# Europe, transnational mobilisations, civil society

Master 1 Affaires publiques européennes 2023-24

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# Introduction

Valentin Behr, CNRS research fellow.

PhD univ of Strasbourg (2017).

Research topics/interests:

- Sociology of intellectuals; history of political ideas (intellectual history): conservatism, illiberalism.

- Sociology of (political) elites: trajectories of former APAs at the EP (revolving doors, public/private circulations, lobbying, …).

-> Focus on right-wing movements and CEE

**Introduction**

Europe, Transnational mobilisations, Civil society...

???

Europe?

Transnational mobilisations?

**Transnational mobilisations?**

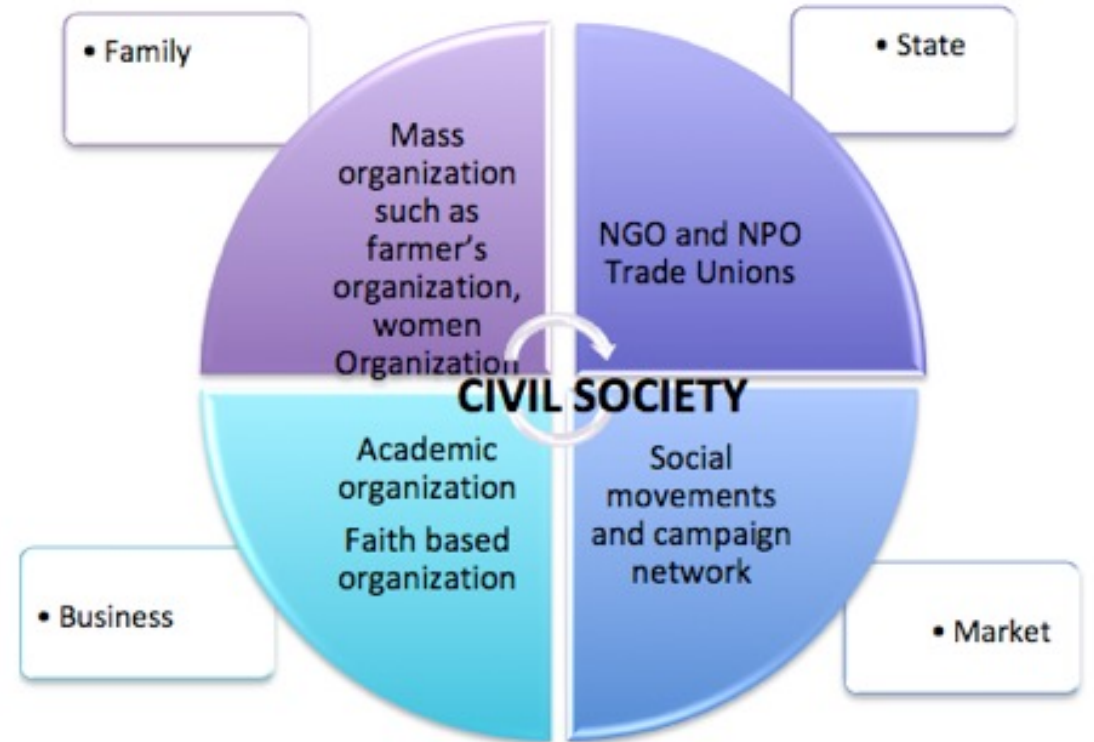Collective Action vs Political Action.

Conventional vs non-conventional.

- **Conventional pol. action** = elections, pol. parties, pol. debates, pol. participation.
- **Non-conventional pol. action** = protest (contention) cf. petitioning, demonstrations, occupations, blocking, ... but also influence (lobbying, advocacy).

Civil society?

# Civil society?

# Reading list & sessions

*1/ 30 January 2024 - Intro*

Reading: Contentious politics

*2/13 February 2024 – A transnational civil society?*

Reading: De Swaan

*3/ 27 February 2024 – Transnational (progressive) politics*

Reading:: Della Porta, Progressive social movements and the creation of European public spheres.

*4/ 5 March 2024 – EU Lobbying*

Reading: Lahusen (intro)

*5/ 12 March 2024 – Elite mobilisations*

Reading: Neoliberals against Europe (Slobodian & Plehwe).

**6/ 26 March 2024 – Transnational activism**

Reading: Islamism (Dazey)

**7/ 16 April 2024 – The "global right" and transnational culture wars**

Reading: Anti-gender movements (Paternotte)

**8/ 30 April 2024 – Climate protests**

Reading: Thunberg (speaking for the youth)

# Student assessment

- **Eval 1: Presentation.**

For each course, a group of students opens the discussion, by putting the text into dialogue with other sources of their choice (scholarly articles, media sources, including videos/photos, ... in English).

**Aim: to contextualize and to illustrate the text** (based on examples provided in the text and on examples of your choice).

**Justify your choices!**

⇨ To be done at the beginning of each course. 20 min presentation, then discussion.

⇨ Complemented with a written document (1–2 pages summarizing your presentation).

- **Eval 2: follow-up/feedback.**

At the beginning of each course, a group of students presents a brief summary of the previous session (main findings, key concepts, etc.) and follows up with some textual or audiovisual material related to the previous topic.

⇨ 10 min presentation, then discussion.

⇨ Complemented with a written document (1 page).

**WARNING: Participation (general discussions) + attendance are also part of the evaluation.**

# General introduction

**I/ Reading: Tilly and Tarrow, *Contentious Politics* (2015)**

What do you know about the authors?

Charles Tilly (1929–2008)

Sidney Tarrow (born 1938)

- What did you learn reading this text?

- What stroke you?

- Do you have questions or comments?

- **What is contentious politics, how do you understand it?**

**Contentious politics**

"People struggling with each other over which political program will prevail."

"**Contentious politics** involves interactions in which actors make claims bearing on other actors' interests, leading to coordinated efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs, in which governments are involved  as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties. Contentious politics thus brings together three familiar features of social life: contention, collective action, and politics."

**Contention**: "making claims that bear on someone else's interests."
Contention always brings together subjects, objects and claims.
Ex. A (subject) wants B (subject) to do sthg (object) = claim.

**Collection action**: "coordinating efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs."
The bulk of collective action takes place outside contentious politics (in this classroom for ex.).

**Politics**: "interactions with agents of government".
Most of politics involves little or no contention.
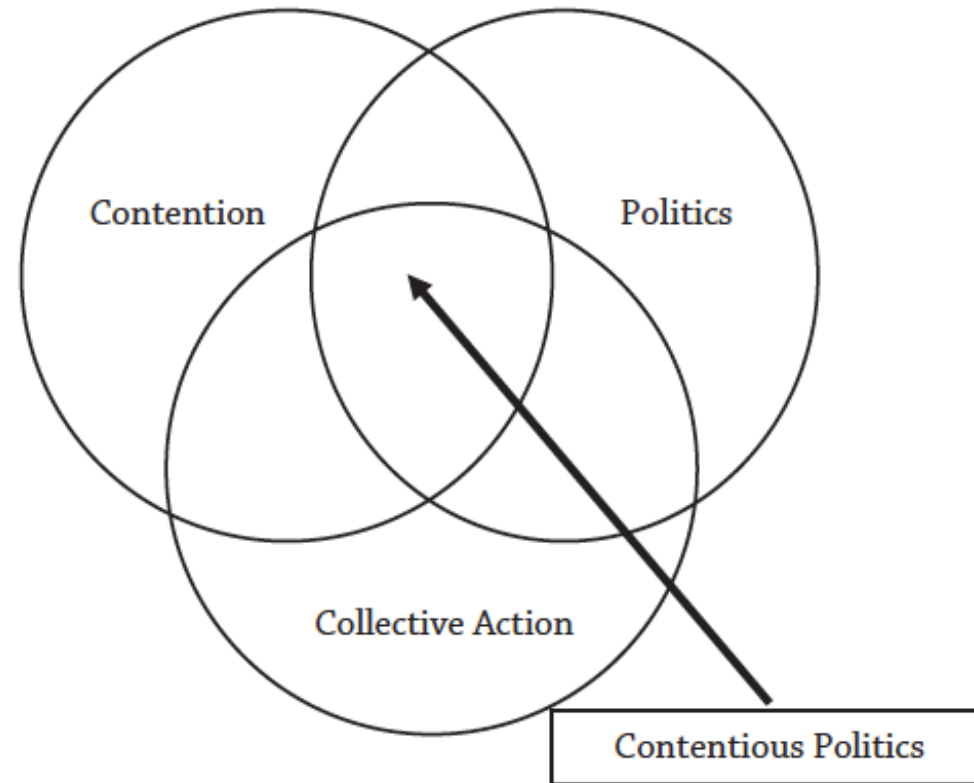Ex.: showing your passport to immigration officers.

**Figure 1.2:**
**Components of Contentious Politics**

Governments make rules governing contention + people get accustomed to "**repertoires**" of collective action).

-> **Routinization**.

Meyer & Tarrov, *Social Movement Society* (1988).

-> thesis of the routinization of contention.

Wrong: 21$^{st}$ century:

-> More intensive protests, more disruptive and more violent.

-> Governments not becoming better accustomed to dealing with protest (more aggressive forms of policing and surveillance).

Examples:

– Demonstration against WTO summit in Seattle (November 1999).

– Genoa G–8 Conference (July 2001).

Contentious politics is not the same thing as social movements.

**Social movement** = "a sustained campaign of claim making, using repeated performances that advertise the claim, based on organizations, networks, traditions, and solidarities that sustain these activities."

Social movement = historical (not universal) category.
Role of digital activism replacing social movements?

**Most forms of contentious politics are not social movements.**

**Contentious performances**: "relatively familiar and standardized ways in which one set of political actors makes collective claims on some other set of political actors."

**Contentious repertoires**: "arrays of performance that are currently known and available within some set of political actors."

**Contentious campaigns**: "combinations of performances that focus on a particular policy and usually disassemble when that policy is implemented or overturned."
Such campaigns involve "movements", but also interest groups, political parties, media, interested onlookers, state agents.
Example: current farmers' protests in France.

# Chapter 1: a historical perspective

Conventional vs non-conventional.

- **Conventional pol. action** = elections, pol. parties, pol. debates, pol. participation.

- **Non-conventional pol. action** = protest (contention) cf. petitioning, demonstrations, occupations, blocking, ... but also influence (lobbying, advocacy).

# I: From one revolution to another (1789–1848)

Deconstruct democratic myths.

The link between voting and democracy is a construction; it has been created; it was not given or natural.

Representative democracy has been constructed through a **process of division of labor**: between professionals in politics (the representatives) and the citizens (the electors, the voters).

Today it has become a common view, a natural thing that in a democratic regime, the legitimacy of the power relies on the election and the universal suffrage: we chose our leaders.

Hence, democracy and universal suffrage seem to be connected.

Nonetheless, this has not always been the case.

Other principles of legitimation have existed long before the election or universal suffrage:

- Lottery (Athens).

- Divine right: French Absolutism, monarchies, "Ancien-Régime".

- Acclamation (acclaim, applause): this is how the French Republic was proclaimed, from the Paris city Hall's balcony in 1848, during the popular riots.

In France, the principle of universal suffrage is proclaimed in 1848, half a century after the Revolution.

A that time, it is a male suffrage, but also almost exclusively a "white" suffrage.

One could even argue that the vote it still not "universal": conditions of age, citizenship, ...

Classes laborieuses et Classes dangereuses

On a toujours remarqué l'importance du crime dans la littérature du XIXᵉ siècle mais on a trop tendance à y voir une mode littéraire coupée des réalités. En fait, ces récits sortis de l'imagination de Balzac, Hugo ou Eugène Sue, peuvent et doivent être mis en relation avec la société parisienne de l'époque. Née de l'inadaptation de la ville « de pierre », aux besoins d'une population qui s'accroît formidablement en 1830 et 1848, la criminalité imprime sa marque tragique à la ville. Elle façonne le Paris de la monarchie de juillet, un Paris pathologique, qui souffre du déséquilibre des sexes, qui pullule d'enfants trouvés et de naissances illégitimes, un Paris qui ressent jusque sur son visage même la trace des maladies vénériennes ou que terrorise seulement la peur de ces maladies. Le crime y pousse en terrain privilégié comme la fleur empoisonnée d'une civilisation.

Dépôt légal Impr. 4705-5 Édit 9222 4. trimestre 1978
Pierre Faucheux / Dedalus / Documents R. Viollet

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Louis Chevalier
Classes laborieuses et Classes dangereuses

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If we take a look at the texts that were published from 1789 to the end of the 19ᵗʰ century, and to the first laws framing universal suffrage, transpires the **anxiety of the elite vis à vis the people.**

Fear of the masses, perceived as angry, irrational and dangerous.

Cf. the phrase "les classes dangereuses".

Social Darwinism = quite common to think of society in biological terms at that time.

The concept of citizenship is historically linked with the development of democracy.

18th century: American and French revolutions.

**Thomas Humphrey Marshall** (*Citizenship and Social Class*, 1950) distinguishes three main steps in the establishment of the modern citizenship:

- The affirmation of **civil rights** in the 18th century: democratic revolution (Declaration of Independence in the US in 1776; Declaration of Human and Civic Rights in France in 1789): freedom of speech, of religion, property rights, equality of citizens in rights.

- **Political rights** in the 19th century: development of representative democracy, right to vote and to be elected.

- **Social rights** in the 20th century: development of the Welfare State: right to education, healthcare, work, housing.

This three-steps model fits well to the US and British cases, but less to Germany (where social rights were adopted prior to political rights, cf. Bismarck) and to France (where civil and political rights appear jointly, even if political rights become effective only after 1848).

**Structural factors favoring the nationalization and democratization of Western societies:**

- The nationalization of the agricultural and industrial markets;

- The increase of administration to administer those markets;

- The development of the liberal doctrine (individualism);

- The development of industry and the need of workforce;

- The development of industrial (capitalist) bourgeoisie;

- The gradual homogenization of culture among the different peoples living on the national territory (creation of a national language).

As a consequence, the new social groups (industrial bourgeoisie) who benefit from those profound social changes are looking for new ways to organize and to distribute the political power.

**On which criteria should citizenship be based?**

French Revolution: **citizen-owner vs citizen-individual.**

The dominant conception of the people is that most of them are uneducated, untalented with Reason.

Women and colonized people are even not considered.

The Constituent Assembly adopts a solution in 1791, according to a proposal from Abbé Sieyès. At the heart of this resolution is the distinction between **"active" citizens and "passive" citizens.**

– Passive citizens = members of the nation, enjoy civil rights (Declaration of Human and Civil Rights).

- Active citizens enjoy the right to vote.

The main argument in favour of such a distinction derives from the idea of **Reason**: only individuals who have their self-will, who are considered as autonomous, are supposed to be able to have their own opinions, and so have the right to vote.

**Three different criteria are used to define self-will and the autonomy of judgement:**

- Intellectual independence: a voter should be a grown man gifted with Reason. Childs are considered to be under the influence of their parents. Women are considered as being dependent on their husband's or father's will.

- Sociological independence: a voter should be an autonomous individual and no the member of an order. This is why monks are not given the right to vote.

Cf. **Loi Le Chapelier** (1791): ban on religious congregations and trade unions (until 1884).

- Economic independence: a voter should earn his living by exercising an independent profession. Exclusion of servants. Women are also considered as being dependent from their husbands.

⇨ **Census suffrage**.

Hence, the concrete exercise of the political power is reserved to the dominant parts of the society, but on a basis of principals that have been completely redefined in line with the Revolution.

The new political regime and principles established after 1789, even though they rest on social grounds which are far larger than those of the Ancien-Régime, are still based on the political exclusion of major parts of the whole population.

1848, universal suffrage: what consequences?

# II: Universal suffrage as domestication of citizens

"L'urne et le fusil",
Marie Louis Bosredon, 1848
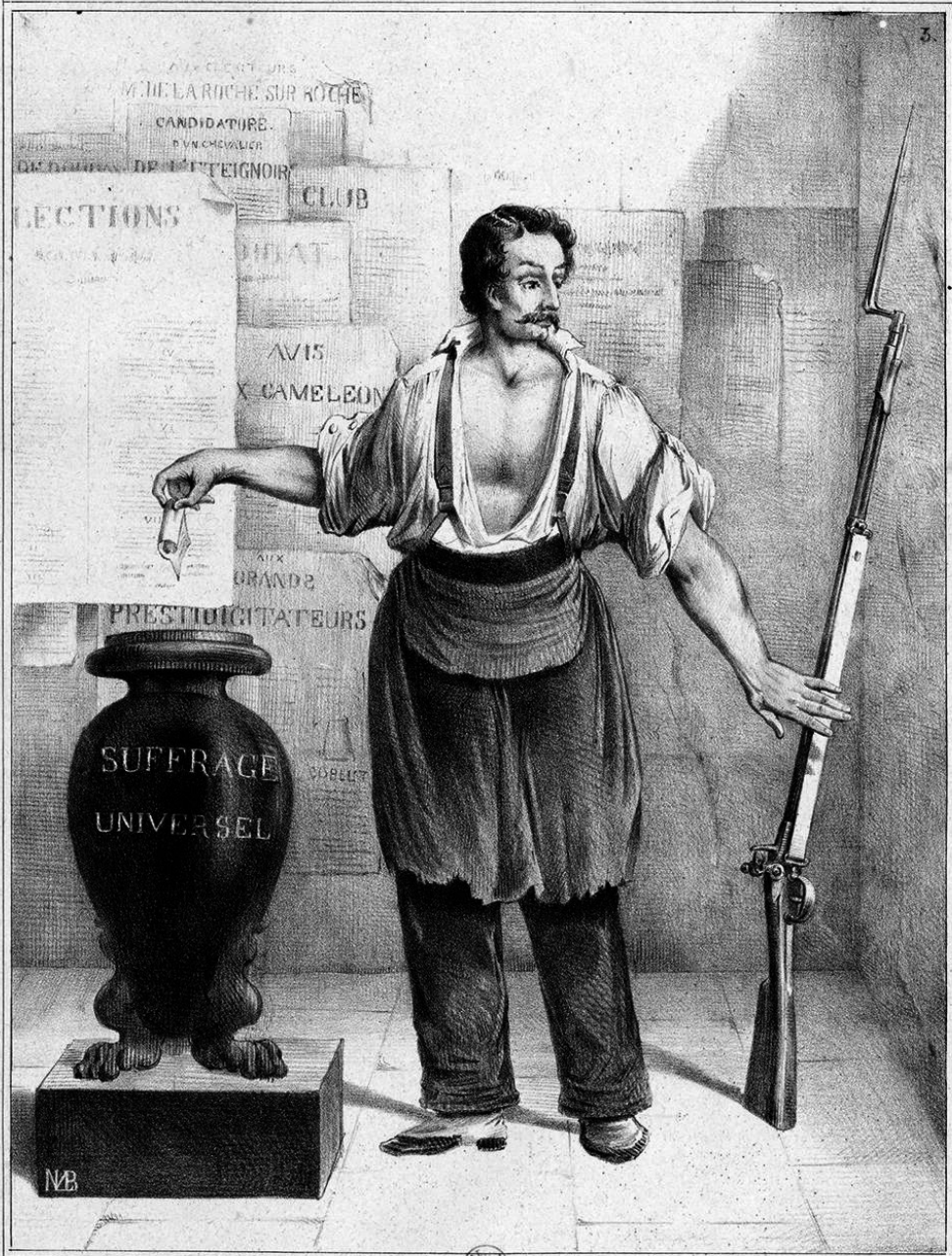
Universal suffrage = new mode of regulation of the political competition.

Implies the banishment of other means/modes such as violence.

Tocqueville: the universal suffrage opposes "the idea of law to that of violence".

Victor Hugo, speech in front of the National Assembly on 31 May 1850: universal suffrage gives a ballot to those who suffer, instead of a rifle; this means the end of violence, the end of uprisings.

**Universal suffrage = to pacify the competition between different political camps.**

However, … contestation of results, pressures, frauds and cheats, but also violence and barricades, not to mention coups, were pretty common means to be used in the political competition throughout the 19th century.
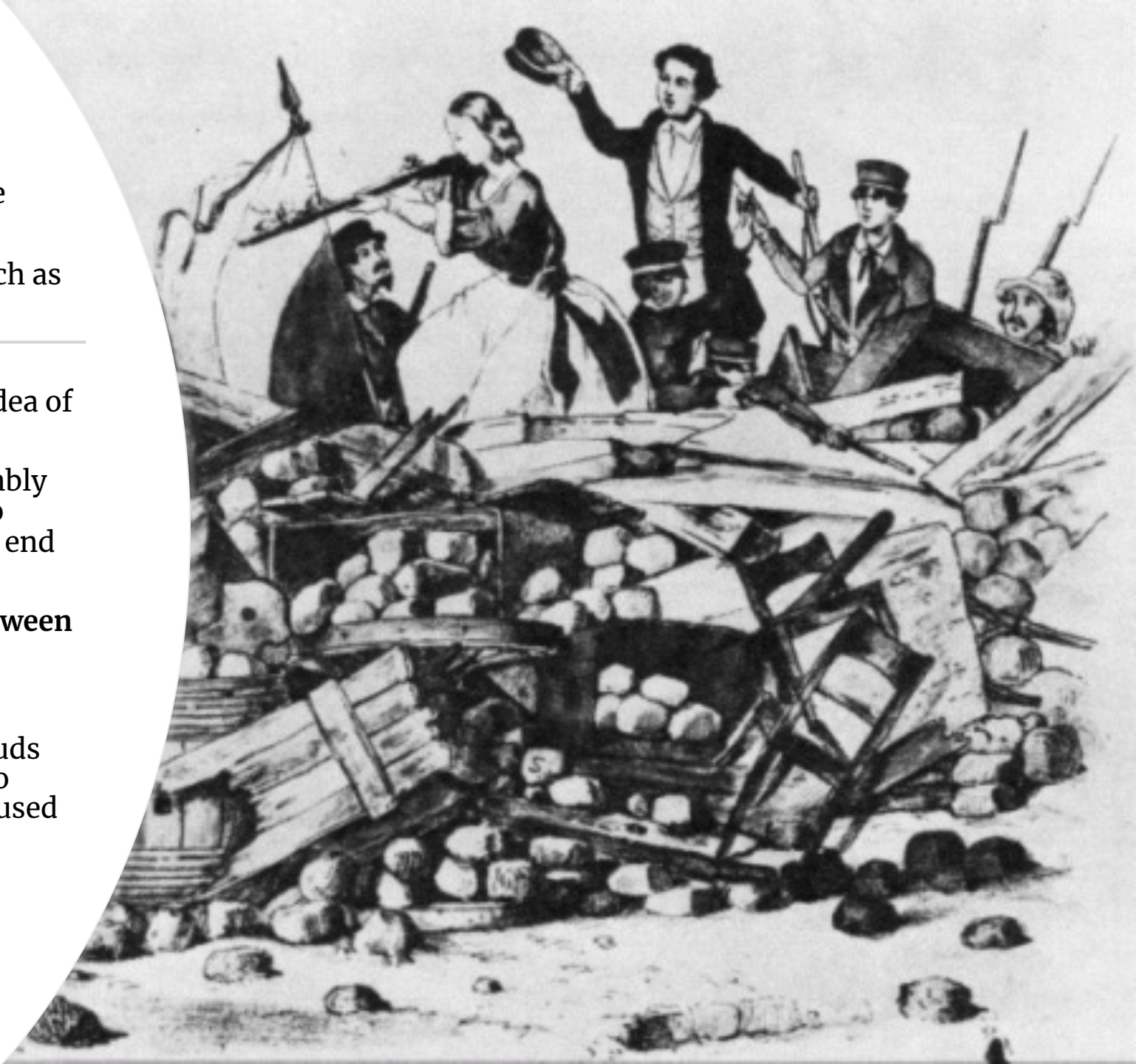
We know quite well that the 1848 ballot was far from being calm and peaceful.

Scholars (Garrigou, Ihl, ...) have worked on police and judiciary archives, but also on the local press.

Far from being a means to pacify the political competition, the universal suffrage did not encourage the search for compromise.

Invites to consider the **necessary conditions for democratic competition**: rule of law, freedom of speech, free media, etc.

When such conditions are not met, bullets can easily replace ballots.

At that time the results of a ballot are not easily accepted by the losers; and sometimes the winners consider it gives them the right to humiliate the losers. Hence, **the ballot is just one step in a broader political struggle**, a struggle that can sometimes use violent means.

Example taken from Ihl, Olivier. « L'Urne et le fusil. Sur les violences électorales lors du scrutin du 23 avril 1848 », *Revue française de science politique*, vol. 60, no. 1, 2010, pp. 9-35.

*In southern France, in a village near the city of Nîmes, the supporters of the monarchist candidates organized a demonstration of joy after their victory.*

*Thousands of people were partying in the streets, including women and children.*

*They marched to a café which was known as a republican headquarter.*

*This was perceived as a provocation and republican supporters shot at them and threw stones at them.*

*In the end, two people were killed and 15 injured.*

*The village had to remain under military control for a couple of days.*

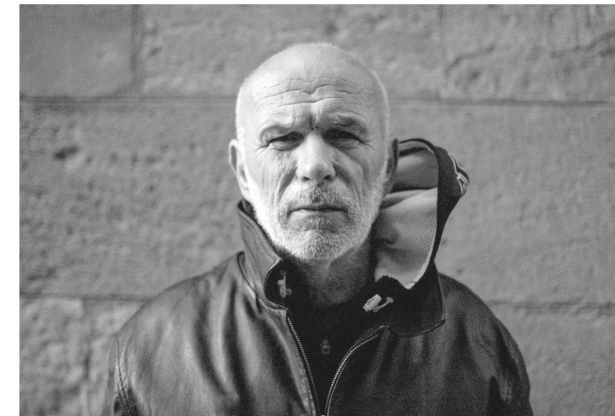*Some witnesses spoke of a "civil war" going on.*

There is no linear history of democratization, however.

Cf. "cycles of contention" (Tilly and Tarrow), like in the 1960s/1970s.




ACTION DIRECTE


RAF


LIBRAIRIE LIBERTALIA
RENCONTRES & DÉBATS
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MÉTRO CROIX-DE-CHAVAUX

▶ VENDREDI 28 FÉV. / 19 H 30 • JEAN-MARC ROUILLAN

Apéro-discussion avec Jean-Marc Rouillan, auteur de *Dix ans d'Action directe* (Agone) à propos des livres de sa vie (romans, témoignages, essais, manifestes…) et de ses propres livres, quelque vingt ans après la première publication de *Je hais les matins*. On parlera de Malraux, Kerouac, Sabaté, Hemingway, Flaubert, Traven, Gorter, Jules Bonnot, Aragon…

# III: The professionalization of politics

Invention of the universal suffrage also means **new ways of doing politics**.

⇨ Professionalization of politics throughout the 19$^{th}$ century.

⇨ Invention of modern politics.

**Pattern: representative democracy => professionalization of politics in each parliamentary democracy in Europe.**

End of Notables = amateurs in politics.

Cf. Weber: those who, thanks to their economic situation, can do politics as a hobby, without any salary.

Next to the notables, the 19$^{th}$ century sees the emergence of new political entrepreneurs.

Cf. "new strata" (nouvelles couches), according to Gambetta: republican bourgeois elite (lawyers, doctors, teachers).

+ Workers' movements (socialists).

See Heinrich Best & Maurizio Cotta (eds), *Parliamentary Representatives in Europe 1848–2000. Legislative Recruitment, and Careers in Eleven European Countries*, Oxford University Press, 2000.
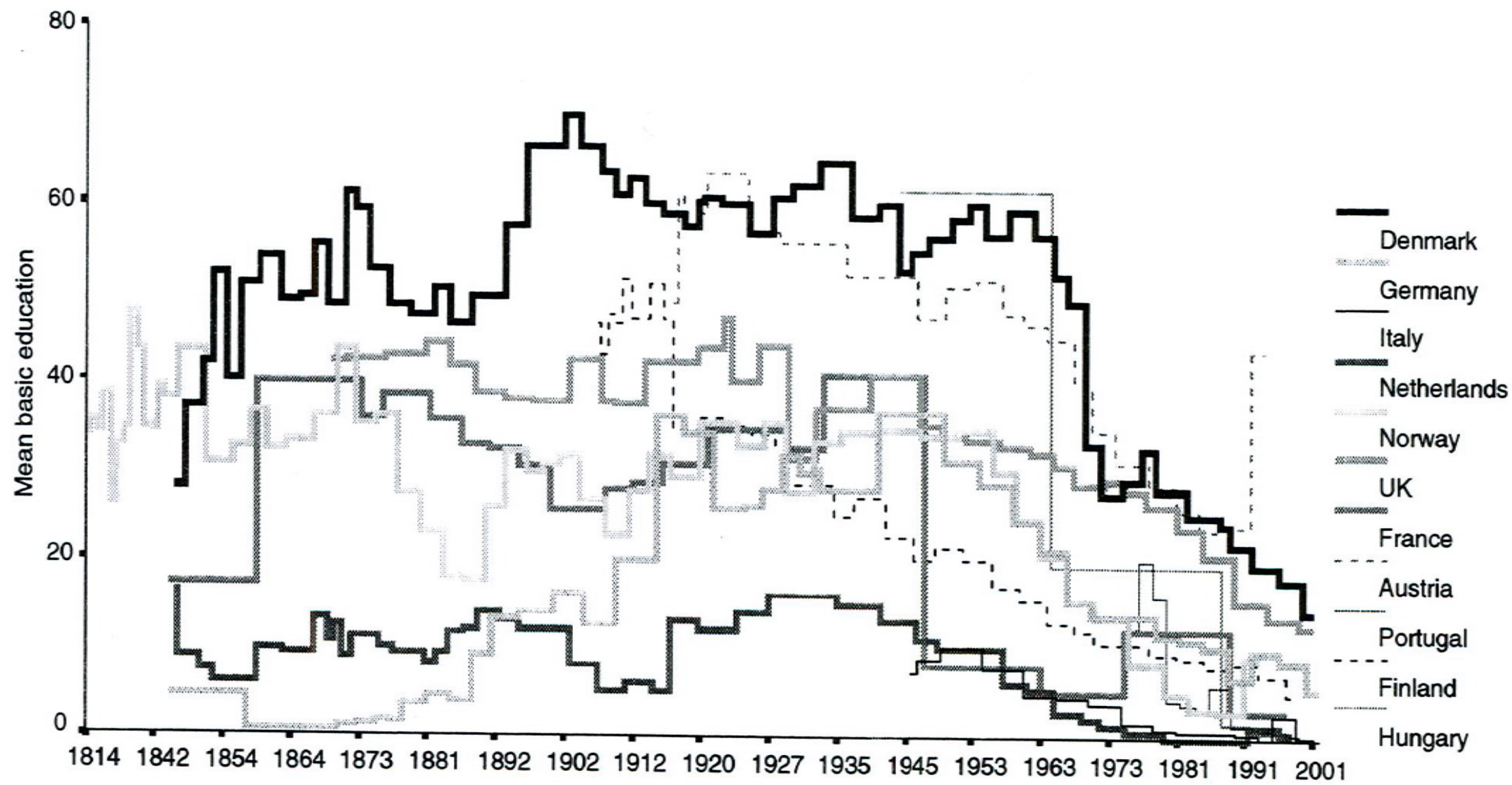
FIGURE 5.1. Basic education (Var04), all countries (%)
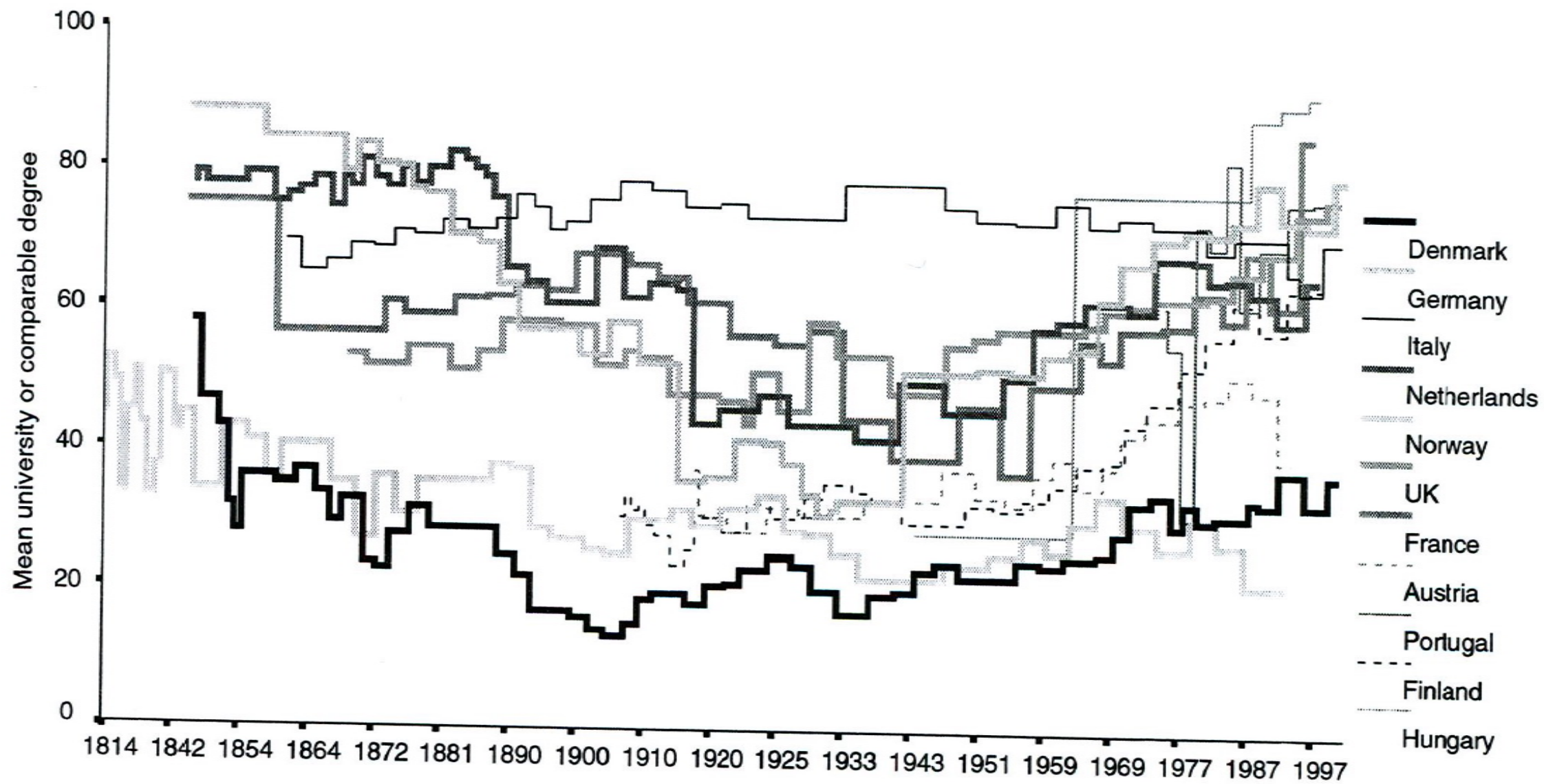
FIGURE 5.2. Higher education (Var06), all countries (%)

Legend:
- Denmark
- Germany
- Italy
- Netherlands
- Norway
- UK
- France
- Austria
- Portugal
- Finland
- Hungary

Y-axis: Mean university or comparable degree (0 to 100)

X-axis: 1814 1842 1854 1864 1872 1881 1890 1900 1910 1920 1925 1933 1943 1951 1959 1969 1977 1987 1997
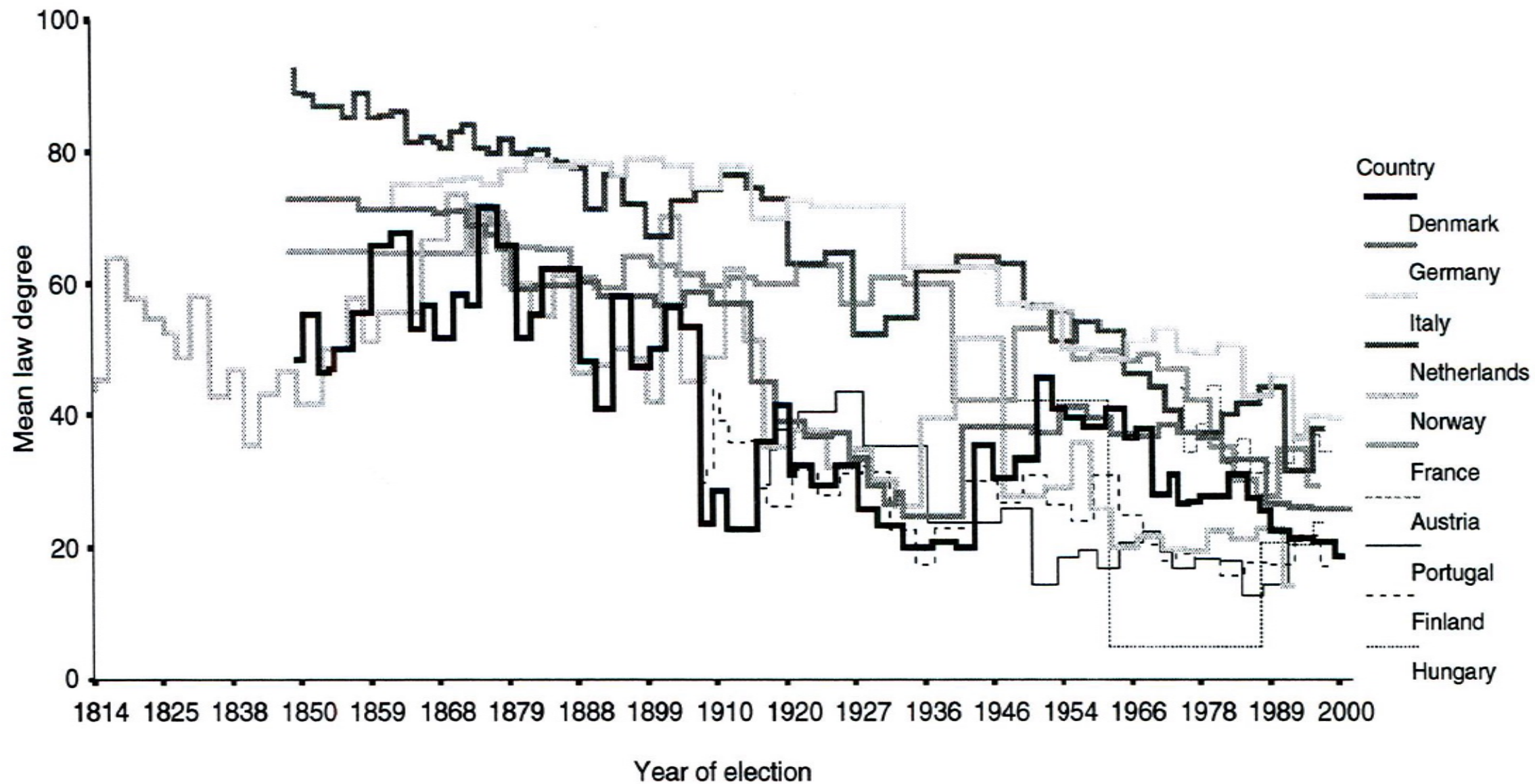
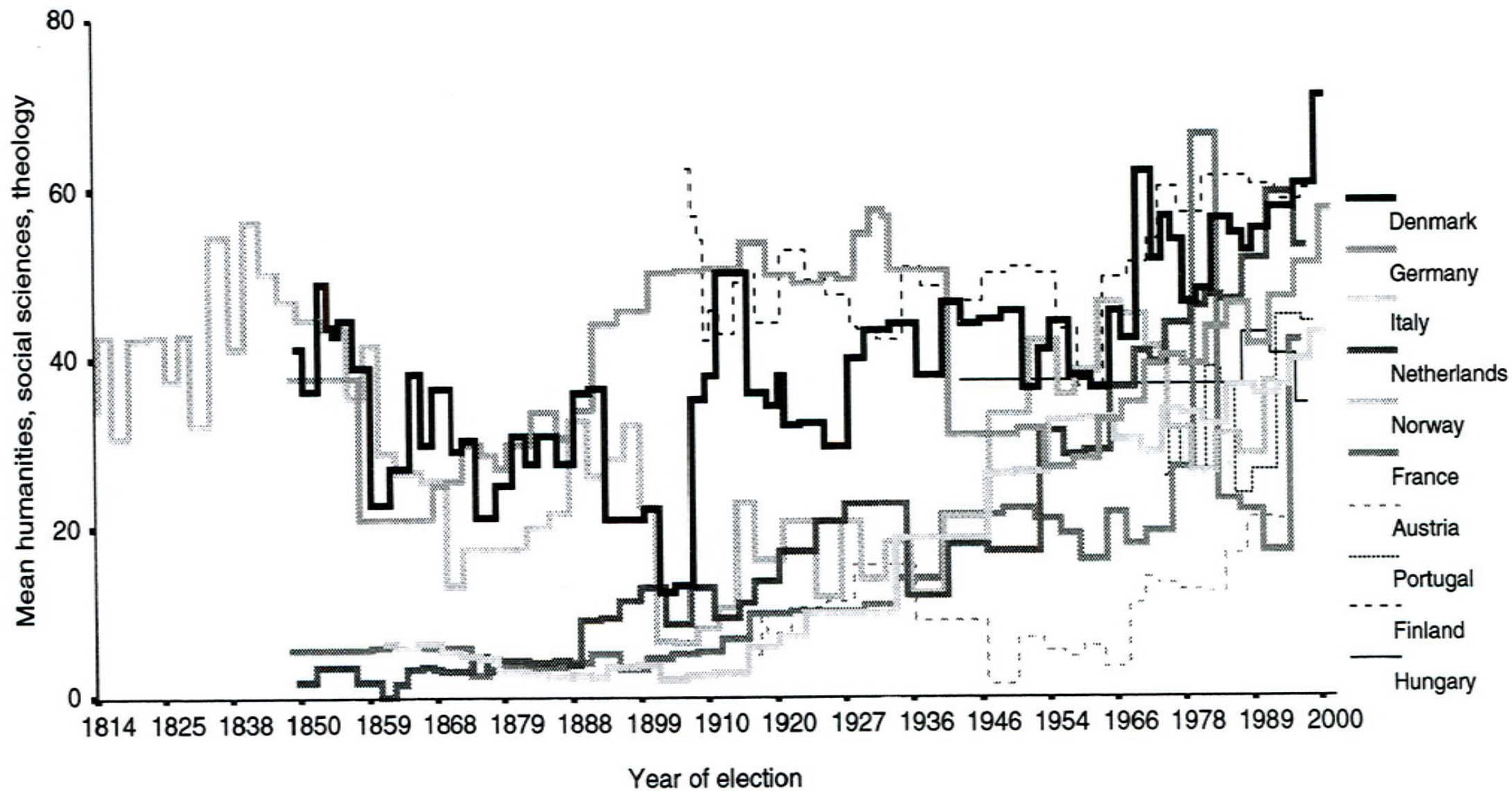FIGURE 5.6. Legislators with a law degree (Var07), all countries (%)

FIGURE 5.7. Legislators with a public administration, economics, humanities, or social sciences degree (Var08), all countries (%)

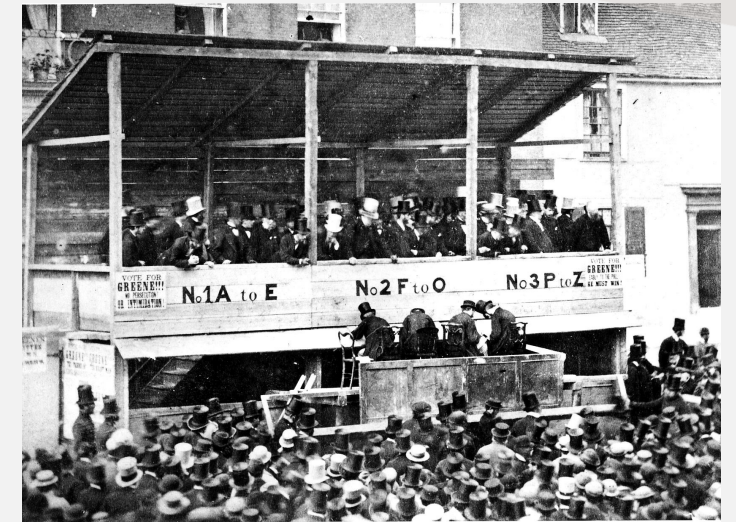Emergence of political parties: political programs.

Development of electoral campaigns, techniques of mobilization: public meetings, political propaganda.

Be able to speak in public => favors the bourgeois elite and partly explains why the political recruitment is so socially selective.

**As a result:**

- Notables professionalize themselves. They are forced to politicize their discourse in order to survive. Cf. Baron de Mackau (study by Eric Phélipeau), clientelism is gradually replaced with the professionalization of his campaigns: programs, discourses, budget, advisors.

- The new political entrepreneurs (republicans) become notables for some of them. Their electoral successes provide them with local resources. They become the new notables, even though they do not have a personal wealth.

⇨ Emergence of a new social figure, the professional politician, according to Weber's definition: **to live off politics and for politics.**

- They live **off** politics because they earn their living off politics, this is their principal professional activity.

- They live **for** politics because it is their vocation.

"Iron law of oligarchy" (Robert Michels, 1911, *Political Parties*): rule by an elite is inevitable within any democratic organization as of the "tactical and technical necessities" of the organization.
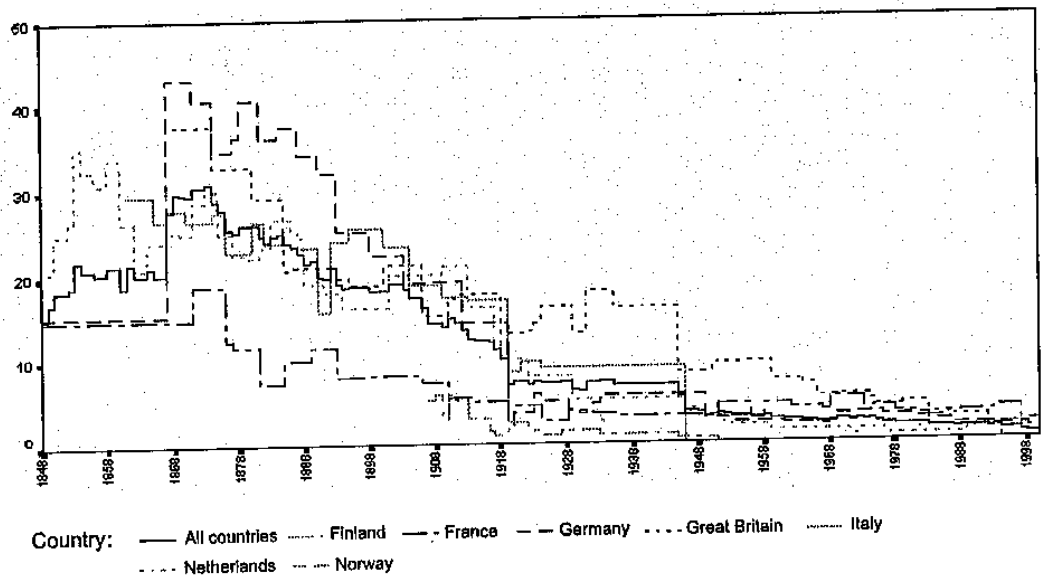
Fig. 13.5. European Parliaments 1848–1999: nobility

Country: —— All countries ······ Finland —— · France — — Germany ···· Great Britain ——— Italy
····· Netherlands —·— Norway
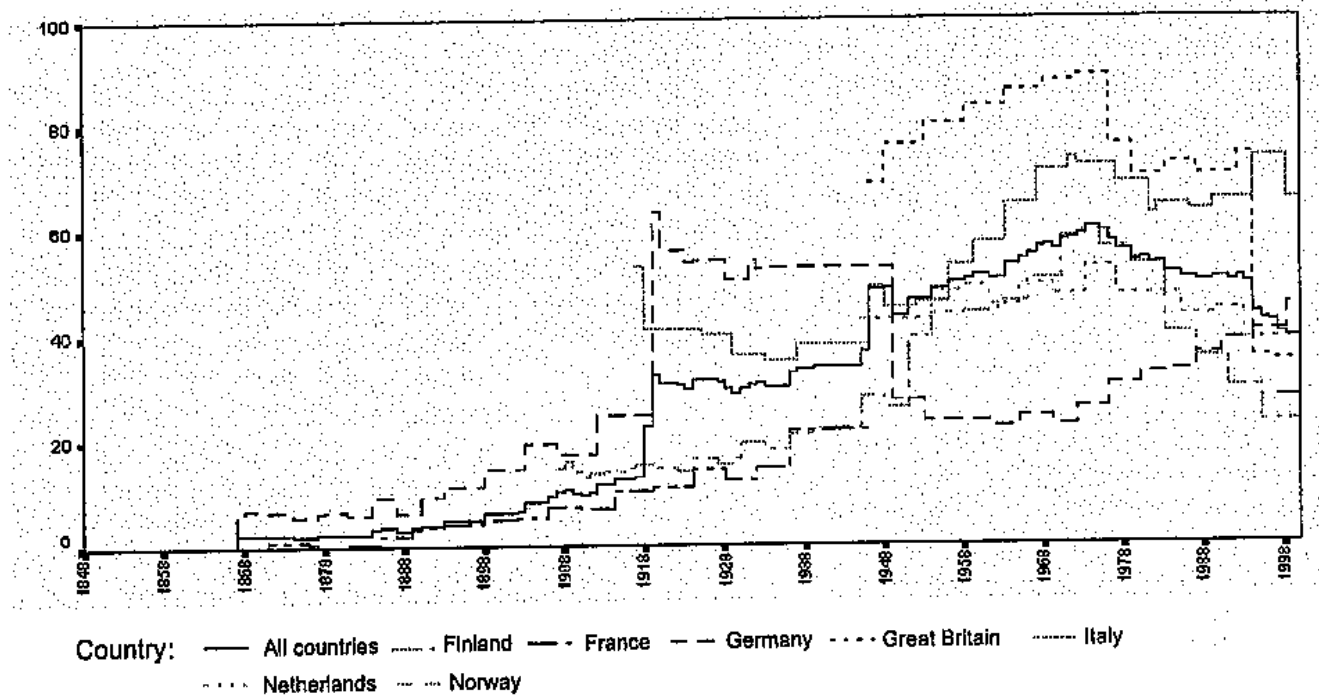


Fig. 13.4. European Parliaments 1848–1999: leading party position

Country: —— All countries ······ Finland —— · France — — Germany ···· Great Britain ——— Italy
···· Netherlands —·— Norway



Country: —— All countries ······ Finland —— France — — Germany ···· Great Britain ——— Italy
····· Netherlands —·— Norway
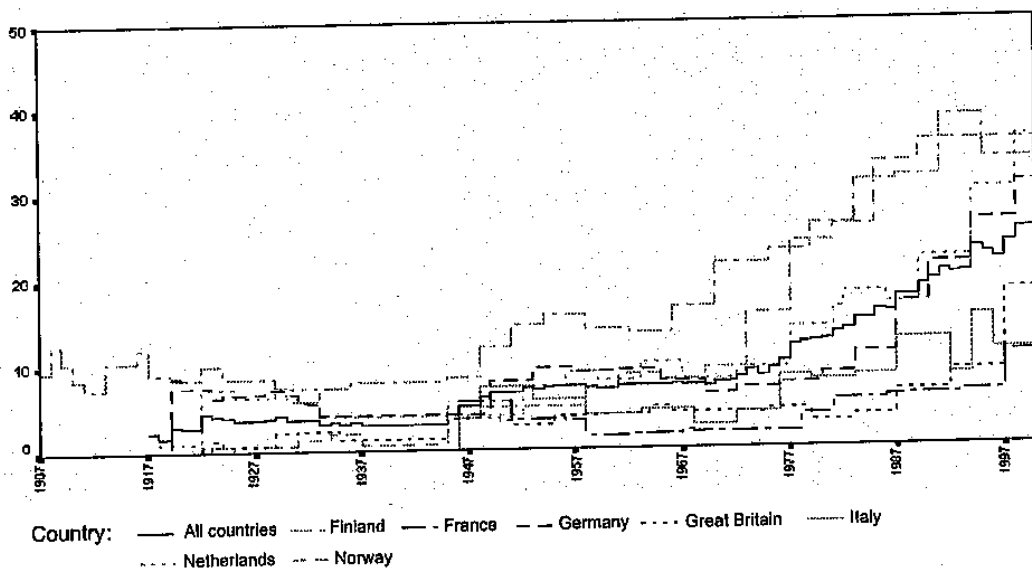
Fig. 13.6. European Parliaments 1907–1999: female legislators

# IV: A "crisis" of democracy?
# The issue of disintermediation

**Abstention aux législatives**

Source : ministère de l'Intérieur. Premier tour. En %

| Année | Abstention |
|------|-----------|
| 1958 | 22,8 |
| 1962 | 31,3 |
| 1967 | 18,9 |
| 1968 | 20,0 |
| 1973 | 18,7 |
| 1978 | 16,8 |
| 1981 | 29,1 |
| 1986 | 21,5 |
| 1988 | 34,3 |
| 1993 | 30,8 |
| 1997 | 32,0 |
| 2002 | 35,6 |
| 2007 | 39,6 |
| 2012 | 42,8 |
| 2017 | 51,3 |
| 2022 | 52,3 |

*Table 1.* National levels of party membership

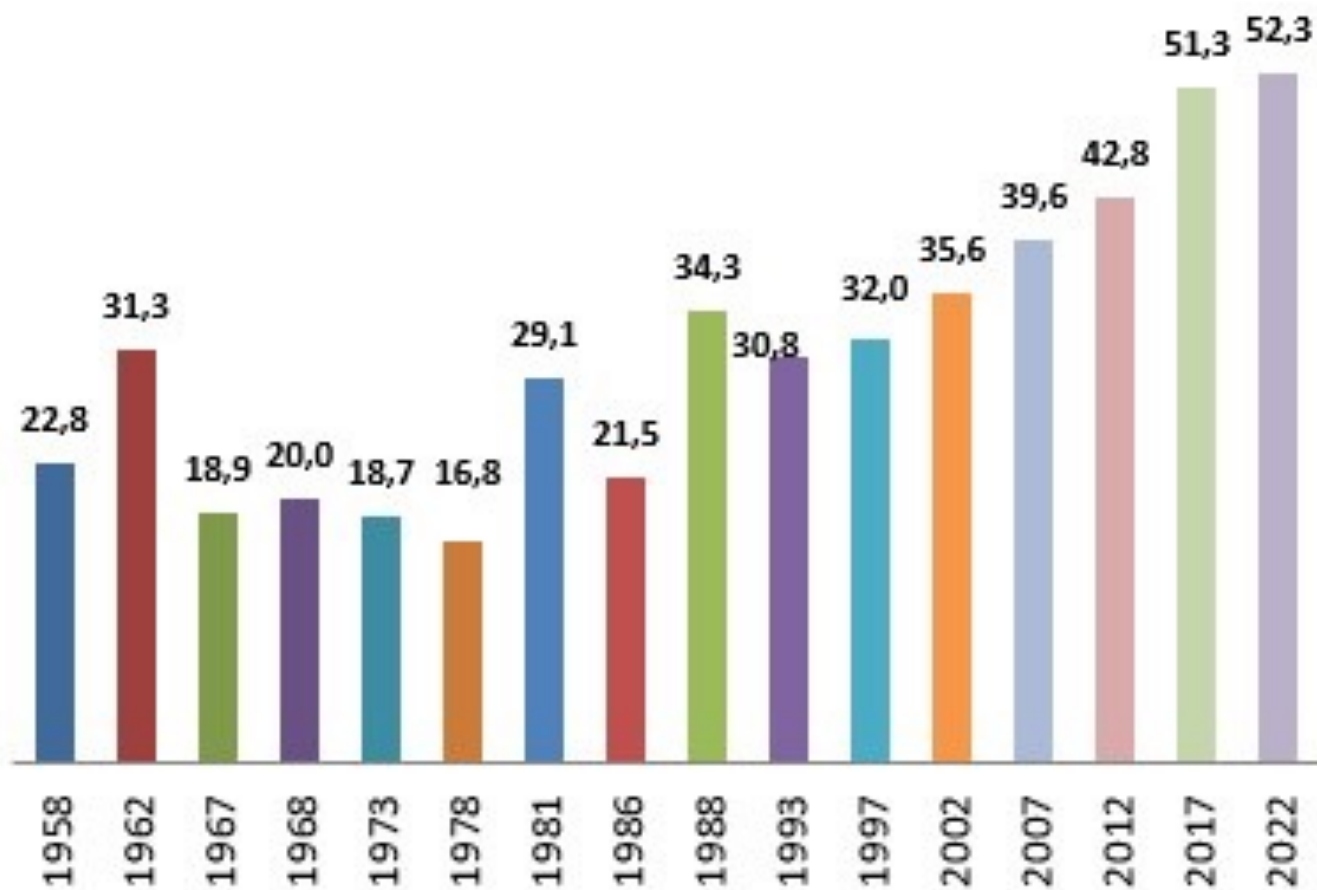| Country | Year | Total party membership | Total party membership as percentage of electorate (M/E) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Austria | 2008 | 1,054,600 | 17.27 |
| Cyprus (Greek) | 2009 | 81,433 | 16.25 |
| Finland | 2006 | 347,000 | 8.08 |
| Greece | 2008 | 560,000 | 6.59 |
| Slovenia | 2008 | 108,001 | 6.28 |
| Bulgaria | 2008 | 399,121 | 5.60 |
| Italy | 2007 | 2,622,044 | 5.57 |
| Belgium | 2008 | 426,053 | 5.52 |
| Norway | 2008 | 172,359 | 5.04 |
| Estonia | 2008 | 43,732 | 4.87 |
| Switzerland | 2008 | 233,800 | 4.76 |
| Spain | 2008 | 1,530,803 | 4.36 |
| Denmark | 2008 | 166,300 | 4.13 |
| Sweden | 2008 | 266,991 | 3.87 |
| Portugal | 2008 | 341,721 | 3.82 |
| Romania | 2007 | 675,474 | 3.66 |
| Lithuania | 2008 | 73,133 | 2.71 |
| Netherlands | 2009 | 304,469 | 2.48 |
| Germany | 2007 | 1,423,284 | 2.30 |
| Ireland | 2008 | 63,000 | 2.03 |
| Slovakia | 2007 | 86,296 | 2.02 |
| Czech Republic | 2008 | 165,425 | 1.99 |
| France | 2009 | 813,559 | 1.85 |
| Hungary | 2008 | 123,932 | 1.54 |
| United Kingdom | 2008 | 534,664 | 1.21 |
| Poland | 2009 | 304,465 | 0.99 |
| Latvia | 2004 | 10,985 | 0.74 |
| *Mean (N = 27)* | | | *4.65* |

# Going, going, . . . gone? The decline of party membership in contemporary Europe

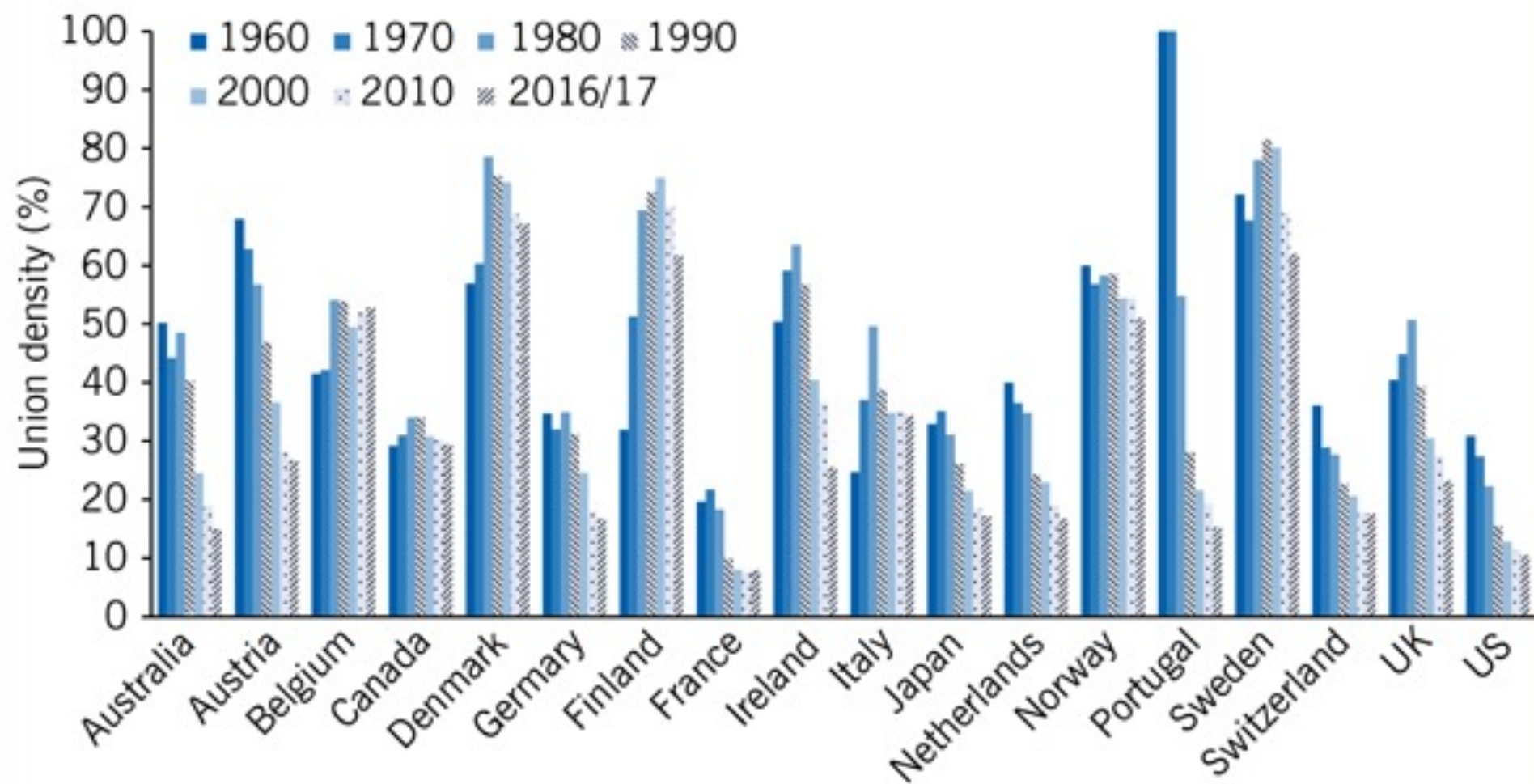INGRID VAN BIEZEN,[1] PETER MAIR[2] & THOMAS POGUNTKE[3]
[1]*Leiden University, The Netherlands;* [2]*European University Institute, Florence, Italy;*
[3]*Heinrich Heine University, Düsseldorf, Germany*

*Table 4.* Party membership change, 1980–2009

| Country | Period | Change in M/E ratio | Change in number of members | % change in number of members |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Czech Republic | 1993–2008 | −5.05 | −379,575 | −69.65 |
| United Kingdom | 1980–2008 | −2.91 | −1,158,492 | −68.42 |
| Norway | 1980–2008 | −10.31 | −288,554 | −62.60 |
| France | 1978–2009 | −3.20 | −923,788 | −53.17 |
| Sweden | 1980–2008 | −4.54 | −241,130 | −47.46 |
| Ireland | 1980–2008 | −2.97 | −50,856 | −44.67 |
| Switzerland | 1977–2007 | −5.90 | −178,000 | −43.22 |
| Finland | 1980–2006 | −7.66 | −260,261 | −42.86 |
| Denmark | 1980–2008 | −3.17 | −109,467 | −39.70 |
| Italy | 1980–2007 | −4.09 | −1,450,623 | −35.61 |
| Slovakia | 1994–2007 | −1.27 | −41,204 | −32.32 |
| Belgium | 1980–2008 | −3.45 | −191,133 | −30.97 |
| Netherlands | 1980–2009 | −1.81 | −126,459 | −29.35 |
| Austria | 1980–2008 | −11.21 | −422,661 | −28.61 |
| Germany | 1980–2007 | −2.22 | −531,856 | −27.20 |
| Hungary | 1990–2008 | −0.57 | −41,368 | −25.03 |
| Portugal | 1980–2008 | −1.05 | +4,306 | +1.28 |
| Greece | 1980–2008 | +3.40 | +335,000 | +148.89 |
| Spain | 1980–2008 | +3.16 | +1,208,258 | +374.60 |

Figure 1. Union density, 1960–2016/17

Legend: 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, 2016/17

Y-axis: Union density (%)

Countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, US

IZA
World of Labor

**Peter Mair, *Ruling the void. The Hollowing of Western Democracy* (2013).**

"The age of party democracy has passed."

*"Although the parties themselves remain, they have become so disconnected from the wider society, and pursue a form of competition that is so lacking in meaning, that they no longer seem capable of sustaining democracy in its present form."*

"What we now see emerging is a notion of democracy that is being steadily stripped of its popular component – easing away from the demos."

"In the political discourse of the twenty-first century we can see clear and quite consistent evidence of popular indifference to conventional politics, and we can also see clear evidence of an unwillingness to take part in the sort of conventional politics that is usually seen as necessary to sustain democracy." (Mair)

***Générations désenchantées? Jeunes et démocratie*** (eds. Laurent Lardeux & Vincent Tiberj, INJEP).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Loohqd_m6KE

Indifference to conventional politics does not mean indifference to politics *tout court*, cf. opinions regarding "cultural matters" womens' rights, LGBTIQ rights, support to refugees, cosmopolitanism, …) and climate issues; involvement in social movements and/or NGOs active on those topics.
More "direct" action, echoing disintermediation and the loss of influence of political parties.

**CONCLUSION**

- Democratization as a long process, not univocal: anti-democratic and anti-liberal elements throughout its history: cf. slavery, social Darwinism, etc.

- Not a linear process (authoritarian restorations, Paris Commune), and not taken for granted (Vichy).

- **Democracy is not only formal**: beyond elections and majority will, there is an array of institutionnal arrangements (RoL, checks and balances, …) + complementary channels of participation and representation of citizens (unions, protests, petitioning, deliberation, …).

- **Disintermediation** + search for **alternative ways of doing politics** (single-issue politics) as the main characteristic of contemporary democracies?

DOMENICO LOSURDO

LIBERALISM

A COUNTER-HISTORY