970s' political parties and trade unions, and a continuity line can be traced with structural organizations, rather than a cultural fracture (discontinuity) with the political backgrounds of the militants involved.

In Chapter 4, I discussed theoretical and research questions. The field research was driven mainly by an interest in the cultural and political dynamics of the militants, and I did not provide a mechanical hypothesis to be verified and disproved based on data analysis. Instead, I preferred to work with a theoretical flexible approach which was able to support each step of the investigation from the beginning, through brainstorm interviews to the end, with data discussion and confirmation.

In Chapter 5, I discuss the genealogy of ATTAC-Quebec and ATTAC-Italy. ATTAC was not born on its own, and cultural and political contributions have influenced it over time. This chapter also provides a red line through time and space by discussing implicit and explicit dynamics of political recognition. All these dynamics characterize the birth of a new social movement organization.

Chapter 6 'measures' ATTAC. It is an overview of the Quebecoise and Italian organizations in terms of sociological and politological dynamics, and provides a description of what ATTAC does. This chapter is based on quantitative and qualitative data analysis, and is helpful to frame both the organizations in terms of sociographic information. Data has been collected with survey research, and qualitative information has also been helpful. Quantitative data has suggested qualitative questions during focus groups and interviews, and previous brainstorm interviews were useful to form the

questions on the cultural/political backgrounds of the Italian and Canadian organizations.

Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12, represent the core of the book. In Chapter 7. I discuss organization and decision-making in ATTAC Quebec and ATTAC-Italy. The social perception of decision making provided by participants was gathered by asking specific questions, and has been dialogically discussed with militants during focus groups. The key question concerned ways of deciding; that is to say: "Who decides and how?" "Will the group disagree on certain issues?", and "What shall the group do to reach a shared decision?".

In Chapter 9, I analyzed the network connected to ATTAC. A question was created within the survey questionnaire and the same question was asked during focus-groups. Participants were asked to make a list of groups and organizations with which they are connected (have membership) at present, other than ATTAC. The data collected was analyzed based on the network analysis theory. Findings are given in Chapter 9, and the social and political connections of multiple memberships presented accordingly.

In Chapter 10, I discuss the results provided by diachronical analysis of structural (quantitative) and cultural (qualitative) information on participation in political parties, trade unions, and social movements over time. Participation in political parties, trade-unions and social movements have been considered as part of the political biographies available for ATTAC in Italy and Quebec. In doing this, I focused on political biographical continuities and discontinuities, and I traced a line that could cross the borders between formal political participation (e.g., political-parties and trade unions) and informal political participation (e.g., social movement political participation) throughout the militants' lives (their participation in the past, present, and future was considered here).

In Chapter 11, I focused attention on the way militants in ATTAC make decisions about what to do, while in Chapter 12, I questioned where a European and a North American model is available respectively for collective action and the opening of political opportunities. To do this, I provided qualitative and quantitative data analysis of political participation, decision-making, and social movements for ATTAC in Quebec and Italy. Moreover, the similarities and dissimilarities between the Canadian and the Italian organizations has been addressed based on a systematic confrontation of qualitative and quantitative indicators, and the net result has been considered the basis of discussion.

In the Conclusion, I present a list of things that I wanted to discuss before, but was unable to do until that point. I combined the subjectivity of the author, the scientific production, and the political responsibility intended, as one entity. I have also summarized the outputs provided and discussed them with reference to previous theoretical assumptions. Sometimes, in the Conclusion, I have also adopted a personal and reflexive approach. I decided to do this because I am aware that my subjectivity matters, even when a foundation of strong scientific methodology is guaranteed. So, I explain why certain personal political and scientific issues have been intertwined in this work, and the role they had in producing knowledge.

Finally, I decided to present this research discursively. Therefore, I have not introduced data over the whole text, and the information quoted, and the tables can be found in the Appendix. I used a discursive textual approach, and a comprehensive discussion on data collection and analysis is found in Chapter 15. I have also done my best to present these chapters as homogeneously as possible. However, the topics presented in each of them, and data availability, had an impact on the flowing text and information. I apologies in advance if I failed occasionally in doing so, especially in Chapters 11 and 12.

CHAPTER 1

POLITICAL RECOGNITION, POLITICAL OPPORTUNITIES AND ORGANIZATION

The 'Ford Society', and the political-economic Keynesian model that has been an integral part of it for a while, are undergoing a deep transformation. It has been more than 30 years since neoliberal politics began transforming politics and economics worldwide, but a range of groups and organizations within international civil society are still struggling against neo-capitalism and the financial economy. Resistance against deregulation policies is still alive, and left-wing political parties and organizations are active, among many others. Financial capitalism has not yet been built upon, and some political leeway is available but not immediately accessible. Due to this, the demand for transformation from the left-wing political perspective is on the rise again, and it remains to be understood how the transformations that have occurred in politics and economics have also required an adjustment to the theoretical approaches available to political studies and social movements.

Whether or not some political leeway is available for groups and organizations outside the political system, the opening of political opportunity theory has inspired this research (Tarrow 1994), even though this theory is not enough on its own to explain the rise of the existence and the effectiveness of a political organization. Besides being able to unify the structure of the political opportunities approach, the political recognition paradigm has been helpful in providing an insight into political opportunities and participation (Lindemann and Ringmar 2016). Political recognition has been considered as the core of political participation, and it is assumed that, with no positive political recognition, there is no political participation as a consequence. The recognition process could be helpful in providing a political frame for an organization, and where mutual recognition is a positive process, social action will be taken accordingly. However, the political recognition process cannot fully explain by itself the effectiveness of a political organization in the future, since after having been politically recognized, other dynamics intervene, such as the organizational dynamic, the resource mobilization dynamic, and the political opportunities

dynamic. By focusing on the latter, I presumed that some political leeway and opportunities are still available, although not clearly identifiably. In order to provide an historical context where political leeway and opportunities could be available, I focused on the cycle of protest which has emerged in the present globalized culture. In this age of complex social systems, recent mobilizations have raised increasing debate on the relations between social movements' organization and the political system, even when the political system is not comparable in terms of being open to political opportunities and democratic transformation (Della Porta 2001). Moreover, the political system is heterogeneous, and a mixture of political offers is present at internal (the formal political system) and external (the civil society) levels (Merkel and Weiffenb 2012). Due to the heterogeneity of the political offers, and the aim of reducing complexity, the intersubjective relational political recognition process is thought to be useful in identifying the options which best represent specific interests and orientations not yet included in the system. In addition, the mis-recognition process, which is the process opposite to the relational political recognition process, is considered as the basis of the interpersonal conflict rooted in human relations. The general assumption is that human beings are used to interacting, based on the relationships between the recognition process, the process of misrecognition, and the tensions between the two which determine interpersonal and historical conflicts, and social, economic, and political, transformations (Meehan 2011). Integrating with all the above are complaints regarding the distribution of goods in society which are intended as struggles for recognition. The ethical categories (such as the recognition category) are intertwined with structural social-political categories (such as the redistribution category). The intersection between the recognition category and the redistribution category plays a role in the process of recognizing a political organization, and, in turn, this depends on specific interests (Honneth 1996). Following the theoretical perspectives described above, the recognition process is also not able, on its own, to explain the birth and the survival of a political organization. Indeed, the political recognition process is a dialogical process between individuals and groups of individuals, and one of these groups should be a political one able to positively recognize those not yet included in the political sphere (Achino 2005). In addition to the positive mutual recognition process, militants are also required to provide an effective organization aimed at optimizing relations between organizations and external political opportunities. It is to be kept in mind that, by itself, an organization cannot influence the political system without connections to institutions (Achino 2019).

The mutual recognition process has been combined with the need for an effective organization. However, which decision-making system is optimal for a social movement organization is a matter that still requires an answer. To do this, scholars noticed that the political collective identities related to such organizations are mostly important in terms of political options and institutional recognition. On this basis, neo-institutionalism theories regarding institutions' propensity to imitate organizational forms suggest that previous participation in political parties and trade unions tended to be imitated through people's experiences within these political-parties and trade-unions, and the political culture acquired in such a way could then be moved elsewhere through militants' political-biographies. In a similar way, political parties and trade unions have an agenda which corresponds to the political culture of those involved, and these political backgrounds dialogically influence decision-making and existing political collective identities. These political collective identities are formed by several interacting individuals who are concerned with the orientation of their action. Political collective identities are also moving along a timeline from the past individuals' political experiences to the present individuals' political experiences, which will in turn, be able to suggest future political actions (Alvesson and Spicer 2019, and Thompson 2005).

1.1 Why do political identities and organization matter?

The mixture of the political recognition process and the need for an effective organization have been detailed above, and the political collective identities related to such organizations have been included in the debate. Political collective identities are fluid, and they move along a timeline from past to present individuals' political biographies. These can suggest future political actions. Political collective identities are also strategic in aiming to optimize their relationships with institutions and with the structure of the political opportunity. To do this, political collective identities are not static and include a cognitive definition, an active relationship, and emotional investment (Melucci 1996).

This interaction allows the collective political identities to identify political opportunities and restrictions, and then individuals and groups can recognize that they share certain orientations and decide to act together. The active relationships, cognitive definitions, and emotional investments, are used to contribute to the surfacing of political collective identities, due also to the interaction with political/institutional and associative actors. In doing so, collective identity is neither in opposition to strategy and politics, nor to

interests and incentives, and collective identity is not considered as a means of filling gaps left by the state–centered approach. By contrast, political interests are crucial in explaining social dynamics, and the recognition paradigm plays a role in the process.

The general assumption is that collective identity is an interactive process, and the dynamics between structural and cultural effects of political participation transform the social perception of the political and organizational settings where individuals, collective actors and institutions mutually recognize each other. On this basis, social movement organizations (intended as heterogeneous collective actors) could also relate to the cultural representation of institutions and decision-making and, therefore, transformations affect the social perception and political action regardless of the future institutional, associative, and organizational improvement (Achino 2019).

On the other hand, the collective identity is not the algebraic sum of individuals' identities. While collective identities are placed halfway between structural constrictions and cultural dynamics, and are able to identify opportunities/limitations that the political system offers them, in a fluid manner, the political biographies of those involved can mutually sustain and reinforce the political collective identity concerned with the process (Honan 1979). These political biographies lie between collective and individual identities, and this mixture can provide the organization with pre-existing political/organizational cultures obtained elsewhere and through time. In this manner, this mixture of individual and collective identities and political biographies can also support the actual organization. However, social movement organizations cannot completely grow without sponsorship from political parties or institutions (Achino 2019).

As a matter of fact, an established organization cannot fully succeed without sponsorships from political parties and institutions, and the ability of groups' organizations to combine different forms of contentions aiming at influencing political structures and making institutional policies conform to their goals is the option that is most conducive to the survival of movement organization over time. In doing this, social movement organization can reinforce collective identity, and the positive effects of the political recognition have a role in the process. However, the existence of the conventional political system has sometimes been taken for granted. In fact, the implicit model is that once those groups leading certain protest cycles succeed, and are incorporated into the system by employing conventional politics, then social movements organizations are integrated within the

system consequentially. While the system and the political opportunity structure have been considered as the counterparts for those organizations placed outside the political system, much clarity on what constitutes bright opportunity structures is urgently required. To date, in fact, the political opportunity structure has been taken for granted by promoting the emergence/success of a movement, and it has been assumed quite implicitly that once the political access is open, movements' activity will come with institutional political action, and therefore the political opportunity structures are able to offer a degree of formal participation (Achino 2019).

Nevertheless, the opening of the political structure is also not sufficient by itself to explain the existence of social movement organizations. In fact, the relationships among groups and elites, and the power dynamics, as well as the relationships between social movement organizations and external institutional and non-institutional organizations, are intertwined in the political setting, and political outputs also depend on these implicit and explicit interconnections (Achino 2005). Although the political system has sometimes been taken for granted, the political opportunity structure approach has been useful in emphasizing certain strategic elements in the external environment of social movement organizations. By focusing on the political issue, it emphasizes conditions relating to formal institutions and tends to neglect the role of critical economics and historical conditions. Focusing on opportunities emphasizes that opportunities are outside the organization, and rarely within the organization itself and the individuals' political biographies, while by focusing on structures it suggests that large-scale premises are necessary/sufficient conditions for certain outcomes (Goodwin and Jasper 1999). Moreover, the political opportunity structure approach has not paid enough attention to those political biographies placed outside the political system but which are able to influence the actual organization.

Based on all the above, there is not a one-way direction for political collective identity, political biographies, and the structure of the political opportunities, that can combine them together unequivocally. Instead, their historical placement allows an analysis which can move forward and cross the borders between different fields of action and critical political options.

A list of critical political choices is at present in the agendas of social movement organizations, and political collective action has been taken to cope with them (Della Porta 2015). In fact, the formal political system has lost its willingness to govern the economic system by adopting deregulation policies, privatization options, and free market perspectives, while the

formal political system seems to move toward a political central position. However, left-wing groups and organizations are still alive, and to face these transformations, they have required political recognition and have also claimed that the political system is moving backward by returning to governing economics on local, national, and international scales. At the edge of the left-wing organizations there are other groups that explicitly demand transformation, and this will require further action to positively negotiate with the State, the institutions, and the civil society.

CHAPTER 2

WHY DOES THE POLITICAL CULTURE MATTER?

The theory of political collective identities and the political biographical approach, combined with the political recognition process, have been considered as a continuing interactive dynamic. Political collective identities are developing by moving from individuals' previous political experiences to individuals' present political experiences that can be brought to political actions in the future. While collective identities are placed halfway between structural constrictions and cultural dynamics, the political biographies of individuals are intended as the micro-level in which they experience and develop their own expectations and desires. These expectations and desires are concerned with forms of contention and participation, and organization becomes an issue for those involved. Individuals' political biographies act through mutual negotiation in the political process with the aim of providing a stable organization which is also concerned with the chance of optimizing the opportunities the political system offers them. The mixture of political and organizational cultures acquired elsewhere, and the positive political recognition process, represent the basis for further political and organizational development.

However, what constitutes the political culture has not been discussed yet. A range of options is available on the matter that has been provided by scholars over time. Moving from the structural political culture (Almond and Verba 1963) to the political psychology and behavioral studies (Stewart 1988), and from political anthropology to political philosophy (Lewellen 1992), there is not a consensus on which are the base measurable elements that can define the modern political culture. Although political culture is considered as a combination of attitudes, beliefs, and sentiments, that provide an order and a meaning to the political process, and to the underlying assumptions that govern behavior in a political system, it does not offer a clear insight on the assumptions that govern individuals' behavior in political life (Lijphart 1977). Moreover, while the combination

of political attitudes is generalized, the heterogeneity of individuals' political experiences and expectations has not been considered adequately.

As stated above, scholars have been trying to combine the psychological and subjective dimension of politics, but political culture is more than that alone. Political culture is, in fact, the product of the history of a political system and the members' political biographies (Zavala 2012). However, the implicit national character of political culture has often been taken for granted. Political culture theory refers in an implicit way to the definition of culture provided by the anthropological and political sciences studies that reflect a wide range of perspectives. To date, the modern national state is considered as the basis for a legitimate formal political action (e.g., considering that elections occur mainly on a national scale, and although Europeans vote for the European Parliament, at present, each EU State is still considered as a formal institution able to use force legitimately, as defined by Hobbs. This definition, however, is outdated). Nevertheless, for the purpose of this investigation, political childhood socialization, its process, and political recruitment, all represent a milestone for individuals' further development (Sears and Levy 2003). In fact, it was presumed that after early socialization in general culture, there was a second step in political socialization in which people learned about the political system and then acted accordingly. This learning theory and cognitive development gave more weight to the rationality paradigm by itself.

2.1 The discursive political culture

Rationality, and the human ability to identify options that have the aim of optimizing political outputs, are now incorporated in the debate. However, political culture is not just what people do concretely, and it is not just a combination of attitudes and expectations. Political culture is integrated with, and is an integral part of, the political biographies of those involved in groups, organizations, political parties, and trade unions. Political culture and political biographies work together by creating an interaction among beliefs, expectations, and emotions, on which people act. In this learning process political biographies are already established into political groups and organizations, and they are active biographies.

Assuming that the definition of active biographies helps, and including them in this outline, it is clear that the interaction between structural political culture (what people do concretely in a measurable way) and discursive political culture (verbal discourses on political power, beliefs, expectations,

and emotions) is an essential part of the same phenomena (McCammon 2013).

Still, I suppose that political culture is the result of a movement that occurred from individual political socialization, and that developed through individual and collective political life. In a similar way, the political culture of militants involved in ATTAC is the result of a movement that developed along a timeline, and originated from the political formal/informal groups and organizations that individuals experienced over time. Political culture described in such a way can also influence the cognitive maps of militants and the organizational options available to the Italian and Quebecoise associations. Besides, cultural and political variability can also create a legitimate framework in which political action, political opportunities, and political recognition, can take place, even though the flow and the implicit interactional dynamic are hard to observe empirically.

CHAPTER 3

IN THE MID-1980S

Previous discussion on individuals' political biographies, political culture, and political discourse analysis, has not yet provided an historical contextualization for ATTAC in Italy and in Quebec. Although data suggest that ATTAC had a role in the constituency process of the alter-globalized social movement between the late 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s (C., 46, m., Mi),[2] this alter-globalized social movement has emerged after a latent time period. Previously, the 1980s – also known as the latent decade - have been depicted, in fact, as the decade of retreat into private life after twenty years of focusing on the public scene with countless protests and mobilizations (Della Porta and Diani: 2006). However, this was also the time for those people who were close to the youth counterculture backgrounds to experiment with politics and non-conventional participation. Furthermore, it was stated that the social movements which arose at the beginning of the 1980s onwards partially differed from their predecessors, such as the labour movement, which had previously been seen as focused on economic concerns and workers' rights. Moreover, it was also noticed that the new social movements which arose in the 1980s promoted a shift in identity politics, and sometimes, class-based mobilization does not seem to be an issue for participation (Melucci 1996).[3]

---

[2] Quotations from interviews and focus groups are as follow e.g., "Emanuele, local group of Turin, male, age 48": (E. 48, To, M.). If the quotations are incomplete, it is due to the lack of information provided by those I met during the fieldwork.

[3] For details on the recognition process, on the identity politics and on the Fraser-Honneth debate, see Thompson (2005) in the bibliography. Accordingly, I assume that redistribution might be considered as a form of recognition. Although the discussion on recognition and collective identity has provided a wide range of theoretical viewpoints, I assumed that there could be a plethora of individuals and groups who are struggling for recognition which have not yet achieved public acknowledgement, and thus have not been implicated within positive or negative social structures of signification. Moreover, I also assumed that recognition is an interactive process, and the mutual understanding - individual and institutional - and

In fact, the authors noticed that two main claims have been made to explain the rise of the new social movements (Touraine 1997). On the one hand, the post-industrial economy which grew over the 1980s was partially responsible in influencing a new wave of social movements, while on the other hand, these movements were significantly different from previous social movements of the industrial economy. New social movements did not focus exclusively on materialistic values, but rather on issues, which are related to recognition, lifestyles, and cultural codes (Melucci 1996). Furthermore, certain social movements have been described such as instrumental movements – when they are oriented toward materialistic goals - while other movements have been described as expressive (McCarthy and Zald 1977) – when they are oriented toward the solidarity approach and passionate politics - (Goodwin and Jasper 2000).

In doing this, observers included in their analysis social dynamics which have been excluded for a long time from the rational paradigm analysis. In fact, by participating, people promote new identities as a way to erode power and to transform themselves and society, as well as experiencing mutual recognition, which is strategic for social inclusion and participation. Examples of such non-materialistic issues are the gay and lesbian claims for civil rights, as well as environmental and peace concerns which require recognition, and inclusion in the political space.

The 1980s was, moreover, the decade that witnessed the transformation of the industrial economy, placing the Fordist model of production for the financial economy much closer to the current economic and social system. It was, therefore, the decade in which the foundations were laid for further economic development and for the process of privatization of public goods (Touraine 1997). Nevertheless, during this period, civil society and singular individuals did not give up, and new cultural codes were changing in the political space and in the forms of contention and participation. In fact, individuals and groups within civil society claimed recognition for changing the way they addressed the political agenda, and further actions and participation. Civil society was, at this time, comprised of both civic and social organizations, voluntary social relationships, and those institutions which form the basis of a functioning society, notably different from the formerly force-backed structures of a state and market. Together, these institutions constitute the entirety of a society, and it is the relations between these components that determine the character of a society and its structure.

---

the opening-doors-attitude are both integral parts of a theory and practice of social justice.

Moreover, the new social movement organizations sometimes had new demands for recognition and participation which have not been yet included in the political space, while so much transformation occurred in the social, political, and economic spaces over the 1980s. In this context, it was also noticed that international organizations were less ready to mobilize than they had been over the last decades, and the Italian militants who later became part of ATTAC did not follow this trend and have kept on working and being politically active (Achino 2005).

Sometime around late 1990, the Italian and the Quebecoise associations arose, and some exponents of left-wing trade-unions and political parties, as well as individuals from the Italian and from the Quebecoise civil society, worked together to found national associations, officially established early in the 2000s. Furthermore, supporters had largely participated in the alter-globalized social movement, including the protest against the WTO in Seattle in 1999, as well as those which came through the International Social Forum on local, national, and international, scales.

CHAPTER 4

THEORETICAL AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Up until now, the discussion has focused attention on a range of different theoretical perspectives on political participation and political culture. The biographical and discursive political perspectives have been integrated with the structural political approach, and the opening of political opportunities has been intended as a part of the process. In addition, the organizational dynamic has been seen as intertwined with the political biographies of militants, while the challenging codes produced during the latent life of social movements have been intended to create a specific frame for political, individual, and collective, actions. Finally, the cognitive dimension of political socialization has been helpful in providing a subjective and relational framework for this research.

This theoretical mixture is complex, due to the fact that none of the theoretical assumptions are sufficient by themselves in explaining the internal dynamic of a social movement organization. On this basis, I propose that the complexity of contemporary globalized culture requires a new theoretical understanding, and the need to cross over and get away from the theoretical dichotomy between the social structure and the cultural production is an urgent requirement. This new theoretical understanding should be in line, timewise. with the present global political and economic transformations, by assuming that the dynamics of present political participation are more complex than those which were like the Ford society. At that time, the left/right wing continuum and the distinction between ideological and cultural political values were more clear and easier to identify. The underclass and the working class, the middle class, and the upper class (e.g. the social class stratification) were all well distinguishable, and the connections between class positioning and class voting were also well recognized by workers, militants, and the political establishment, as well (Evans 2017).

However, the shift from a welfare society to a neo-liberal society is at present characterizing western countries by affecting the political space, while the political system seems to respond much more with functional

policies than with structural policies (Achino 2019). Moreover, a rise in populist political parties is also influencing western democracies today, and Italy is not immune (De Witte 2018). In fact, the Italian Five Stars movement is a political movement[4] able to gain consensus from the right and the left-wing political electorate (BBC 2018). The Five Stars movement has recently formed a governmental coalition with the Lega political party, and together they have provided the electorate with policies which cross the border between the 'traditional' right and left wing political cultures (e.g. the 'quota 100' pension scheme and the so called 'citizen income' among many others). When the first coalition of the Five Stars and the Lega political parties failed in 2019, the Five Stars organization formed another coalition with the Italian center–left PD political party. At present, a mixture of Italian left- and right-wing political parties is in charge, and this mixture is well known as a 'national unity government' which is having to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. On the other hand, in Quebec, the political system is also following the general trend of transformation from a welfare society to a neo-liberal society, and, to date, there is no evidence that populist political parties and populist political movements are affecting the Canadian political system (Depuis-Deri 2008).

In this context, characterized by the decline of formal left-wing political parties, by the rise of right-wing governmental coalitions and populist political parties, and by a pandemic crisis that is still in progress, an integrated paradigm is urgently needed. This integrated paradigm will be required to reposition ATTAC as far as a political transformation, and to provide it with an active framework for the present and the future. This integrated paradigm will also be able to gather different theoretical perspectives into one theoretical approach, by crossing borders between the structural and the cultural dichotomies. The reality is a mixture of cultural and structural dynamics, and this theoretical approach will be able to reflect the complexity of this mixture. In addition, the individual biographical approach, as intended here, suggests that the structural and the cultural dimensions of social life are an integral part of individuals' real existence. This is to say that, by investigating individual political biographies, it will be then possible to observe the structural and cultural dimensions as interacting together, while the analytical distinction between the two will be a responsibility of the researcher.

---

[4] Although called 'Five Stars movement', this "Five Stars movement" is not a social movement organisation as intended in this research.