

The PLI and the crisis of the First Republic. A long-term analysis (1968-1994)

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Abstract

The relationship between PLI and the collapse of the party system in Italy presents elements of interest. Unlike the mass parties, the PLI perceived some crisis factors: the ever-increasing distance of the ruling-class from citizens, the increase in public debt, the spread of bad practices in politics, the need for a big institutional reform, the growth of new political subjects (Leagues) they were issues widely addressed in the internal debate. What you notice is a very difficult situation of a party that is where it doesn't want to be, that participates in the government but would like to stay out of it.

Despite a timid growth of consensus at the beginning of the crisis, just as a result of an effort to differentiate itself from the other government forces, the PLI was unable to escape the "Grande Slavina". Factors related to its nature and its ideological-cultural identity, but also to its particular history, played a role on the "end" of the PLI, in spite of a favorable international situation (collapse of the Soviet system, Thatcherism, Reaganism). Looking at the three levels of delegitimation indicated in the panel guidelines, the essay proposes a reconstruction of the political parabola of the PLI starting from the period following Malagodi's opposition to the center-left governments. It is believed that this may serve to identify the reasons for the inability to impose itself as a valid political proposal in a completely changed scenario.

Author information

Gerardo Nicolosi (PhD) is Associate Professor of Contemporary History, Department of Political and International Sciences, University of Siena. In October 2019 he has been appointed as Department Director. From 2006 to 2009 he has taught Comparative History of European political systems at Luiss Guido Carli University. He is member of the Scientific Committee of "Ventunesimo Secolo"; member of the board of "Nuova Rivista Storica"; member of the board of Istituto internazionale Datini di Prato. Among his latest publications: A. Parente, *La lunga vigilia. Pensieri e ricordi politici 1943-1946*, edited by and with introduction of G. Nicolosi (2019); *La figura del Presidente del Consiglio nel sistema politico italiano. Il periodo liberale*, in «Ventunesimo Secolo», 43, 2018; A. Dante Coda, *Un malinconico leggero pessimismo. Diario di politica e di banca (1946-1952)*, edited by and with introduction of G. Nicolosi (2018).

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Friday, 18 June - Session 6 - **9,00-10,30 CET (Webex)** - Panel – *Delegitimizing party democracy: Italy as exception or harbinger of change in European democracies (1978-1994)?*

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