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RESEARCH ARTICLE

PARADOXES OF DEMOCRACY AND DEPOLITICISATION IN THE SOCIAL PERIPHERIES OF MODERNITY

Gianpasquale Preite

University of Salento, Italy

ABSTRACT: At the end of the 20th Century, the global diffusion of economic neoliberalism represents, seen from diverse perspectives, the outcome of a communicative overlapping between the economic system and the political system. This overlapping is equivalent to a functional intrasparency, which generates paradoxes of democracy as the depoliticisation and exclusion phenomena when facing inclusion expectations, as occurs in the peripheries of the world. Depoliticisation, in fact, appears as a paradox of democratic systems closely related to the development of the technocratic practices and the enhancement of the bureaucratic apparatus. One of the characteristics of technocracy is that it lies on the assumption that great decisions are of technical nature, not political. If great decisions may be taken by means of technical instruments, it means that there is no longer need for 'professional politicians', and even less need for people's participation. Technocracy and bureaucracy converge above the traditional sphere reserved to politics. The consequence of this convergence is, in fact, depoliticisation. In other words, there is a relation between technocracy, bureaucracy and ideological crises. Hence, the more technical the decision-making process, the more bureaucratized will the process of power be, and the more de-ideologized will the process of fundamental choices be. Populist movements thus describe the effect of the attempt of providing responses to the issues of modern society, to the extent in which the economic value becomes the only discriminating variable between what is correct and what is wrong (what is economically pointless must be discarded) and it actually move the decisional process away from the political sphere, enhancing the differences between the center and the periphery, between inclusion and exclusion.

In the light of such trends, which have become extensively resilient in the systems, how can the process of functional specification of social systems (economics, politics) be implemented in the peripheries of modernity? If trust in the political system lessens vis à vis problem-solving capabilities, how the consequent uncertainty be absorbed?

This essay aims to describing the extent in which the depoliticisation process can compensate for the pressure put on expectations against inclusion values. The theme is tackled with an outlook that stems from the epistemological mutation of globalization and, consequently, from the resolution of the traditionally axial center/periphery pattern, and focuses on the analysis of peripheries that come into play as the protagonists of the two-way relationship with their center, albeit the unusual democratic participation, yet to be interpreted.

KEYWORDS: depoliticisation, neoliberalism, populism, paradoxes of democracy, peripheries of modernity

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR: Gianpasquale Preite, e-mail: gianpasquale.preite@unisalento.it

1. Neoliberalism, paradoxes of democracy and depoliticisation

Liberalism is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon. It is a recurrent yet historically variable pattern of economic and political organization in modernity. Ideologically, liberalism claims that economic and political relations are best organized through free actors who seek to advance their own material or ideal interests in an institutional framework that maximizes the scope for formally free choice (Jessop 2002, 458). The resurgence of liberalism in the form of neoliberalism is often attributed to a successful hegemonic project voicing the interests of financial capital. Its recent hegemony in neoliberal regimes undoubtedly depends on the successful exercise of political leadership in response to the crisis of Atlantic Fordism a crisis that the rise neoliberal policy has exacerbated. «Liberalism can be seen as a more or less spontaneous philosophy within capitalist societies, that is, as a seemingly natural, almost self-evident economic, political, and social imaginary that corresponds to specific features of bourgeois society» (Jessop 2002, 462).

Since the end of the seventies, neo-liberalism has thus emerged as a new hegemonic global paradigm. Numerous aspects have facilitated the spread of neoliberalism globally, but did not pay much attention to the role played by the assessment both in the legitimacy of state neoliberalization and in the explanation of the resistance of neoliberalism (Giannone 2016, 495). In a complex society, neoliberalism may be seen as the doctrinal economic model of the 'free market', an ecosystem capable of self-regulating itself and,

hence, in an optimal condition whereby the variables of demand, inflation, unemployment operate by means of natural forces and, with some spontaneous adjustments, they are capable of ensuring an equilibrium. In other words, a perfect world with full employment, creativity and 'perpetual growth' (Hayek 1944; Friedman 1962).

This theorization ideologizes the economic doctrine and, in its democratic metamorphosis, it preserves the features of fundamentalism with which contemporary legitimization processes are constructed. Actually, if something in markets (and consequently, at a social level) does not work (i.e. inflation rises, growth drops, etc), the only plausible explanation is that the market is not sufficiently free. Hence, the solution and the way of creating a perfect society is enforcing stricter and more effective fundamental norms of economic and political freedom and eliminating every type of state interference on economy as a universally viable prescription for development, praxes that respond to the 'invisible hand' and Smith's liberalism.

Neoliberalism is the expression of a response to the 'over-government' that, in the wake of privatization, deregulation and new public management, would have been a state withdrawal from the direct government of many aspects left to economic freedom (Lastrico 2016, 360).

As an economic project, neoliberalism calls for: liberalization and deregulation of economic transactions, not only within national borders but also through these borders; The privatization of services provided by the State and the treatment of public spending on welfare as a cost of international production, rather than as a source of domestic demand. In particular, the expansion of financial capitalism towards the 'lower levels' of economic life (Bowman et al. 2014) was facilitated by the privatization of utilities and the outsourcing of public services under the encouraging flag of liberalization (Salento, Pesare 2016, 466).

As a political project, neoliberalism seeks to roll back normal forms of state intervention associated with the mixed economy and the Keynesian welfare national state as well as the exceptional forms of intervention aimed at managing internationally widespread crises (Jessop 2002, 458-459).

Neoliberalism is a model that often conflicts with the various forms of public intervention and, consequently, with the 'Keynesian Economic Theory' which envisages (especially in times of crisis) the need for state intervention to increase the global demand even in the condition of deficit spending. This determines an increase in consumptions, investments and employment (Keynes 1920, 1936).

Even the outlook founded on 'welfare economy' is not immune from neoliberalist opposition. In welfare economy every time there is an actual and overall income increase, there is a greater collective satisfaction and every redistribution of monetary income

from a wealthier subject to a less wealthy one increases the community satisfaction, thus enabling the full achievement of the most intensive needs to the detriment of the less intensive ones (Pigou 1920).

Lastly, economy considers social space in terms of market and, consequently, of 'supply and demand', even when it deals with issues related to social welfare, for instance, (community wellbeing), where the balance between social needs and the allocation of scarce resources become evident. A level, the latter, whereby social expectations arise determining the shift of decisional responsibilities, and therefore of risk, from economy to politics, despite economy depends of the functioning of politics, or the insurance of peace conditions, on guaranteeing rights and on the fact that binding decisions are produced. Nevertheless, the political coverage of specifically economic risks must not be confounded with forms of undifferentiated interdependence between economy and politics, and between economy and the state.

The issue of what role should the state play in economy has always been the focus of social sciences and has produced a considerable amount of literature, albeit constantly aiming to counter 'liberalism' and 'interventionism'.

The Theory of Public Choice developed by Buchanan in the 70s of the past century, examines the 'non-market decisions' and analyzes the behavior of the actors on the political scene. The Public Choice synthesizes the application of economy to political science (Mueller 1979, 1) and to political and social philosophy issues.

The element that makes it topical in any applied economy research is that the intervention of economic reality cannot disregard the political-institutional context, where the economic models must be put into practice. Nevertheless, also the Public Choice is in antithesis with the Welfare Economy and criticizes state interventions only when the latter is implemented according to tools, which do not sufficiently safeguard freedom and citizens interests (Buchanan 1989, 9-10). This theoretical approach does not see politics as a virtuous system, nor politicians as enlightened rulers with the community's wellbeing at heart; on the contrary, the latter often appear as rational players led, within the market context, by egoistic and personal interests (i.e. prestige, wealth, power, tax advantages, etc.); a plausible assumption, if we take into account that all these factors affect economic and politics and law, they alter the fragile participation system and the democratic government of institutions and pave the way to conflicts, contradictions and new paradoxes which, alongside the globalization of the economic system, the liberalization of the movement of capital, the existence of monetary and political supra-institutions, raise the issue at a highly complex level. In other words, they take the debate at a level which brings to the surface the non-neutral contents of theoretical constructions at the basis of the concepts of social welfare, the protection of rights and the quality of

life, and give rise to paradoxes involving the representativeness of democracy in the terms already debated by Condorcet, in the 18th century and vividly theorized by Arrow in the mid-20th century (Arrow 1951).

After the abandonment of a welfare state / Keynesian key social perspective and the apparent uncontrolled victory of neoliberalism, the theme of popular sovereignty has become a central theme in Western democracies.

In the complexity of the globalized world, democratic life is decentralized giving rise to a variety of actions and institutions, which unexpectedly go beyond the concept of universal suffrage (Rosanvallon 2008). Here, the major issue for democracy is not the proclamation of rules, which are widely acknowledged by now, but rather making them concrete, that is, translating into reality the values of democracy and overcoming paradoxes, starting from the constitutive ones linked to the concept of freedom and equality (Bobbio 1999). Bobbio maintained that one of the first paradoxes is represented by the growing demand for participation in decision making on issues concerning the community—a demand which stems from the ‘direct democracy’ model which gradually replaces the ‘representative democracy’ model. Nevertheless, the dimension and the functions of a modern State have made inapplicable the direct democracy procedures and difficult the implementation of the representative democracy (Mancarella 1995, 136).

In the traditional institutions of the representative democracy, the level of public confidence temporally denotes a progressive decline, which is even more evident at international level. (Norris 1999; Pharr, Putnam 2000; Rosanvallon 2009; Mastropaolo 2011; Galli 2011, Petrucciani 2014). This is a process of reducing democratic representativeness, beginning in the mid-1970s of the last century, with the Report on the *Crisis of Democracy* edited by Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki for the ‘Trilateral Commission’. According to these authors, in fact, the overload of social demands that burdened the life of democracies has been met, through a process of verticalisation of decisions, strengthening of executives, concentration of decision-making powers in the hands of more restricted elites (Crozier, Huntington, Watanuki 1977). At the same time, there has been a gradual erosion of liberal-democratic legitimacy, both in terms of the demand for ‘equal freedoms’ and the demand for ‘equal participation’ in decision-making processes, both of which are expressions of the ethical substratum of liberalism and democracy (Galeotti 1993, 2010).

This phenomenon, alongside the globalization process, has contributed to the creation of yet another paradox, due to the fact that there has also been a greater bureaucratisation, seen as power and, consequently, a ‘development in technical terms’ of society. A technocratic drift whereby the great decisions made by one or more States are of technical nature, and not political. If the great decisions can be taken with technical tools,

we would no longer need 'professional politicians' nor peoples' participation while growing trust being placed in management consultants and other private sector producer services firms than in the expertise, experience, and opinions of public sector professionals (Jessop 2007a).

Technocracy and bureaucracy merge above the traditionally political sphere. There certainly is a strong bond between technocracy, bureaucracy and ideological crises, due to the fact that the more technical the decision making process becomes, the more red tape will there be in the process of power, the more de-ideologized will the process of making fundamental choice become.

The last paradox of democracy derives from the contrast between the democratization process and the massification seen as a depersonalization of the individual and a strong trend - a feature of the neoliberal society - to uniformize and, hence, standardize the values of living conditions and the behavior of the single elements of a social community, and the consequent process of cancellation of individual traits. It is a massification that stems from the concrete extension of the bases of power, which generates depoliticisation due to the fact that the masses (periphery) are removed from the political system (center). We are witnessing a democratic disenchantment whereby citizens' vote less than in the past and, above all, they vote in a different way (Rosanvallon 2008). This process being influenced by the greatest structural inequalities present in society and are reflected in state policies (Fawcett, Marsh 2014, 185).

The concept of depoliticisation is emerging as one of the most, if not the most, important devices for understanding contemporary patterns of governance throughout advanced industrial democracies. Its use has been stretched from describing a relatively simple form of statecraft to the widespread foreclosure of political debate and the disengagement of citizens from formal political arenas. What seems clear is that depoliticisation appears to be a process, which is far easier to pin down empirically than conceptually; in that sense, «we all agree that it is happening, we're just not entirely agreed on what precisely is happening» (Foster 2014, 226).

Depoliticisation is basic concept in political analysis. For the polity, a key aspect of depoliticisation is the redrawing of the structural difference between the political and the non-political spheres. This creates space for various kinds of depoliticisation. However, as Foucault, and Gramsci emphasize, this dividing line is not natural, even if it is sometimes taken-for-granted: it must be policed and can be repoliticised (Jessop 2014, 212). This space represents a 'shadow area', from which it was created and developed the new 21st-century populism c. d 'from below', in which disappears the logic of representation, generating instability (Bazzicalupo 2016, 62) and threats to the fabric of democracy (Rosanvallon 2008, 128).

The democratic disenchantment, however, does not favor the lack of concern for public affairs; citizens show their involvement in community life in a different way. In between elections, democratic viability takes on different features and takes on other forms, drawn from all the activities which do not, however, associate citizens with the exercise of power, but with organizing their control over who is ruling (Rosanvallon 2008, 123) – a constant balancing act between the empowerment to act and the empowerment to deny, already theorized by Montesquieu, because not only consent but also dissent plays a major role. These activities have, at all times, an ambiguous character. On the one hand, in fact, they may be useful to strengthen democracy by stimulating positively, on the other they can also weaken it, fostering the depoliticisation processes that expose power to new evidence of ‘good governance’ at the service of society.

The malaise that comes from the populism is the product of the inability to represent and respond to social unease that, left to itself by ‘rational’ political forces, is listened only by the prophets of resentment (Petrucciani, 2014). However, the gap between power and society, between center and periphery, does not lead to social appropriation, but to a situation in which citizens are increasingly expropriated from democratic processes. The populism of the 21st century ignores complications and disagreements, even assimilates discontent and stops it, without creating alternatives or social mediation. There is no sublimation, no alienation or sacrifice of differences in the unitary identity of the people. There is no political project, although the wave of credulity, cynicism and trust in the voice of one as everyone, drag the fragile institutions (Bazzicalupo 2016, 69-70).

Tocqueville maintained that democracy could simplify political life, but actually, nowadays, the contrary occurs. The development of democracy makes political life ever more complex. Politics, with its ordinary actions formally oriented towards a democratic inclusion, actually democratically excludes those who are ‘different’, and includes those who are ‘equal’. Observing, describing and understanding the mechanisms and structures of social inclusion and exclusion, means unveiling the possibilities of demystifying equalitarian demagogies and orienting the very expectations of inclusion. By means of these procedures, society controls the nature of the its structural operations as well as the evolution improbabilities is may be exposed to, ensuring its stability.

The consequence of the stabilization of this differentiation process does no longer allow for inclusion into a social system to imply also the inclusion into others. The inclusion of the center or of the periphery in the system of law, does not definitely translate into its inclusion also into the political or economic system. This fact may raise problems as it generates a differentiation between inclusion and exclusion and increases risk, diminishing interdependence (De Giorgi, Magnolo 2005, 17).

This is the main reason whereby a paradox occurs.

If one assumes this perspective, one will see how in modern society there is a greater equality and, at the same time, a greater inequality, more legality and illegality, more wealth and more poverty, more knowledge and more ignorance, more democracy and less participation, more safety and more risks (Castañeda Sabido, Cuéllar Vàsquez 1998). When politics, facing these conditions, does not provide stability of expectations, but rather contributes to detour them, there is a concrete issue of how the consequent uncertainty may be absorbed.

Democracy is still seen as the type of government, which accomplishes the representation of everyone's interests, and this is why there is a greater expectation in democracy and a higher demand for it (De Giorgi 2006, 133-135). By the same token, there is the assertion of a globalizing idea whereby the new social order is assigned to the market where one can assert the freedom of private individuals. The assumption is the following: if the selection of public decisions does not work, the natural selection in terms of money and finance would certainly work. The outcome of this assumption may be translated into depoliticisation and into the results of the current political, social and economic crisis, which is affecting most of the world's population.

2. The center/periphery differentiation process in the systems theory

The center/periphery differentiation is, above all, a historiographical model applied also in times before modernity, as an interpretation key, along with other models, of the relations between empires and provinces (Sassen 1995), between cities and territories (Mela 2006), between what is included and what is excluded (Luhmann 1992).

In the general theory of politics, the depoliticisation concept evokes the meaning of moving away from the political aspects, or the subtraction of the political influxes which takes place when, in the political systems, the functional codes are distracted from their specification and are confounded with the functional codes of economy and law, thus generating a central nucleus, definable as 'center of interests'.

Hence, the process of the releasing of the functional specification of the system is a factor found at the basis of the center/periphery differentiation, used to indicate the inclusion/exclusion processes, compared to the economic, social and territorial power relations. This type of differentiation shows the peripheries acquiring a more or less negative value, depending on the context examined.

A wide range of peripheries may be examined (Caldiron 2005), from the extreme ones – as those in some areas of the world far from modernity (democracy, human rights,

individual and/or collective freedoms), where there are no legal systems nor stable political and institutional structures, where economies are weak and subject to strong variations- to the less severe ones yet equally significant (on the rise in the western world) which report paradoxes of democracy which are independent from the lack of legal systems and democratic political structures, but depend on the disappointment of the cognitive expectations which generate forms of selectivity and populist orientations that can be considered as depoliticisation phenomena, i.e. the 2016 Brexit issue representing not only the result of the votes of the elderly against the youth's, but also the votes of the provinces (a periphery made up also by large urban centers in the Midlands and the old industrial districts as the ones in the West and East Midlands) against the metropolis (a center made up by the City and the other districts with mutual interests having basically an economic and financial matrix).

The constructivist and functionalist theories and, above all, the theory of social systems, offer a valid methodological reference for the analysis of the differentiation process at the basis of the center/periphery differentiation and, consequently, of the inclusion/exclusion issue.

The constructivist approach, in fact, leads to the assumption that modern society is functionally differentiated, therefore the social systems through which modernity may be described, are the outcome of the differentiation based on their function (Di Viggiano 2012a, 293-295), . This means that the point of departure of the reflection is not identity but the differentiation between the social system and the environment, is so much as that every form is a form with two sides and every form is a form of some kind of differentiation.

At the basis of this analytical perspective, there is the outcome of an epistemological process, which ascribes centrality to the concept of observation. Observing means differentiating and indicating. From a definition many more may be generated, thus making up a network of connections/differentiations as a product of the observer's activities (Spencer-Brown 1969).

Even the center/periphery difference may therefore be considered as the outcome of an observation which, taking on the form of a differentiation, defines the selection of one side against another. Every unit of the center/periphery differentiated form is a socially organized abstraction (mankind) which orients expectations. This abstraction is the result of an external observation, which, by observing, makes up the identity of a social system (Esposito 2002, 125).

In the 80s of the past century, with Luhmann's publication of the *Soziale Systeme* the scholar introduced a concept taken from biology to explain the capability of systems of guiding their own reproduction processes – autopoiesis. The scope of this acquisition

was of great momentum as it shifted the focus of the issue from repetition, i.e. from the reiteration of some behaviors or expectation of behaviors, to the connection, i.e. the issue of deciding how to go from a given phenomenon to a subsequent one (Luhmann 1984, 80-92).

This phase is innovative and fundamental for two reasons. On the one hand, it represents a strategy to reduce complexity, because every system excludes the excess of complexity with respect to what is absorbable, depending on their own operations. On the other hand, it enables to consider the structure of a system as something stable, as it is the result of an election with respect to all which is external. The relations between elements, in fact, acquire structural value because they represent a selection between multiplicities of possible combinations, and only this way will they recover the advantages, with the relevant risks, of a selective reduction (Luhmann 1984, 440).

Luhmann's *Social Systems Theory*, assumes that society is the result of the form of the difference between the system and the environment. It is a macro-assumption, i.e. from the generalization of a form, which is valid for all social systems. Every social system reproduces the form of the difference with respect to its environment (externally) and is stable to the extent in which it reproduces internally the characteristics, which are at the basis of its functional specification.

This is the autopoiesis process which defines the 'operational closure' of the system, but also its opening to the environment (Luhmann, De Giorgi 1991, 30-32), whereby the term 'closure' refers only and exclusively to the lack of an input-output relation between system and environment, whilst the term 'openness' implies the capability of self-regulation with respect to the disturbances deriving from the environment.

As Jessop observes, the concept of autopoiesis elaborated by Luhmann, allows us to overcome the problem of hierarchy between systems (question specific to Marxist theory). In particular, systems such as politics and economy, having their own codes, are independent in operational terms. This has both structural and strategic consequences. On the structural level, the systems have an operational autonomy that is absolute and therefore cannot determine social development. However, the operational autonomy reveals a constraint of material dependence of the performance of other systems that operate according to their own codes and programs. Faced with these constraints, the system builds simplified models introducing selective constraints, that is compatible with its own operations, and therefore such as to reflect their relevance with respect to its own reproduction. On a strategic level, modern societies are so highly differentiated and polycentric that no single system could ever coordinate their different interactions, and ensure their harmonious cooperation towards a common goal. Once the systems

reach the autopoietic take-off, they only respond to the problems in their own way. External requests indicated in other codes and/or in terms of noise of 'world of daily life', will be considered irrelevant or, otherwise, treated as irritation to be avoided or overcome in any way whatsoever the disturbed system deems appropriate (Jessop 2008). In other words, the first major implication which systems from the functional differentiation of society, therefore, is that every social system is operationally independent, i.e. it operates selectively absorbing the information from the environment relevant for the system, and produces communication according to its own codes.

The second implication is that the system may come in contact with its environment, and consequently with other systems, only by means of structural couplings, which take place in presence of highly generalized phenomena. This assumption highlights the capabilities of evolution of the system, but also selectivity with respect to its specification, considering that every system will absorb a new complexity only in accordance with its own functional coees.

Structural coupling describes the type of interaction that takes place between two systems or between system and environment, without altering the identity of the systems involved. Through recurring interactions, structurally coupled systems adapt each other's structure. In this way, a system can integrate disturbances from the other system into its own processes. The structural coupling, in this sense, would be equivalent to a concept that Jessop proposes to experiment as a substitute for the terms 'derivation' or 'correspondence' (Jessop 2007a).

In the political system, the operational closure represents the meter of its stability, in spite of the fact that the system is always exposed to demands coming from the surrounding environment, that become relevant only if there is a high generalization. At this point self-referentialism comes into the picture, absorbing innovations by means of the production of new political decisions - made according to their own functional code. Such new political decisions may still be adopted, without altering the structural and operational features of the system. Hence, these will not depend on the production of legal norms (belonging to the legal system) or on the variations of the supply and demand of a given market (as operations which take place in the economic system).

Another feature of the political system is the fact that its means of communicating is represented by 'power', as the very political behavior is focused on the criterion of maximizing power, which defines differences in decisions made to meet the needs. In a hypothesis of a perfect rationale of its behavior, it will take into account also other subsystems and their specific communicative universe, only if these are functional to power.

However, this consideration opens the space for further exploration. As noted by Jessop, it is not be neglected the strong dependence of the State from law and money to

ensure its collectively binding decisions, which implies a close connection between the systems of politics, economy and law (Jessop 2007b), even if each of these systems sees this coupling from its own distinctive point of view.

Economy uses 'money' as a communicative tool. The monetary mechanism is the one that contributes the most to economy's differentiation process (Marinelli 1993, 125). From a material standpoint, money takes on the role of a 'meter of value' and supports 'exchange mechanisms' which follow the supply and demand laws.

The law, in turn, albeit its relational interface which connects rationally to the codes of each of these systems and with all the others making up its environment, orients itself according to the meaning and the inner structures of the legal system proper (Luhmann 1990, 61-62).

In fact, the systems theory analysis describes the function of law as a structure of expectations consistently generalized. Having assumed this higher level of abstraction, it describes how social communication is practiced and determines the selectivity of the legal structure.

The legal system, thanks to its peculiar configuration, made up by all the social communications that are expressed with reference to law, examines behaviors in compliance with the law, but also of those that violate it. Modern society is not made up in a corporate way and cannot be reduced, as none of its primary partial systems, to a unit of an organization. Hence, the system of law does not end with its organizations (Luhmann 1990, 63). This remark explains how the constitution, within political power, of a jurisdiction that takes on a collectively binding decisional character, is only one of the assumptions for the differentiation of the legal system, and not the only one.

The propagation of the neoliberal thinking at a global level produces distorted effects on the social systems and promotes, above all, forms of undifferentiated dependence between economy, politics and law.

While economy portrays a greater capability of absorbing the global dynamics according to the inclusion-exclusion code, politics display a certain resistance mainly due to the impermeability, which comes from the intensive institutionalization process, which, in time, has defined the functional prerogatives. It is a dimension in which political choices, conditioned by the market, acquire the character of necessity and unavoidability.

This consideration makes evident a property of the environment, that is 'functional intransparency', understood as the difficulty of a given system (such as, for example, the system of politics that is functionally specified according to its own code: power), to provide a complete description of itself, such as to be in contemporaneity both functional specification and environment with respect to which it has distinguished itself (Luhmann 1997, 3). Spencer Brown speaks in this sense of the form of the distinction to highlight

that nothing can be indicated and observed if it is not distinguished from an undifferentiated space (Spencer Brown 1969). The specification of systems, however, if on the one hand it breaks the linear cause-effect relations - therefore the order of operations as successions - on the other hand, it works through the continuous re-entry into the system of the distinction between system/environment and this self-reference reproduces intransparency, therefore environments where the phenomena of depoliticisation are generated.

3. The effects of globalization in the peripheries of modernity: inclusion networks

The creation of local specificities highlights a sort of contradiction compared to the effects expected by the functional differentiation of society. In fact, while in the centers it is possible to observe a complete separation of the functions (economy of law, the morale of politics, etc.), in the peripheries, this differentiation cannot be traced with distinct lines, hence, the shape of modernity has a hard time in establishing itself.

In the different peripheral realities, there may be differentiated structures, as well as undifferentiated ones. In both cases, the process of reproducing the elements making up contemporary society is not blocked. The functional differentiation is still taking place by means of infinite variants that reproduce, simultaneously, homologation and deviance, with a mutation pace that may definitely be considered as unprecedented.

In the temporal evolution, the center/periphery spatial axis is associated to different interpretation categories referring to the diverse fields of knowledge, which range from history to social sciences.

At the end of the 19th Century, for example, the interpretation of the center/periphery relation developed within the framework of the studies on the birth of the social state and was affected by the Eurocentric conception of the time (Shennan 1974), and by the centrality attributed to Europe and all the western world, of detecting and defining reference models through which 'other worlds' could be examined and understood.

After one century, the center/periphery relation appears profoundly changed and subject to strong criticism, that has considerably impacted its progressive weakening. In fact, the 'peripheries' have taken on a major role in relation to their 'centers'. This process has started to become manifest at the time when from a world of states and nations the world became global with a spatial conception, that has focused on a social dimension.

This is when the model theorised by Wallerstein took form, involving social sciences (anthropology, religion, economics, political decisions, urban planning, evolution of rights, social and individual expectations, etc.) and developed around the idea of 'world system', as a historic reflection on the global economy (Di Viggiano 2012a, 296). This is a proposal focusing on the rejection of the concept of 'third world' and on the conviction of the existence of one single world regulated by complex economic relations (world economy), in which the dichotomy 'capital-work' and the hoarding of an increasing amount of capital, explain the existing boundaries. Despite the dishomogeneity of the world's capitalistic system in terms of culture, politics and economics, this proposal offers a representation of the gradual process of expansion of the system proper, as a single network or a global economic exchange system, still existing today.

Unlike the positive modernization theories, Wallerstein does not conceive such differences as residues or irregularities that can be overcome only with the global evolution of the system, proving there is an inadequate knowledge of the systemic dynamics and, especially, of the evolutionary processes of social systems (Wallerstein 1979, 146-161).

A major element of the 'world system' is the composition of the world in center, semi-periphery and periphery. What characterizes this description of the world is a fundamental and institutionalized division between the center and the periphery. The center has the connotation of the high level of technological development and by products of complex nature, while the periphery plays the role of providing raw materials, agricultural products and low-cost labor. From an economic standpoint, the periphery sells products at a low cost to the center and purchases from the center at comparatively higher prices. This constitutional inequity tends to stabilize itself producing deterministic constraints. Between the center and the periphery –not localized in a stable manner in specific geographic areas, there is an area called semi-periphery that behaves as a periphery in relation to the center and as a center in relation to the periphery. The semi-peripheral states enjoy a certain instability and can move either towards the center or towards the periphery, this becoming a 'hinge' which makes the global movements of the 'world system' dynamic. With this theoretical and ideological matrix, the axis of the class struggle theorized by Marx shifts from the national level to the level of the world economy system, attracting the interest of anti-globalization movements (Lafay 1996).

With the establishment of modern society described as a functionally differentiated system, the center-periphery differentiation is above all declined by the counterpositioning of globalization and regionalization processes that are not alternative one to the other but, rather, simultaneous and complementary, not describable using the categories of exploitation. The functional specification of societal systems detects systems according to their function and not according to hierarchies. Every functional system is

necessary to society as any other function. Globalization, seen as a modern society phenomenon, concerns all social systems and is not limited to one alone.

This is a phenomenon that generates processes of institutional change in individual countries and strong dependence on an international level; the capacity of markets to overturn institutional rules and control possibilities; high economic instability rather than solidity of economic performance, politically supported and guaranteed; pursuit of cyclical rather than structural policies and, consequently, the primacy of short-term profit maximization (of economic actors) rather than long-term efficiency of public action (of institutional actors) (Moini 2012, 96).

Globalization, therefore, favors different degrees of economic development rather than different ways of development in different countries. On the other hand, the same model of capitalist accumulation is an expression of changing, variegated and spatially differentiated declinations, with respect to which the search for differential traits of common constitutive characteristics seems difficult, considering that the same mechanisms of coordination, and therefore governance, tend to be heterogeneous even within a single State (Hollingsworth, Boyer 1997). This difficulty limits the possibility of grasping the differentiations with respect to which capitalism declines, although capitalist variation is understood as a more explicit conception of diversity, recognizing the strong and complex interdependencies present in global capitalist structuring and contingent institutional convergence between different so-called varieties of capitalism (Nixon 2014) and it is the basis of the theoretical model of 'variegated capitalism', as an explanation of the unequal development of capitalism through the combination of «neomarxist concepts of combined and uneven development, regulationist treatments of the geographies of accumulation and regulation, and polanyan notions of socio-institutional embeddedness» (Peck, Theodore 2007, 762).

The original analysis of the Luhmann's social systems theory, presents the idea according to which in peripheries communication survives by making a strong reference to people, included in knowledge networks and relations of many kinds, which are distinguished by the degree of social prestige and visibility they manage to obtain (Luhmann 1999, 123; Corsi, De Giorgi 1999, 29).

In the traditional (stratified) society, family, heritage, and ownership represent the old order on which the structure of society is constructed. The stratification is based on the unity of family and heritage and includes the patron/client relation which has also political functions, due to the lack of a local administration that can be regulated by the center (Eisenstadt, Roniger 1984). This order disappears with the passage to a functionally differentiated society where the role of associations, parties, public administrations develop, as well as those of institutions organized to meet the needs of citizens according

to specific functions. The functioning of these structures makes unnecessary the patron/client relations as well as family, friendship, business and private proximity networks.

The problem of peripheries of modernity stems from the fact that such structures, nowadays unheard in a structurally differentiated society- resurface due to the negative depoliticisation process which moves away from politics, law and, consequently, from the 'center of interests' legitimizing the quest for 'help-nets', for support or the expectation of gratitude.

Inside these nets one learns how to take advantage of a position of prestige in the organization with the causal links oriented towards sedimentation and reorganization of differences, with special reference to the factors, which have always led to the obtainment of something (Baraldi, Corsi, Esposito 2002, 168-170). Inside such networks, the conditions of social inclusion take place, clearly far from the center.

The dynamics of inclusion/exclusion become more complex due also to the cognitive expectation, which is generated following a deception. Deception is the event through which possible forms of selectivity become possible, thus generating not only new forms of populism but more new 'inclusion networks' as international terrorism (at a macro level) and the enhancement of 'trust networks', as criminal organizations (at a local level), whose stability derives from the legitimization of the inclusion processes which normalize the hypertrophy of the political system that, in different terms, fuel the depoliticisation process.

Inclusion networks grant security because they generate their own legality, structure expectations and channel them. All peripheries of modernity can be described through the functioning of such network: the effectiveness of their organizational action, the generation of their own legality, the orientation of skills, responsibilities, safety and social costs.

These are the elements, which make alternatives to such networks unavailable and define stability and specification as inclusion networks. In order to trust an organization one needs to know an influential person. The request of a favor triggers the recognition of a competence, influence, power and good will, the network rewards and motivates because it 'honors' (Luhmann 1999, 114-118).

Family relations and the ones between patron and client survive within this context, but it would also make sense to start talking about corruption. This rationale highlights the limitations of rationality of power (means/purpose) which, as a social system, is different from the environment as it becomes 'irritated' by the antagonisms of the environment and includes forms of irritation (Luhmann 1985, 115-132).

Actually, such 'incorporation' processes conducted by power, determine the occurrence of new forms of antagonism, i.e. new forms of power (Gozzi 1982, 7) which, in the case of peripheries of modernity, is seen as an inclusion or exclusion network. This means that social systems are differentiated and are not differentiated, their codes function properly and are corrupt, at the same time.

In the periphery of modernity it is very difficult, if not impossible, to keep politics within the boundaries of politics, economics within the boundaries of economics and law within the boundaries of law.

A sort of 'class of corruption' is produced, thus inhibiting a clear differentiation of communication. In such an instance, if we wish to impose our own right, it would be necessary to have an excellent political connection, or enough money to convince officers and employees. If we were to preserve our heritage it would be expedient to be supported by the powerful, creating the bases for the so-called 'inclusion networks' which replace the functional differentiation and enable a form of participation in communication which, for some social groups, would be complex to achieve in other ways.

4. Conclusion

Hence, in the peripheries of modernity, the social and individual expectations are structured so that their function of facilitating the construction of the future needs to be filtered by networks, which generate the immunization that, in the context of economics, both politics and law are incapable of implementing. This occurs because peripheries are, at a time, place for society and places where the codes for the functioning of the social systems are corrupt. Consequently, the protection of rights depends on institutions, institutions depend on public administration, the functioning of public administration is subject to politics, and politics is conditioned by economy and, in summary, political consensus or economically acquired.

At such conditions, extra-institutional mass organizations (anti-politics) as the populist organizations are (and have in common) the result of the stabilization of the corruption processes of functional codes. Hence, once stabilized, the issue is no longer underdevelopment or backwardness, nor the lack of political or legal culture but, rather, the resistance and stratification.

The fact that one's expectations are directed towards organizations that act as inclusion networks, as a guarantee for the obtainment of what through politics could not be obtained, at such conditions, the expectations directed towards politics become a reason for exclusion as the rime for the social actions are impossible to accept, and they

imply a further 'distance' for those who have already moved away and imply a further marginalization of those people who have already been marginalized.

Observing the dynamics through which these expectations occur and take shape, gives the possibility of describing how peripheries are stabilized due to the fact that they are generated.

The peripheries of modernity, therefore, follow a process of stabilization that derives from the disappointment of expectations on the part of the political system. The same 'Third Way' proposed by Giddens in the nineties of the last century, as a combination to ensure efficiency and equity in systems, did not represent the overcoming of a paradigm able to act on the processes of inclusion/exclusion. The same consideration can also be applied to the most updated version proposed by Stiglitz according to which, the states of the West, and in particular the European Union, suffer from an intolerable democratic deficit. National governments must be subject to the diktats decided by men, women and commissions who are answerable only to themselves and not to the governed. Furthermore, the austerity regime propagated and administered as a law imposed by the market economy, creates serious problems for the real economy by favoring poverty, inequality and a lack of democracy.

If there is a core challenge that remains for the literature on depoliticisation today it is surely to identify better, to describe in more detail and to explain more effectively the disparate and complex motivations of political elites as they continue to design and build institutions that prevent us from seeing clearly the political choices that govern our ostensibly democratic societies (Hay 2014, 310). However, the path theorized by Stiglitz (continental keynism) opens a glimpse into the future because it promotes the construction of new social institutions starting with movements against the deregulation of the labor market, opposition to the destruction of the public university, mutual aid, the construction of productive initiatives not marked by the logic of profit and ecological requalification of the territory (Stiglitz 2007).

In the meantime, something new has happened. This is the technological revolution that with its pervasiveness has acted as an accelerator of social and economic changes that are not compared with any other type of revolution, that act in an unprecedented way on the processes of functional specification of modern economic and political systems and that, in the periphery of modernity, stratify as spaces of integration between people and operate on the basis of a goal code that produces resistance to forms of differentiation, i. e. exclusion with respect to the functioning of different system codes.

Among the many variants of the forms of public intervention and the many variants of the forms of liberalism there is the need for an overall rethinking of the relationship between state and market, between politics and law in the light also of the profound

changes induced by the technological revolution and the phenomena of de-politicization in progress.

Rethinking the relation between the state and the market, between economy and politics, in the light of the ongoing depoliticisation phenomena, means asking new questions that overcome the old (consolidated) paradigms. Yet, it also means looking towards new development models capable of intervening on territorial unbalances, on the depletion of social capital and infrastructural endowments, on the deskilling of educational systems and welfare facilities, as well as the impact on environmental issues or, more in general, the ones involving common goods. In other words, revisit the role of economy and politics, where center and periphery make up two sides of the same coin, means acting on the reduction of the level of deceived expectations and, consequently, acting on the depoliticisation process, redesigning inclusion strategies in terms of new opportunities and new forms of integration and democratic participation in the market and in social life, to stabilize expectations and absorb uncertainty, despite the only possibility of binding the future is always a risk.

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AUTHOR'S INFORMATION:

Gianpasquale Preite is assistant professor of Political Philosophy at the University of Salento