

Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II
Scuola delle Scienze Umane e Sociali
Quaderni
1

STUDI E RICERCHE DI SCIENZE UMANE E SOCIALI

a cura di ROBERTO DELLE DONNE
Prefazione di LUCIO DE GIOVANNI



Federico II Open Access University Press





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Prefazione di Lucio De Giovanni

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Grillo's Personal Party. A Case Study of Organizational Leadership*

Annarita Criscitiello**

Abstract: For many years, the organisational approach to the study of political parties, in Italy as well as in many other Western democracies, has predominately concentrated on the analysis of the party's organisation at grass roots level, how it organises its central office and its organisation once elected. Party leadership as a possible organisational resource has often been neglected or ignored. Italy's history during the last 20 years is one of a long process of personalization of political parties. In particular, at the beginning of the 1990s, with Silvio Berlusconi and his party Forza Italia, we witness the develop of a new type of political party, one in which leadership matters. This can be defined as a personal party. This paper will focus on the Movimento 5 Stelle of Beppe Grillo, a political party that obtained significant and unexpected success: 8,500,000 votes (25% of the italian electorate), in the general elections of February 2013. Analysing the M5S from its origins as a grass roots movement to a party in public office, this paper will seek to define Gillo's leadership. Despite its declared bottom-up organizaton and 'hyperdemocracy', based on Grillo's blog, the 5 stars movement is in fact a top-down decision making body. The evidence from Grillo's Mps and the party's discipline after a year in parlament, demonstrates that Grillo's party is a personal party and is an example of controversial leadership in public office, the 'arena of powers' where even Silvio Berlusconi failed.

Keywords: personal party, Beppe Grillo, Five Star MoVement, party organization, party leadership

1. Introduction

In this article the Five Star Movement (M5S), founded in 2009 by Beppe Grillo, will be analyzed as a party, not as a movement. Indeed the literature on political parties is unanimous in considering the presentation of candidates as the fundamental function of political parties, a function that the M5S has exercised in the last Italian local and national elections.

Looking at its origins, the genesis of this movement, immediately one may ask: how was the M5S created? It was founded in 2009 on the initiative of Beppe Grillo who, relying on his own resources and a blog (that boasted

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numerous visitors over four years), managed – in partnership with Gianroberto Casaleggio – to ride a growing and pervasive wave of discontentment that was channeled into a new political actor.

A party, and especially one that comes to represent more than 8 million voters, is however, first and foremost, a complex organization. Nowhere in the world can a complex organization survive without clear rules, roles and responsibilities. And writing some rules called ‘non-Statute’ may be just a good marketing gimmick to encourage people to believe that the members are all equal. It actually becomes the pacesetter to the anarchy within the organization or to a monocratic board.

In fact, the M5S moves between these extremes: that of chaos and that of a main party in which the leader, who has no formal role in either the party or in institutions, becomes the one who goes on to discuss with the Head of State, with the head of government and/or could expel a parliamentarian who does not agree with his political lines.

The M5S has (almost) managed to equal the success of Silvio Berlusconi’s party. *Forza Italia*, in fact, was the first Italian party ‘created round the table’, and within only a few months in 1994 – using the majority system for the first time – the most voted Italian party.

In the elections of February 2013, only three years after its first debut election (it ran in the regional elections of 2010, and only in some regions) the M5S obtained a resounding success, reaching 25% of the electorate, with 8.5 million votes. How, therefore, can it not be considered a party?

In this paper we investigate the useful analytical dimensions for ‘unpacking’ the M5S, seen as a complex organization. Leadership is the fundamental resource which shapes all the other aspects.

- A) Why and how is it an organization? This dimension concerns the problem of collective action, or rather, what organizational incentives encourage individuals to become part of a political movement.
- B) How the problem of coordination and institutionalization is dealt with? What is the role of leadership?

2. Organisation and membership

Beppe Grillo began his career as an actor, comedian and presenter at the end of the 1970s working for the Italian public television (RAI). During the ’70s and ’80s he participated in a series of successful TV programmes and began to stand out – especially during the so-called ‘*pentapartito*’ (five-party

coalition) phase – for his strong and incisive criticism of the economic and political establishment. In particular, in 1986, a heavy satirical joke against the Socialist Party, in the government at the time, led to his resignation from RAI. From then on he preferred to work first in theatres, then with shows in town squares, with monologues which were always very caustic and critical of the politicians, but also of the economic and financial élites. It was precisely during the years of the crises of the political parties that the object of his shows took the form of a carefully documented denunciation of the political and economic fraud undertaken by these political parties against its citizens. From the beginning of the 1990s Beppe Grillo built a loyal audience, show after show, who followed him on the most pressing issues, from protesting against the political parties and the economic establishment to criticise the tools and fraud of high finance to the detriment of citizens; from environmental and anti-consumerism issues to complaints against political corruption.

This continued for a decade until 2005, when he decided to give his street performances – which were more and more similar to real political rallies – a more established location, that of Web 2.0, by creating the personal blog www.beppegrillo.it, where his political initiatives would then take shape in the form of interaction between politics and citizens (Mosca e Vaccari 2011). The blog became an immediate resounding success. As we will see in the section on fundamental resources of communication, one of the organizational pillars of Beppe Grillo's Movement will be the clever mix between a deep knowledge of the mechanisms and tools of the Web – especially due to his partner and friend Gianroberto Casaleggio – and more than twenty years of experience in theatre, and especially public squares.

In 2007 Grillo and Casaleggio organized the First V-Day, a big event in a public square: the V-Day, which can be translated as the 'Fuck Off Day'. On the 8th September 2007, in the main square of Bologna, 350,000 signatures were collected to propose, with a popular legislative initiative that: a) no Italian citizen who has been found guilty at any one of the three levels of the Italian legal system can stand for Parliament; b) no Italian citizen can be elected to Parliament for more than two terms and c) parliamentary candidates must be voted into office by preference voting.

This event was not only an opportunity to formalize the position of Grillo's followers on their idea of the political class, but civic lists (independent lists of electoral candidates) were also talked about. This event was, at the time, seriously underrated by the media and political scientists who saw it simply as a form of political communication, nothing more than a moment

of protest. It marked, however, for the first time, the transition from the party on the ground to the party in public office, even if only at local level. More precisely Grillo invited citizens who were present at V-Day to appear in local elections in their towns offering himself as a kind of guarantor for some civic lists, awarding them his own personal ‘warranty label’. What he called “the ‘new Renaissance’ would start from the local elections, where various lists of candidates described as ‘Friends of Beppe Grillo’ were put up” (Bordignon and Ceccarini 2013: 5). In fact, in 2008 and then in 2009 these were the first representatives to be elected onto local councils as “Friends of Beppe Grillo”.

Obviously, the transition from the website to the legitimacy of elected positions, although only indirectly, involved, in fact, dressing more appropriately for a party than a movement. And in fact, in October of 2009 the *5 Star Movement* was founded. The only one rule for joining the Movement was: not being a member of any political party. And for anyone with an ambition for political office: the additional requirement of not having a criminal record of any kind.

The five stars of the name and logo represent the five most important policies of the movement. These five themes are: the safeguarding of public water, the environment, the growth of public transport, connectivity and development.

These are issues on which meetups, the first public meetings, were formed. With this simple but immediate programmatic platform since 2010, Grillo’s Movement has scaled all the steps of political representation, arriving at the clamorous success of February 2013.

At the regional elections of 2010, the M5S ran in five regions, collecting about half a million votes, with good results recorded in Emilia Romagna (with 6% of the vote) and 4% in Piedmont.

In the local elections in 2011, there was a first turning point, from the point of view of numbers. The M5S appeared in 75 cities, collecting several successes, such as, for example, nearly 10% of the votes in Bologna. But the real turning point came with the local elections in 2012, especially the first round on the 6th and 7th of May when it came close to 20 per cent and, five months later, in the regional election in Sicily. Overall, there were more than 150 ‘*grillini*’ (supporters of Grillo and the M5S) sitting on local councils and – for the first time – four mayors were elected.

This entrance exactly in the arena of “party in public office” forces the Movement to address its first, real, organizational challenge. Starting with the strength of the bond with its leader. For the first time ever, due to arguments between Grillo and some local leaders over the issue of internal de-

mocracy, the compactness of the movement was undermined. A theme which, as we shall see, runs over and over again.

But it was in the general elections of 24th–25th of February in 2013 that the M5S obtained a very significant and unexpected success: 8.5 million votes (25% of Italian voters while opinion polls predicted about 18-20%).

This is why the starting point here is to consider the M5S not a movement, but a party, and in particular, a new kind of “personal party”. As Angelo Panebianco said, in his seminal book on political parties, «a party is an organization».

Let's look at what the organizational resources which existed during the first phase, starting with the establishment of the web site and the meetups to their first electoral successes of the movement. One of the key organizational resources of the M5S is the Web, in particular Web 2.0 applications: such as the blog and meetup.com (De Rosa 2013). Alongside the blog, *beppegrillo.it*, we must examine local-level organization due to the decision made six months later to activate the meetups. The use of the meetup platform was very important for the Movement. Those who approached the blogs were encouraged to sign up to the platform and to organize themselves independently at local level.

The question of internal democracy is a big issue, which leads us to the leadership issue in the 2000s. More precisely the impact of the Movement with its face ‘in public office’ was important to the management of internal relations. And, in fact, it was an elected member in the local council of Ferrara, who was the first to be expelled from the M5S for having a “different political vision” from that of Grillo. A few months later, an elected councillor in Bologna, in an off-air comment recorded by a television station, argued that there was no democratic debate inside the Movement and was expelled by Grillo. And then it was Federica Salsi's turn. Salsi, another councillor in Bologna, had participated in a television talk show without Grillo's permission. But many MPs during 2013 and the first part of 2014 were also expelled¹.

¹ Senator Marino Mastrangeli was expelled in April 2013, for having participated in a television talk show without permission. Senator Adele Gambaro was expelled in June 2013 after she gave statements to the press which were considered detrimental to the M5S. This expulsion from the M5S forces the exit of a group of MPs which includes Fabiola Atinori, Paola De Pin and Adriano Zaccagnini. Also, in June of 2013, M5S MPs Alessandro Furnari and Vincenza Labriola leave for political dissent on the management of the closure of the Ilva in Taranto, Apulia. On the 26th February 2014 M5S decides to expel senators Orellana, Francesco Campanella, Fabrizio Bocchino and Lorenzo Baptist: for all of them the charges are of having a press office with its own symbol ready. As a result of this expulsion five further senators and two MPs decide to leave the parliamentary group.

The data from the opinion polls conducted by Ilvo Diamanti's research team in 2007, at the time of the first V-Day, offered a very precise profile of the supporters of Grillo's initiatives: young, well-educated, living in medium to large cities, and, naturally, with a higher than average rate of Internet use. From a political point of view, the 'grillini' declared themselves prevalently as having centre-left sympathies, while expressing some difficulty in positioning themselves on the left-right ideological axis, reminiscent of old political categories (Bordignon and Ceccarini 2013).

This profile of supporters remained largely unchanged until 2011. Greater involvement during the election of 2012 meant that the socio-demographic profile of potential voters began to undergo transformations. Biorcio and Natale (2013) divided the membership into 4 types:

- Militants (activist) 25%, enthusiasm and faith for Grillo: the Movement is their home.
- Leftists (lefty) 20%, disappointed by the traditional lefty parties
- Rationals 30%, more recently found, they think in a very constructive manner about changing society and the political system
- "Less worse" (*i meno peggio*) 25%, indifferent, a bit xenophobic, anti-Europeanist and populist.

3. Organisation and Communication

In this section, we will examine another very important organizational dimension, that of resources, from public and private funding to the access to communication systems. But also of social legitimacy (non-material resources). How has the M5S addressed the problem of resources?

Here we must consider three mainstays. Firstly, – the most evident and that which is considered the real novelty – is the professional and innovative use of the Web. Before Grillo, the Net had barely been used in politics, little was known and it was not utilized not in a productive manner. The electronic agora has been talked about for twenty years: the myth of the democracy of Ancient Greece that can finally be reborn without borders and limits. In practice, however, the experiences of e-democracy were sealed in some civic laboratory, or in the debates amongst political scientists. The first groundbreaking contribution was when Obama's staff used the Web platform 'Move on', that is to put together a voluntary association of three million of net-citizens, in the service of the presidential campaign of 2008. Activating political participation and funds – both agenda and communication – with a

highly centralized management. Grillo, thanks to Casaleggio, has imported and refined the model by propagating the idea that the Net decides while holding tight to the reins (and then the property!) of the site. The second important channel of communication for Grillo was that used by everybody nowadays, the TV.

So we have a personal media to appeal to the people exactly as it was the case for Berlusconi. The Web for Grillo, the television for Berlusconi. But television provides communication in just one direction, while Grillo emphasized the continuous interaction between citizens, and their active participation and with a stress on social problems. Sharing political discussion through the blog is a feature specific to Beppe Grillo. In the same year he began his partnership with Gianroberto Casaleggio, one of the first people in Italy to understand the power, the political power, in Web-publishing. In 2011 they wrote a book, the (translated) title is «We are into a war. For a new Politics». They talk about war, but there is no violence in the book.

Their (ideological only) war is against political parties: «The Net is Franciscan, anticapitalist: on the Web the ideas and their sharing have much more value than money» (Casaleggio and Grillo, 2011: 8). The neo-pauperist issue is a key element in the discipline and control of the M5S Movement, especially for parliamentary recruitment. In managing a very oversized consensus Grillo and Casaleggio gave a strong message with the aim of removing the process of personal gain. They therefore ask for a sort of Franciscan poverty vote. A way to take MPs far from economic (and personal) power temptations. Grillo becomes the supervisor of his MPs and this role has been better exercised on the Net, where he can punish someone, if he deems it necessary.

With a consequent formal penalty decided via Web, usually with a referendum to legitimize the leader. This is the most unexpected – and disturbing – side of Grillo's personal Movement: he shifted the Web from a synonym for hyper-democratic participation into a hierarchical instrument for controlling membership while, at the same time, strengthening the ideology of Net-citizens as the real decision makers.

Even here Grillo has been able to make wise use of it: he has managed to be visible, and to make headlines, without even appearing (Diamanti, 2013 and 2014) and, in fact, his clever idea of “escaping from television” turned him into the main object of desire within the space of a few weeks: he was highly sought after by all journalists and public and private TV stations! By refusing to appear in person on the small screen, the leader of the M5S achieved a double result. Firstly, he managed to avoid the cross-examination

and rituals of the talk-show, so as not to be identified with old politics. Secondly, he spoke to television audiences via speeches in the various town squares. Keeping the virtual forum together with the real one on one huge screen. Moreover, by denying his presence on TV, he legitimized the same prohibition that he has imposed on all of his 'grillini', of whatever order and level.

We should also consider that this forced estrangement from television is accompanied by an offensive campaign waged against journalists, accused of writing to please the so-called 'caste'. It is no coincidence that the second V-Day organized in Turin after the 2008 elections, was directed against journalists. The dates for that event was the 25th April, the national commemoration of Liberation Day in Italy, attributing a new symbolic value to it: «On 25th April we freed ourselves from Nazi fascism. Sixty-three years later we can free ourselves from the fascism of the news media».

Therefore, the success of Grillo's communication strategy is explained by the wise (and carefully designed) merger of these three channels of communication. Next to the circuit of horizontal communication, peer to peer, typical of Web 2.0, the other M5S channel is top-down. It provides the leader with both site management and also enhances his extraordinary ability to speak in town squares. In this way, he personalizes the relationship between the leader and the voters. With the originality of a merger between indirect communication – that is mediated by the Net – and direct communication with citizens. Beppe Grillo's Tsunami Tour, during the 2013 electoral campaign, was a brilliant move with regards to the traditional parties, now unable to cope with public squares, least of all a concise and decisive tour which Grillo was able to do.

This synthesis between the square and Net represents an important innovation when compared to Berlusconi's model. Even Berlusconi used the town square. But his natural environment right from the beginning has always been in television. His success and his overcoming of various obstacles are closely linked to his control – financial, professional and as master – of television. But he has always underestimated the Net.

Conversely Grillo had a great ability of knowing how to exploit the potential of all three channels: television, Web and public squares.

One of the most significant aspects in this regard is the character and role of its leader. His profile differs both from that of the traditional professional politician and from that of the various figures who, over the last twenty years, have come to Italian politics from professions, associations and institutions (businesspeople, magistrates, union leaders, university professors). In

fact, Grillo comes from the world of show business, he is a comedian with a rather particular background regarding his relationship with politics and television. He is one of the most active figures in giving voice to the anti-political sentiment that is making a deep impact on the orientation of Italian citizens in the 2010s.

4. *Organisation and parliament*

In this section, we analyse another fundamental organizational dimension. That of strategic action, also known as the competition (Raniolo 2006), looking in particular at the M5S' relationship with the parliamentary institutions.

After an initial phase in which Grillo encouraged voter participation at local level, with the certification of civil lists at the local and regional elections, he finally engaged at the national level. The anti-politics of the M5S, expressed substantially in the anti-party stance was not free from certain forms of anti-parliamentarism. In fact 'grillino' politics is characterized by its positions against the political élite, with harsh, often violent tones. How do we overcome this paradox then? How do we justify their candidature in national elections despite the explicit anti-parliamentarism? Grillo is not the first, nor the last leader, who plays the "anti-politics in power" card (Campus 2010). And he does this by focusing everything criticising the system that establishes the objective, deemed concrete and feasible, changing it completely, subverting it. Meanwhile, changing the selection rules of the political class, with a system of nominations 'from below' like the "parliamentaries" (the 5SM version of the *Primarie*). Assuming enough of a 'classical' anti-parliamentarian approach of asking the impossible, "namely a parliament as a sociological mirror of the country in which all occupations and professions, social classes and ages, and in equal number of men and women are proportionately represented" (Pasquino, 2010: p. 10).

However, first we must return to the definition of a personal party to understand how and why we can apply this category to Beppe Grillo, to then analyze the strategic action that allows this leader to control his parliamentarians.

The rise of personal parties is one of the most relevant political phenomenon in the so-called Italian second republic (Musella 2013). Ilvo Diamanti invited us to consider the useful analysis of Manin on the transformations of representative politics with the advent of what he calls the "democracy of the public". This type of democracy, which began to establish itself during the

last years of the twentieth century, emerges as a result of the crisis of the 'democracy of the parties' that are increasingly losing their role as actors in mediation and the representation of interests and give room for personalization. In other words, the citizens, when deciding who to vote for look a lot more at the leaders than the parties (Bordignon 2013). They move away from collective organizations towards individuals. These transformations, which will also be momentous in Italy, will seriously challenge the dominance of political parties in the state sphere, opening new windows of opportunity for monocratic leadership.

Furthermore, as we have seen, the relationship between parties and territory is often replaced by messages in the media (TV and Internet). Manin speaks of 'audience democracy' precisely because the space of representation coincides with the exchange between the leader and public opinion.

As we know, all this had happened with Silvio Berlusconi, his television and his polls. In that case, his party *Forza Italia* had been created by its leader, an organization at the service of its leader. Berlusconi created and organized his own party to promote and advance his political ambitions. Not just a personalized party then, but a personal party (Calise 2010). In fact, with Grillo, just as it was with Berlusconi, we are not simply facing an outcome of the personalization of politics – common to many other Western democracies – where parties continue to be machines that create their own candidates and their leaders. Berlusconi and Grillo create their own party and provide its values, rules, identity.

Now, after twenty years of the continuous and steady weakening of the link between traditional parties and civil society has increased, as a result, electoral volatility has too. At this stage, «a wave has, therefore, been imposed that sees the 'personalization' and 'individualization' of democracy, patterns of party, government and voting evolve» (Diamanti 2012, p. 32).

Beppe Grillo's Movement has entered in Italian politics during a phase precisely when the communication between parties, institutions and citizens require more immediacy. It has to be instantaneous and direct. Helped in this by the advent of new technologies and the use of professional networks – as we have seen – Grillo creates a movement that will become, in the space of a few years, a personal party. A machine with a very special motor: the personality of its leader and his undisputed control over every major decision. Once again, just as happened with Berlusconi, we should not consider a party which is identified in the person of its leader as lacking in organization. A personal party which must face not only the organizational challenge, but, as we have seen after the important victory of February 2013, must meet the challenge of being 'in public office', in institutions, starting with parlia-

ment. This issue is all the more difficult because it is a political actor born from the anti-politics/policy fracture (Bordignon and Ceccarini 2013) which gathered and emphasized the discomfort of the citizens against the representative institutions. Underlining the populist tension between the pragmatic and the redemptive faces of democracy (Canovan 1999); between the management of ideology and the demand for government (Criscitiello 2010), against the Parliament, that is, where 109 MPs and 54 senators sat for the first time.

Let us now give an interpretation of their behaviour in parliament – during the Letta Government – looking at how the MPs voted in the House on key issues, ranging from the most pressing social issues to those presented in the government's programme, to the dynamics of coalition. All MPs have voted in a compact manner carrying out their role as opposition party in a very clear and readable manner. Let's look closely, for example, at the only times (5 out of 50 key measures voted in the Parliament) where the M5S' MPs gave their vote in favour of a confirmation of what we have said. There are two nonpartisan votes, on very important issues, and with a high symbolic value too. The first, on the amendment of a law, no. 416, which proposed the tightening of the Criminal Code for those who encourage in any way the electoral exchange between the Mafia and the political class. The second is the ratification of the Convention against violence against women. For both, the Five Star MPs voted in favour, joining, in fact all the parliamentarians of the Republic. Then there was a vote in favour of suspension of IMU (the disputed tax on house property) and the refinancing of redundancy payments for workers. This a social policy, inserted in the electoral program of the M5S, that the government is able to propose after a very difficult phase of debate within their own majority. Finally, there were two votes, one of no confidence in the Minister of Justice, Annamaria Cancellieri and the other on an amendment to the new electoral law to reintroduce preferential voting. In both cases, all Members of the M5S voted in favour, exercising in a compact and disciplined manner the role of opposition party, with the Nichi Vendola's left party, SEL.

How can we explain a party discipline that would even make the Soviet Parliament envious? Among other things, in a parliament which now retains very little of the characteristics of its first sixty years (Mastropaolo and Verzichelli 2006), starting with the internal compactness of the parties. The parliament in recent years is an 'atomized' institution where each day the multiplication of parties and small parties that make up the coalitions are registered (Musella 2012). From Di Pietro to Fini, from Casini to Mastella,

from Rutelli to Monti there are numerous leaders who decide to form personal parties. In this way, they contribute to the fragmentation of the parliament, giving rise to many individualistic actors, seeking greater visibility or better positions, both in opposition and in the government majority.

Table 1. The favourable votes by the M5S' Mps during the Letta Government

Bills	Votes against %	Votes for %	Abstentions %	Result
No confidence in the Minister for Justice	72.1	27.4	0.5	Rejected
Tightening of the Criminal Code for electoral exchanges between the Mafia and the political class	0	100	0	Approved
Suspension of IMU and re-financing of redundancy payments	0	95.5	4.5	Approved
EU declaration on violence against women	0	100	0	Approved
Electoral law, part on reintroducing preference voting	73.8	23.5	2.7	rejected

How does Beppe Grillo, therefore, maintain his compact group of MPs from the outside? As an unelected leader? On the one hand using the basic tools of a personal party: the centralization and professionalization of communication. As we have seen, what you communicate and how you communicate is always via the central staff of his blog. And any form of individual initiative both legislative and communicative by the M5S' parliamentarians is denied, with the penalty of expulsion. The MPs, before supporting any legislative initiative must deal with what is called the basis of the Movement. And where there is doubt, because, for example, these issues are not dealt with in the electoral programme, the scrutiny of a referendum has to be passed, directed and controlled, of course, by the M5S website's central staff. In turn, both Grillo and Casaleggio preside over weekly meetings with parliamentarians (both MPs and senators) in hotel rooms in central Rome, outside the halls of Parliament.

And in recent months, during which some MPs were finally allowed to take part in television broadcasts of political information or to answer questions from reporters, it is always a matter of 'spokesman' of the movement, or people who are personally trusted by Grillo and Casaleggio.

5. Conclusion

The M5S seems to be positioned at the junction between different organizational models and different views of democracy (Bordignon and Ceccarini 2013).

The gap that has been created in the M5S between what is and what it claims to be is really impressive. A movement that enhances grassroots democracy, which has a so-called 'non-Statute' and says it has no leader, but only 'megaphones'; no party membership, just citizens.

But it is also a movement that, as soon as one of its parliamentarians expresses a different opinion to that of Grillo, and that has not been preemptively agreed, the leader starts a public condemnation on the Web and, with the backing of the 'Net-citizens' he expels from the Movement all those who try to express a critical opinion.

Bringing to the extreme the characteristics of the personal party, just like Berlusconi, Grillo too is a true master of his party. It is a movement that has gathered a huge consensus in almost no time at all, taking advantage of a huge pool of disillusioned voters, but doing so not in the least bit in a structured way, trusting a leader extremely effective in his use of the media and in the optimistic prediction that the Net could compensate for party organization. It came out of the most personalized party of all, in which the 'spokesman' is in fact much more than a secretary or president. He *is* the party. It is he who catalyzes consent and it is he who makes the internal rules, modifying them as he likes.

Behind longer available ambivalence it is possible to foresee the challenges the Movement will have to address in the near future. Some authors maintain that after the 2013 electoral victor, there were 3 main challenges: the challenge of government, the challenge of opposition, the challenge of organization (Vignati 2013).

As we have tried to explain in these pages, however, the organizational challenge of a personal party, that is, 'How to Organize Leadership' is by far the most important. As Angelo Panebianco wrote, more than thirty years ago, "the bureaucratic mass party is a strong institution. The electoral-professional party is, on the other hand, a weak institution", (1982, p.486). With the latter, the autonomy against the external environment is reduced; the structural coherence of the organization is downsized; stable collective identities are not constructed. Grillo's party is a sort of "electoral-professional Web 2.0" that was created – just like its predecessors – from the cleavage establishment/anti-establishment, fundamental source of conflict in contem-

porary society. And to really innovate politics its force must be derived not from institutionalized organizations but by 'authentically revolutionary' forces as a charismatic leader, (Weber 2004 [1919]). Probably, if Max Weber were still with us today, he would be the least surprised by the electoral success of Beppe Grillo's party.

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