Party change in 'populist' parties in government: the case of the Five Star Movement and SYRIZA

Davide Vittori

LUISS GUIDO CARLI UNIVERSITY, ROME

Abstract

FSM and SYRIZA are the main anti-establishment parties which seized power during the Great Recession. As in the Greek case in 2015, when SYRIZA coalesced with right-wing party ANEL, FSM coalesced with a radical-right party (The League). Regardless of their different ideological backgrounds, both SYRIZA and FSM were relatively 'new' parties at the time of their first relevant electoral performance. While the literature has sofar tackled the issue of the growth of these two parties in their political system, their organizations and their electorates, little has been said in comparative perspective on the internal reforms that the two parties undertook and their institutionalization process. The aim of this paper is to enquire into the nature of the party reforms within those parties, which the literature has labelled as anti-establishment or populist. To what extent do their reforms correspond to the theoretical frameworks that were designed in the past for mainstream parties? And, secondly, are these changes that the parties have undergone similar? In what ways? The findings show that, albeit following different paths, party changes in the two parties followed the same pattern as mainstream parties.

Introduction

I n January 2015, for the first time since Greece's transition to democracy, the Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA) obtained a relative majority in the Greek Parliament and made an alliance with a newly-established radical-right party, the Independent Greeks (ANEL) (Katsourides 2015). Three years later, another 'populist' (Vittori 2017a) party in Italy, the Five Star Movement (M5S), had the same result and allied with a radical-right party (The League), the main difference from the Greek case being the enduring bargain between FSM and the League for government formation. However, just as for SYRIZA, the M5S electoral success in 2018 was preceded by another outstanding performance in the 2013 elections (see below). Regardless of their different ideological backgrounds, both SYRIZA and M5S were relatively 'new' parties (for a precise classification of party newness, see Bartolini and Mair 1990, Bolleyer 2013, Mainwaring et al. 2017, Powell and Tucker 2014) at the time of their first relevant electoral performance. SYRIZA had existed as a coalition since 2004, but it became a unified party only in 2013; M5S was founded in 2009. While the literature has so far tackled the issue of the growth of these two parties in their political systems, their organizations and their electorates (see among others Bordignon and Ceccarini 2015, Katsourides 2016, Gualmini and Corbetta 2013, Tronconi 2015), little has been said from a comparative perspective on the internal reforms that the two parties have undergone and their institutionalization process. The aim of this paper is to enquire into the nature of the reforms within those parties, which the literature has labelled as populist (Stavrakakis and Katsambekis 2014, Vittori 2017b). Firstly, to what extent do their reforms correspond to

Contact Author: Davide Vittori, LUISS Guido Carli University, Rome.
E-mail address: dvittori@luiss.it

the theoretical frameworks designed in the past for mainstream parties? And, secondly, are the changes (and the institutionalization processes) similar? In what ways? The article proceeds as follows: drawing from the main work in the field, the first part is devoted to the analytical framework of party changes. The second part contextualizes the Italian and Greek cases. The third and fourth parts are the core of the paper, as both provide an analysis of the main party changes occurring within the two organizations in recent years. Finally, I draw some tentative conclusions with regard to party change in anti-establishment parties. The most important of these is that, albeit following different paths, party changes followed the same pattern as those of mainstream parties, since in both cases the party reforms and the institutionalization process followed the desiderata of the party faces which held most power in its hand.

1. Party Change: How? When?

Despite being 'conservative' organizations, which tend to resist change (Panebianco 1982, Harmel and Janda 1994), parties do change. Most of the time they adjust slowly to either internal or external changes. Following Harmel and Janda (1994), party change can occur when the leadership changes, when the dominant faction is overturned by a new majority within the party or when external stimuli force party change. More recent contributions (Webb et al. 2012) have emphasized that the analysis of party change should also include the growing relevance of 'presidentialized' (Poguntke and Webb 2005) or 'personalized' (Blondel et al. 2012) leadership within the party. The fact that party leaderships tend to be more unconstrained and, accordingly, tend to concentrate power into their own hands, may hamper internal changes. Be as it may, three patterns of change may be identified: internally induced changes, externally induced changes and a combination of the two.

In a ground-breaking analysis on party change, which included mainstream parties both big and small from an electoral standpoint, Harmel et al. (1995) found that external factors, notably poor electoral performance, are crucial drivers for change, but sub-party factors may play a role as well. Still, for 'new' parties, more than any embryonal form of factionalism, it is the first electoral breakthrough that represents a crucial phase in the internal life of the party, since new demands emerge from within and outside the party and considerable adaptation is required for the party's survival (Bolleyer 2013: 4).

Party reforms and institutionalization processes have so far been analysed using mainstream parties as points of reference. From the seminal work by Michels to the more recent work on party organizations (Panebianco 1982, Harmel and Tan 2003, Gauja 2015), scholars take mainstream parties into consideration, while less attention has been given to non-mainstream party families (with the notable exceptions of Pedersen 1982, Bolleyer 2013, Scarrow et al. 2017). This gap is unsurprising: mainstream and old-established parties are usually where a) information is available more easily and b) it is possible to compare party reforms diachronically, since they are usually older (Levitsky 1998). Party institutionalization is a crucial component for organization survival. Still, new parties are more exposed to both external and internal shocks, due to their lack of institutionalization. When shocks occur, the most likely reaction for the party elite is either to implement change or resist/anticipate the attempts to change, which are supposed to come from inside and/or outside. Here I define institutionalization as a

process involving a) the routinization of political practice, through which the rules and norms applied within the party become internalized and routinized by members and the élite, and b) value infusion, through which the perpetuation of the organization becomes a value in itself.

While previous work on mainstream parties is useful for analysing party reforms of non-mainstream parties, (see Bolleyer 2013), it should not be taken as a *given* that 'new' parties behave similarly to 'old' parties; nor should it be assumed that their institutionalization is a process which is in all ways similar to older counterparts. Since 'new' parties tend to campaign by arguing their more or less radical difference from traditional parties, it may be the case that they prefer stressing their differences even in organizational aspects. Nonetheless, change and the institutionalization processes for both traditional and non-traditional parties do not occur in a vacuum. Firstly, parties, like any other complex organizations, are path-dependent, i.e. their genesis and first internal power configuration matter when it comes to the options of party elites (Panebianco 1982). These factors narrow down even further when the party faces the heterogony of its ends, i.e. the survival of the organization becomes an end in itself, while the primary policy goals lose their centrality. Secondly, there must be a clear reason for change and a power configuration that facilitates it (Harmel and Tan 2003). Thirdly, party goals, according to Harmel and Janda (1994: 281), determine the nature of the party change: 'for vote-seeking parties [...], the more pronounced their electoral failure, the more likely they are to change'. For office-seeking parties, the pressure for change is higher when they achieve executive office, for policy-seeking parties the failure to accommodate their clientele drives change, while for democracy-seeking parties, dissatisfaction with party procedures leads to party change. Party goals, following Harmel and Janda, are crucial for detecting the nature of changes within the party. The cause of the changes may be either internal or external, since parties may be forced to change even when the external conditions do not 'require' the organization to adapt to the new context. What the authors assume is that, regardless of the primary party goal at t0, i.e. before the external or internal shock, the consequence of a given shock, i.e. electoral performance, impacts in t1 more significantly on a party whose primary goal is related to that shock, i.e. vote-seeking goal. When this happens, the magnitude of the change should be greater than in other cases.

2. External shocks and emergence of new parties: the financial crisis in Italy and Greece

In order to grasp the nature of change within the two parties under analysis it is crucial to start with the major external shock, the Great Recession, behind the political changes which occurred in Greece in 2012 and in Italy in 2013. Both parties were founded either before (SYRIZA, as a coalition of parties) or in the immediate aftermath of the crisis (M5S).
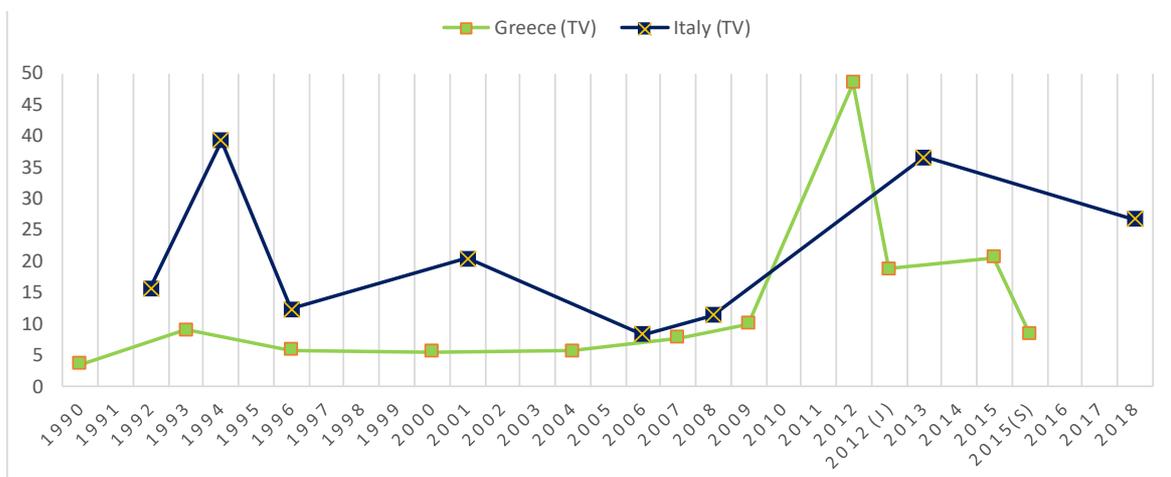
Greece

Greece is the European country where the Great Recession had the heaviest impact on both society and the political system. The four Greek governments in charge from 2009 to September 2015 signed three Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) through which they agreed to implement heavy fiscal adjustments to receive financial assistance.

On 4 October 2009, the Greek PM, George Papandreou, announced that the annual deficit of the State would be 12.7%, instead of 6.7%. In a few months, the Greek economy collapsed. The consequence of the crisis was a private lenders' debt haircut (50%) in 2011. However, the SYRIZA electoral breakthrough occurred four years after the outburst of the crisis (May-June 2012).

Between 2009 and 2012 three elections took place: one legislative (2009), one at the European level (2009) and elections in thirteen administrative regions (2010). In the 2009 legislative election (October 2009), the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) obtained an absolute majority in Parliament (43.92% of votes) and SYRIZA 4.6%. Previously, in the European elections (June 2009), SYRIZA had a similar share of votes (4.7%). Despite the financial turmoil, the regional elections held in 2010 guaranteed to PASOK control over seven regions, while the conservative New Democracy (ND) won in five. The SYRIZA result was unsatisfactory (Gemenis 2012). The intensification of the financial crisis and the failed attempt by Socialist PM George Papandreou to call for a referendum on the MoU caused his resignation (November 2011). The provisional government supported by PASOK, ND and the Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS) and led by the former Governor of the Bank of Greece, Lucas Papademos, lasted about six months. In the May 2012 elections (Table 1), SYRIZA (16.79%) was the second most voted party, behind ND (18.85%).

Figure 1. Total volatility in Greece and Italy legislative elections (1990–2018)

Source: Own elaboration from Emanuele (2015). Legend: Total volatility: total electoral volatility in the party system.

The Greek political system was revolutionized in less than three years (Figure 1). After being almost stable for two decades, total volatility in the 2012 election rose to 48.5. The three parties which participated in the last government were severely punished by the electorate: PASOK lost 30.7% of the votes, ND 14.6% and LAOS 2.74%. SYRIZA's leader, Alexis Tsipras, refused to participate in any pro-austerity government, thus using its blackmail potential to force new elections (June 2012). SYRIZA increased its share of votes (26.89%). Thanks to the support of PASOK and DIMAR, a social democratic split from SYRIZA, ND (29,66%) formed a new governing coalition. The following regional elections (18 May 2014) were problematic for SYRIZA. Despite good results in the Ionian

Islands and in Attica, SYRIZA lost about 9% of the votes (17.7%) with respect to the previous legislative elections. Nonetheless, in the following European elections (22-25 May 2014) SYRIZA was the most voted party (26.6%). The legislative election in January 2015 gave to SYRIZA (36.3%) a relative majority, very close to an absolute majority in Parliament. KKE refused to enter into coalition with SYRIZA. Thus, out of the only two anti-memorandum parties in Parliament, ANEL and Golden Dawn (XA), only ANEL was a 'coalitionable' partner under a shared anti-austerity programme.

Italy

The intensification of the Great Recession in Italy (2009-2011) and the doubts cast by the European institutions as well as by heads of states of European countries, namely France and Germany, over the Berlusconi government's (2008-2011) ability to pursue a fiscal adjustment generated a large-scale panic in the markets. The crisis reached its zenith in November 2011 with Berlusconi's resignation. In the meantime, the already huge public debt (103.3% in 2007) skyrocketed to an unprecedented 132.6% in 2011. Accordingly, the annual public deficit endangered public finance stability (it was -5.25% in 2009, -4.21% in 2010 and -3.68% in 2011). Although Italy avoided a European bailout programme, the chronically weak economic growth and the rise of total and youth unemployment cast doubts over Italian recovery.

M5S became a relevant player in the Italian political system in 2013. Leaving aside the early and somewhat successful attempts to participate in local elections with civic lists associated with the Beppe Grillo symbol, the very first significant sub-national elections for M5S were the regional ones in 2010. The most encouraging results for M5S were in Piedmont (3.67 %, sixth most voted list) and Emilia-Romagna (6%, fifth most voted list). In 2012, M5S became the most voted party (18.17%) in the Sicilian regional elections, but the centre-left coalition obtained a relative majority (30.47 %) and formed a minority government led by Rosario Crocetta.

Table 1. SYRIZA and M5S electoral results.

SYRIZA	M5S
5% (2007) P	3.4% (2010) ** R
4.6% (2009) P	14.9 (2012) *** R
4.7% (2009) E	25.56% (2013) P
4.1% (2010) *† R	16.2(2014) *** R
16.8% (May 2012) P	21.16% (2014) E
26.9% (June 2012) P	15.7% (2015) *** R
17.7% (2014) R	32.7% (2018) P
26.57% (2014) E	
36.3% (January. 2015) P	
35.5% (September 2015) P	

Source: own elaboration from Greek and Italian Ministries of Internal Affairs. * % with allies; †% of Total Vote; ** % vote list obtained in 5 regions in which M5S participated to the elections; *** % of List Vote. Legend: R= Regional elections, E = European elections; P = parliamentary elections.

The 2013 legislative elections (Table 1) – along with three regional elections (Lombardy, Lazio and Molise) – marked a breakthrough for M5S and, consequently, an

earthquake for the Italian political system. Total volatility in the elections reached the 1994 level, when Forza Italia erupted onto the Italian political system (Figure 1). M5S (25.56% in the lower Chamber) was the most voted party before the Partito Democratico (PD). M5S blackmail potential was used to force traditional parties to form an oversized coalition government between centre-left and centre-right parties. M5S made it even clearer to the electorate that the party was unwilling to pursue a political agreement with the other traditional and non-traditional parties. M5S performance in the following elections – European and local – was unsatisfactory. In the European elections, PD reached the best result (40.81%) in its history, while M5S performed considerably worse (21.16%). Its second electoral breakthrough in the 2018 legislative elections granted to M5S a relative majority in Parliament (32.7%).

3. Party reforms within SYRIZA: the government takes all?

SYRIZA was officially founded in 2004 as a multifaceted coalition of political parties, social movements and leftist associations (Tsakatika and Eleftheriou 2013). The participants within SYRIZA have changed over time, even though the most relevant party, and the protagonist of the unification of this coalition into a political party, Synaspismos (SYN), has never abandoned the coalition.

SYRIZA, thus, relied mainly on the resources provided by SYN, the only political force to have had political representation in Parliament. An analysis of SYN transformation is beyond the scope of this paper. However, in line with the theoretical framework provided by Janda and Harmel (1994), the main driver behind the creation of a coalition of different organizations to the left of PASOK and in competition with the 'anti-system' (March 2011) Greek Communist Party (KKE), was the decreasing electoral support that SYN had suffered between 1991 and 2004 (Davellanos 2016). The 4th SYN congress in December 2004 marked a watershed for the Greek left. It is called the left-turn congress, since a radical faction headed by Alecos Alavanos won the congress, thus marginalizing the reformist group. The latter founded a new party (DIMAR) in contra-position to the overly confrontational posture of SYRIZA vis-à-vis PASOK. SYRIZA strategy was based on the creation of a new organizational tool which was able to reconnect the left with society and its lower strata (Spourdoulakis 2014).

As a coalition of different organizations, SYRIZA's founders retained their own structures, while obtaining representation in the highest political organ of SYRIZA (Nikolakakis, 2016). Due to the pre-eminence of an old-established and ideologized party (SYN) (Tsatatika and Eleftheriou 2013), value infusion was not a primary concern for SYRIZA, despite enduring differences within the Greek left (Kalyvas and Marantzidis 2002). Rather, routinization was the main obstacle to institutionalization. Contrary to traditional communist guiding principles, SYRIZA rejected democratic centralism in order to make the coalition more fluid and more representative of all sensibilities within the Greek left. Whatever the definition used to describe SYRIZA – party movement, community organizer or mass connective party (Della Porta et al. 2017, Damiani 2016, Spourdalakis 2014) – scholars agree that the organizational structure of SYRIZA on the eve of the Great Recession was weak, lacking both a defined hierarchy and financial resources compared to other mainstream parties (for the latter point see Vernadakis 2014).

While organizationally weak, SYRIZA, through SYN, was able to rejuvenate its leadership. In 2007, SYN leader Alecos Alavanos stepped back during the 5th party congress to favour the ascendancy of Alexis Tsipras. During the second within-crisis elections (May 2012), SYRIZA performed outstandingly and in the following election (June 2012) overcame PASOK, becoming the main party of the left.

While not as unexpected as in the case of M5S, the good electoral results of two consecutive elections posed a conundrum for the party, i.e. either to maintain a poorly-organized structure or to transform itself into a party with its autonomous structures. SYRIZA opted for the latter, while trying to counterbalance centralization, allowing the SYRIZA founders to dissolve their own organization only in a second phase (see Davanellos 2016 and SYRIZA Statute 2013). In the first congress (2013), Tsipras had the absolute majority, while the left factions, which grouped the SYN leftist faction and left-to-SYN movements, won representation in the central committee. Before the Great Recession, SYN and SYRIZA were primarily policy-seeking organizations, since both staunchly opposed what they called PASOK's path towards neoliberalism (Nikolakakis 2016) and, more importantly, they lacked the electoral support to be considered 'relevant' in the Greek political system. The policy-seeking strategy was pursued also in the first phase of the Great Recession since SYRIZA participated in several anti-austerity protests, the most relevant being the so-called Indignant (Aganaktismeni) protest (Simiti 2014 and Tarditi 2015). However, the policy-seeking strategy was counterbalanced by a more vote-seeking oriented strategy, which included the introduction of an inclusive populist discourse (Starvakais and Katsambekis 2014) aimed at counterbalancing the image of the party as a marginal radical socialist party. Moreover, since the electoral law gives a majority bonus for the most voted party, SYRIZA had no incentives to merge with other centre-left parties: indeed, the polls suggested that the party would be the most voted.

This centralization was criticized by minority factions, which were worried about party institutionalization where the previous porous and poorly-organized structure was only formal. The Central Committee, controlled by Tsipras and by the SYN majority faction, organized the party following the classic mass-membership organization, despite the relatively low number of party members (Tsatatika and Eleftheriou, 2013). The Party on the Ground, thus, was relatively limited and the Party in Public Office (PPO) was mostly new, since SYRIZA had never had a relevant parliamentary group before 2012: the Party in Central Office (PCO) emerged from the founding congress as the main party face and, consequently, the main protagonist of party centralization. The planned dissolution of the former components of SYRIZA served this purpose, i.e., allowing the PCO to better control centrifugal forces within the party, including the one coming from the minority factions.

The second phase of SYRIZA institutionalization started when the party won a relative majority in the January 2015 elections and formed a coalition government with the right-wing party Independent Greeks (ANEL). In a few months, the new PM, Alexis Tsipras, started difficult negotiations with EU institutions and the IMF concerning the conditions for new loans to Greece. The MoU was rejected by Tsipras, who called for a referendum in July, endorsing the No-position. Once the No prevailed, Tsipras signed a new memorandum, which the leftist factions within SYRIZA considered too prone to austerity. After the referendum, 38 of SYRIZA's 149 MPs voted against the new

memorandum, threatening the SYRIZA-led majority in Parliament, while another group called 53+ backed the government, albeit expressing concerns about the consequences of the memorandum. SYRIZA, as a new governing party, faced a new external stimulus, this time related to policy-making rather than elections, i.e. disagreement on a crucial party programme: Grexit and relations with the EU. The party in government needed a new value infusion in order to make the PoG and PCO accept the agreement.

Tsipras forced new snap elections in September, whose outcome was a new coalition government with ANEL. The main leftist faction left the party before the elections, forming a new party (Popular Unity), which eventually failed to reach the electoral threshold. Once the leftist faction had abandoned the party, value infusion was eased as no formally structured opposition remained within the party. In this troublesome phase, it was the PPO and the Party Government that emerged as the most relevant actors within SYRIZA.

Following the September 2015 elections, SYRIZA held a new congress, in which it continued its path towards centralization. Tsipras kept his position as party leader, while serving as PM, thus implicitly linking the destiny of SYRIZA with the government. The renewal of the composition of the Central Committee was the most critical issue for the leadership. Tsipras managed to reduce the total number of Central Committee members, while at the same time guaranteeing up to 25% of such members to government officials. Considering the large number of MPs in the remaining 75%, the overlap between PPO/Party in government and the PCO becomes evident (Tarditi and Vittori 2017). Tsipras was the only candidate for party leadership: he was re-elected with 93.5% of the total votes. Since the left platform had left the party, there were no minority factions that openly questioned party leadership. This second congress may have marked a new phase for SYRIZA, in which the routinization of decision-making and value infusion were both finally accomplished. The extent to which both aspects will resist external stimuli is nonetheless difficult to predict.

4 Party reforms within M5S: from a failed institutionalization attempt to new party leadership?

Officially founded in October 2009, the M5S organizational structure had been drafted by Grillo and Gianroberto Casaleggio a few years previously. This was due to Grillo's blog, whose platform was managed by the Casaleggio Associati, a new media company founded by G. Casaleggio, and to the online platform meetup.com, which allowed the formation of informal Grillo supporters at the local level. Grillo's blog became known to a wider public after the success of nationwide rallies, named Vaffanculo Day (Fuck-Off Day), in Bologna (2007) and Turin (2008).

These first years were characterized by expansion through penetration (Panebianco 1982), i.e. from the centre to the periphery. Local members were free to organize and establish local units through the meet-up platform and to stand for sub-national elections once their list had obtained certification from the Casaleggio Associati (Vittori 2017a). Value infusion was only partial in this phase: the only programme drafted by M5S was the Firenze Chart, a very concise manifesto for local elections and Grillo's blog. The Firenze Chart resembled a pro-environmentalist attitude with a focus on sustainable environment, transparency and the promotion of direct-democracy procedures

(especially within the party) (Gualmini and Corbetta 2013). Casaleggio Associati and Beppe Grillo registered the M5S logo as a trademark, whose rights belonged to them.

In this phase, the supporting staff were people working within Casaleggio Associati: thus, the PCO – as intended by Katz and Mair (1994) – overlapped entirely with the dual party leadership, while the PPO was absent. Although the structure of M5S was not yet developed, the main focus of M5S was direct democracy as envisaged by articles 1 and 5 of the first version of the Statute of the Party (Movimento 5 Stelle, 2009). Despite its populist vote-seeking appeal, M5S could be considered a democracy-seeking movement in this phase. Still, the lack of any formal procedure for the implementation of direct democracy (Vittori 2017b), made routinization impossible to achieve at that time. Moreover, the expulsion of several prominent local figures and the voluntary departure of others highlighted internal tensions over the alleged lack of democracy and transparency with regards to rules. In a nutshell, the routinization of party rules had far to go. The external shock – i.e. the results of the 2013 elections – forced M5S leadership to implement party changes in order to accelerate the party's institutionalization. The worsening health conditions of G. Casaleggio, as well as the fact that it was impossible for Grillo to oversee the functioning of the party (Grillo 2014), accelerated the first attempt to institutionalize the party through the formation of a 'real' party in Central Office, the so-called Direttorio, whose aim, among others, was to coordinate Parliament and the local level. The Direttorio was not included in the first version of the Statute of the party. However, the institutionalization process was not yet complete: firstly, value infusion was still incomplete, since no detailed party programmes were presented with the exception of the 2013 manifesto and 7-bullet points that served as the party programme for the European elections. Furthermore, the rules in the internal life of the party were not yet routinized, since the Direttorio was soon dissolved. The other relevant (and permanent) party change was the elimination, voted by M5S membership, of the website name (beppegrillo.it) from the party symbol.

Before the new elections (2018), M5S undertook a more resilient institutionalization process. Firstly, after two reforms of the Statute (2015-2016), the first of which added one article comprising an online link to the internal rule of the party (Movimento 5 Stelle 2016), M5S started its routinization process, which increased the asymmetry between the leadership and the other party faces (Vittori 2017a). Secondly, M5S implemented another Statute reform in 2017-2018. As Di Maio (2018) stated when introducing the online consultation for the new Statute of the party, 'it's time to think big: new statues and rules for the candidates'. Di Maio argued that the party was ready to govern and, consequently, the change in the Statute served to unify into one person the PM candidate and the political leader of the party. After the 2013 electoral shock, thus, the party made internal changes in order to comply with a renewed vote-seeking strategy.

The 2017 version of the Statue was drafted by the leadership and introduced a distinction between the Capo Politico (Head of the Party) and the Guarantor (Beppe Grillo). The Capo Politico, thanks to the new internal rule for the M5S Parliamentary Group, controls PPO (Movimento 5 Stelle 2018). Still, along with the Guarantor, D. Casaleggio and the newly created Associazione Rousseau (see below) represent de facto the organizational leadership of the party. Curiously enough, the M5S Head of the Party exists only as long as this figure is necessary to compete in the election (art. 7a, Movimento 5 Stelle

2017). Though an unstable position, she/he has extensive power within the party since she/he leads the party in all internal aspects of the organization. However, this power is counterbalanced by the Guarantor (Beppe Grillo). Contrary to the Head of the Party, who can serve only for two consecutive mandates, the Guarantor has a limitless mandate.

Apart from these Statute reforms, routinization comprised another crucial aspect for the party, i.e. the introduction of a new party online platform, called Rousseau, which replaced the less user-friendly Lex. Rousseau is the operating system through which members vote, discuss issues with elected representatives, make donations to the party and share best practices. Rousseau is not controlled by M5S; rather it belongs to an external association, founded by D. Casaleggio, local councillor and PM-assistant Massimo Bugani and former MEP David Borrelli.

Value infusion was improved – at least formally – through two documents: a) the first is the party programme, the longest (about 350 pages) and the most elaborate among Italian political parties in the 2018 elections, which was voted issue by issue by the membership and b) the so-called governing contract signed by M5S and The League when the two parties formed a coalition government. The party programme was drawn up long before the elections (the first online consultation took place in April 2017) and it took almost eight months to complete. As for the Statute reform, this party manifesto was more than a programme: it was meant to be a governing programme for the party. M5S organized a three-days conference in Pescara before the elections (January 2018) aimed at training participants in what M5S called a 'governing programme'.

Table 2. Party reforms and party change in SYRIZA and Five Star Movement.

Party	Stimuli	Party primary goal in *t0* and *t1*	What changed after the reform	Procedure	Driver of the change	Consequences of the change
Five Star Movement	Electoral Breakthrough (2013)	From democracy-seeking to vote-seeking	Strengthening Centralization	Party's statue Changes (2016 and 2017) through internal consultations	Party Leadership (2013, 2016 and 2017)	Dual Leadership: • Party organizational leadership (Casaleggio Associati) controls the PCO. • The political leadership (Di Maio) controls the PPO.
SYRIZA	Electoral Breakthrough (2012)	From policy-seeking to vote-seeking	Strengthening Centralization	Founding Congress (2013) and Post-Referendum Congress (2016)	Party in Central Office (2013) and Party in Government (2015-2016)	The party leadership (Tsipras) controls both PCO and PPO.

Source: own elaboration.

5. Conclusions

The aim of this paper was twofold. It was intended to a) enquire whether anti-establishment parties followed mainstream patterns when introducing internal reforms and b) attempt to analyse the similarities and differences between the institutionalization processes of SYRIZA and M5S. As relatively new parties, external stimuli (i.e. elections) were the main drivers of party change in both cases, even though the institutionalization process within SYRIZA suffered a main setback after the referendum. As in mainstream parties, elections represent a crucial variable for bringing about change within the party. The peculiarity here is that rather than electoral defeat, unexpected good performances pushed the two parties to start a process of internal reforms and institutionalization. In both cases this was mainly due to the young age of the organizations, whose value infusion (M5S) and routinization (M5S and SYRIZA) were not completed before their success.

Furthermore, party changes followed the same pattern as mainstream parties, since in institutionalization, processes were led by the most powerful party-face at the time of the internal reforms, i.e. the party leadership in the M5S case and the PCO (2013) and the party in government (2015-2016) in SYRIZA. However, contrary to the Harmel and Janda framework, for which the strategy of the party influences party change when facing either an external or internal shock, in these two cases the external stimuli were not in line with the party strategy and they led to a substantial modification of the overall party strategies, shifting party priorities from t0 to t1 towards a more vote-seeking strategy (see Table 2). In both cases the party changes were oriented to the anticipation of a likely new electoral shock, i.e. victory in the election and participation in the government. Both M5S and SYRIZA, rather than being passive actors, pro-actively attempted to modify the organization of the party in order to anticipate challenges coming from new external stimuli. What is more surprising is that, despite their departure from different ideological and organizational backgrounds, in both cases the institutionalization process led to the centralization of the competences into the most relevant party face. Despite the similarities between the two parties (first three columns in Table 2), SYRIZA and M5S followed different paths towards institutionalization (fourth to sixth columns in Table 2). As Panebianco (1982) points out, different genetic traits and different organizations impact on both the procedures through which change is pursued and on the drivers of the change. M5S's unbounded leadership (Vittori 2017a) was able through internal consultation to modify the Statute without calling for a congress, while it took two congresses (and one internal split) for SYRIZA to complete its institutionalization attempt. In the latter case, it was the PCO (1st Congress) and the Party Government (2nd Congress) which led the process.

Finally, the consequences of the change were different. M5S was founded through an entrepreneurial leadership, one political (Grillo) and one organizational (G. Casaleggio/Casaleggio Associati). The outcome of its internal changes did not modify the structure of internal power, which at the time of writing has a new political leader (Di Maio) and a new organizational leadership (D. Casaleggio/Associazione Rousseau). In SYRIZA, the overlapping between Party Secretary and Greek PM led to a concentration of the power in the hands of one party: that in government. Like other organizations which faced unexpected growth, the party élite in M5S and SYRIZA tried to create a structure that allows tighter control over centrifugal forces: anti-establishment parties

are not appreciably different from other parties when it comes to the ultimate party goal, i.e. taking (or maintaining) power.

References

Aslanidis P. and Kaltwasser, C.R. (2016). Dealing with populists in government: the SYRIZA-ANEL coalition in Greece, Democratization, Vol. 23(6), 1077-1091.

Bartolini, S. and Mair, P. (1990). Identity, competition, and electoral availability. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Blondel J. and Thiébault J.L. Czernicka, Ka., Inoguchi, T., Pathmanand, U. and Venturino, F. (2010). Political Leadership, Parties and Citizens: The Personalization of Leadership. London/New York: Routledge.

Bolleyer, N. (2013). New Parties in Old Systems. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bordignon, F. and Ceccarini, L. (2015) The Five-Star Movement: a hybrid actor in the net of state institutions. Journal of Modern Italian Studies, Vol. 20(4): 454-473.

Corbetta, P. and Gualmini, E. (eds.) (2013) Il Partito di Grillo. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Damiani, M. (2016). La sinistra radicale in Europa. Italia, Spagna, Germania, Francia. Donzelli Editore, Roma.

Davanellos, A., 2016. Reflections on our experience with Syriza. International Socialist Review 100, http://isreview.org/issue/100/reflections-our-experience-syriza.

Della Porta, D., Fernández, J., Kouki H. and Mosca, L. (2017). Movement Parties Against Austerity. London: Polity.

Di Maio, L. (2018). È ora di pensare in grande: nuovo Statuto e regole per le candidature. https://www.ilblogdellestelle.it/2017/12/e_ora_di_pensar.html.

Eletheriou, C. (2009). "The uneasy 'symbiosis'". Factionalism and Radical Politics in Synaspismos. Paper presented at the 4th Hellenic Observatory PhD Symposium, 25 June 2009.

Gauja, A. (2015). Party Reform: The Causes, Challenges, and Consequences of Organizational Change. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gemenis, K. (2012): The 2010 Regional Elections in Greece: Voting for Regional Governance or Protesting the IMF? Regional and Federal Studies, Vol.22(1): 107-115.

Grillo, B. (2014). RISULTATI - Consultazione Online - Comunicato politico numero cinquantacinque. https://www.ilblogdellestelle.it/2014/11/consultazione_online_-_comunicato_politico_numero_cinquantacinque.html.

Harmel, R. and Janda, K. (1994). An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change. Journal of Theoretical Politics. Vol. 6: 259–287.

Harmel, R. and Tan, A. (2003). Party actors and party change: Does factional dominance matter? European Journal of Political Research. Vol. 42: 409–424.

Harmel, R., Heo, U., Tan, A. and Janda K. (1995). Performance, Leadership, Factions and Party Change: An Empirical Analysis. West European Politics, Vol. 18(1): 1-33.

Kalyvas, N. and Marantzidis, N. (2002). Greek Communism, 1968-2001.East European Politics and Societies, Vol. 16(3): 665-690.

Katsourides, Y. (2016). Radical Left Parties in Government. The Cases of SYRIZA and AKEL. Cham: Palgrave MacMillan.

Levitsky, S. (1998). Institutionalization and Peronism: The concept, the case and the case for unpacking the concept. Party Politics 4: 77–92.

Mainwaring, S., Gervasoni, C. and España-Najera, A. (2017). Extra- and within-system electoral volatility. Party Politics, Vol. 23(6): 623-635.

March, L. (2011) Radical Left Parties in Contemporary Europe. Abingdon: Routledge.

Movimento 5 Stelle (2009). Non-Statuto. Own resource.

Movimento 5 Stelle (2015). Non-Statuto. Own resource.

Movimento 5 Stelle (2016). Non-statuto. http://www.beppegrillo.it/iniziative/movimento-cinquestelle/Regolamento-Movimento-5-Stelle.pdf.

Movimento 5 Stelle (2017). STATUTO dell'associazione denominata "MoVimento 5 Stelle". https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/associazionerousseau/documenti/statuto_MoVimento_2017.pdf.

Movimento 5 Stelle (2018). Regolamento del Gruppo Parlamentare "MoVimento 5 Stelle". Own resource.

Nikolakakis, N., 2016 Syriza's stance vis-à-vis the European Union following the financial crisis: the persistence of left Europeanism and the role of the European Left party. European Politics and Society. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2016.1196918.

Panebianco, A. (1982) Modelli di partito. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Pedersen, M.N. (1982). Towards a New Typology of Party Lifespans and Minor Parties. Scandinavian Political Studies, 5(1): 1-16.

Poguntke T. and Webb P. (2005). The Presidentialization of Politics. A Comparative Study of Modern Democracies, Oxford University Press.

Powell, E.A. and Tucker J.A. (2014). Revisiting Electoral Volatility in Post-Communist Countries: New Data, New Results and New Approaches. British Journal of Political Science, Vol. 44(1): 123-147.

Scarrow, S.E. Webb, P. D. and Poguntke, T. (2017). Organizing Political Parties. Representation, Participation, and Power. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Simiti, M. (2014). Rage and Protest: The case of the Greek Indignant movement. GreeSE Paper No. 82. Hellenic Observatory Papers on Greece and Southeast Europe.

Spourdalakis, M. (2014). The Miracoulous Rise of the "Phenomenon SYRIZA". International Critical Thought, Vol. 4(3): 354-366.

Stavrakakis, Y. and Katsambekis, G. (2014) Left-wing populism in the European periphery: the case of SYRIZA, Journal of Political Ideologies, Vol. 19(2): 119-142.

SYRIZA (2013). Το Καταστατικό του ΣΥΡΙΖΑ [The Statute of SYRIZA]. http://www.syriza.gr/pdfs/katastatiko.pdf.

Tarditi, V. and Vittori, D. (2017). What Are We Gonna Be When We Grow Up? SYRIZA institutionalisation and its new "governing party" role. Paper presented at 67th PSA Conference, Glasgow 10-12 April 2017.

Tarditi, V. (2015). Time of Crisis: Success or Decline for the Left? Partecipazione e Conflitto, Vol. 8(1): 215-240.

Tronconi, F. (ed.). (2015). Beppe Grillo's Five Stars Movement. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

Tsakatika M. and Eleftheriou, C. (2013). The Radical Left's Turn towards Civil Society in Greece: One Strategy, Two Paths. South European Society and Politics, Vol.18(1): 81-99.

Webb, P., Poguntke, T. and Kolodny, R. (2012). The Presidentialization of Party Leadership? Evaluating Party Leadership and Party Government in the Democratic World.

In Helms, Ludger (ed.). Comparative Political Leadership. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 77-98.

Vittori, D. (2017a) Podemos and the Five-star Movement: populist, nationalist or what?, Contemporary Italian Politics, Vol.9(2): 142-161.

Vittori, D. (2017b). Podemos and Five Stars Movement: Divergent Trajectories in a Similar Crisis? Constellations, Vol. 24(3): 324-338.