MOVEMENT PARTIES OF THE FAR RIGHT: THE ORGANIZATION AND STRATEGIES OF NATIVIST COLLECTIVE ACTORS[*]

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The scholarship on the far right has often interpreted nativist organizations as straddling the conceptual space between party and movement. These groups contest elections in order to gain representation in office, yet they also seek to mobilize public support to engage contentious issues like social movements. Despite theoretical commonalities, very little empirical research has focused on far-right "movement parties" as collective actors operating both in the protest and the electoral arenas. The article redresses this inconsistency by exploring the organizational and strategic configuration of two far-right collective actors—the Hungarian Jobbik and the Italian CasaPound. Deploying original interviews with high-ranking officials, the analysis enhances our understanding of the internal "supply side" of the far right as well as empirical knowledge on hybrid organizations that emerge from grassroots activism and successively organize to pursue the electoral option.

Social movements and political parties are normally perceived as separate entities, lying at the heart of distinct streams of literature. This distance was exacerbated by the assumption that events in the extraparliamentary and institutional arenas unfold independently from each other, and that actors in these arenas subscribe to divergent motivations. While some contributions have reduced the conceptual gap between (new) social movements and party politics by looking at the impact of grassroots mobilizations beyond the protest arena, very little attention has been devoted to understanding whether these two arenas share *structural* and *strategic* elements (Giugni 2004; Hutter 2014; Hutter and Vliegenthart 2016; Schwartz 2010). The plea for greater interdisciplinary dialogue seems rather compelling with the rise of new political actors stemming from grassroots activism and engaging in the institutional arena (e.g., the *Movimento 5 Stelle* in Italy and *Podemos* in Spain). In the context of antiausterity politics, "movement parties" have been appraised as emergent actors displaying informal internal structures and procedures, and an enhanced propensity to combine electoral representation with extrainstitutional mobilization (Mosca and Quaranta 2017). As such, these hybrid organizational types have recently turned into self-standing objects of inquiry (della Porta, Fernández, Kouki and Mosca 2017). Similar configurations have been addressed sparsely in the case of the far right (Castelli Gattinara and Pirro 2018).[1] With this study, we aim at redressing some of the theoretical and empirical lacunae surrounding far-right collective actors in transition from the protest to the electoral arena.

Since the second half of the twentieth century, European party systems have witnessed the emergence of "new" parties—new both in their ideological appeals and in the forms of aggregation that they proposed. Political actors such as the Greens/left-libertarians and the far right often have been likened for their ability to bridge the conceptual space between movements and parties (Gunther and Diamond 2003: 188). First, their origins, linked to the juncture

of "1968" though "1989," served a function in newly democratized countries in postcommunist Europe (Minkenberg 2002; Taggart 1995). Second, these organizations successfully managed to catalyze attention on issues neglected by the political mainstream (e.g., environmentalism and immigration). Third, while fielding candidates for elections like parties (Sartori 1976: 64), they frame these issues and mobilize public support like social movements (Tarrow 2010: 7-8). With this article, we delve deeper into the internal workings of far-right collective actors by exploring how they organize internally and mobilize externally.

The scholarship on the far right has scrutinized many aspects of nativist politics, from "supply-side" factors, such as their ideological features, to "demand-side" factors, such as the behavior of their electorates (Golder 2016). Equally relevant elements such as the organization, processes, and mobilization efforts of the far right have been frequently overlooked. Some studies have referred to internal supply-side factors such as leadership and organization to explain the electoral performance of the far right (Art 2011; Carter 2005). Moreover, the scholarship generally subscribed to a *prima facie* notion of hierarchical structures adhering to a "leadership principle" and creating or displacing social movement practices (Gunther and Diamond 2003; Kitschelt 2006; Schumacher and Giger 2017).

We wish to move beyond the use of internal supply-side factors as *explanans* of electoral performance, and elevate organizational and strategic configurations to self-standing objects of inquiry. Researching the organization and strategies of the far right might unravel the goals, collective behavior, as well as the modes of participation of officials, members, and activists alike. We are also interested to see how far-right collective actors are responding to declining party membership and accountability, and the widening chasm between parties and politics (for instance, by engaging in extraparliamentary activities) (Krouwel 2006; Mudde 2016). Indeed, far-right grassroots activism has been seen to increase self-worth and group solidarity (Meadowcroft and Morrow 2017; Pirro and Róna 2018).

Studies on the way far-right groups work internally mostly have been based on secondary data, to the point that very few assumptions on these aspects have been tested empirically (Blee 2007; Goodwin 2006). Notably, it has been difficult to derive insider information about the workings of these organizations from activists themselves (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2015; Kitschelt et al. 1999).[2] One of the reasons for this can be attributed to far-rightists' suspicion of academics and journalists, and their reluctance to share information regarding the workings of their organizations (Mudde 2007: 267). This article makes a significant step forward in this direction by deploying primary data to fill a long-standing gap in the literature.

Following these cues, we ask to what extent far-right collective actors transitioning from the protest to the electoral arena subscribe to the organizational and strategic configurations of movement parties. In the following sections, we review the literature at the intersection of movements, parties, and the far right, and elaborate on our framework for analysis, case selection, and data. We then explore the organization and strategies of the Hungarian *Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom* (Movement for a Better Hungary, Jobbik) and the Italian *CasaPound Italia* (CPI)—two far-right collective actors that emerged from grassroots activism and successively took the electoral option. Based on original interviews with high-ranking officials of the two organizations, we show that the two movement parties do not conform to a single configurational arrangement. We finally speculate on the possible factors underlying these differences and their implications for far-right politics in general.

THE FAR RIGHT AS "MOVEMENT PARTY"

The far right is a composite party family including "radical" and "extreme" collective actors.[3] As these organizations experienced noteworthy electoral fortunes, their performances have taken the lion's share of scholarly attention and have been mainly addressed in terms of interactions between demand-side and supply-side factors (Carter 2005; Eatwell 2003). We

wish to move beyond this "electoralist" tradition, and bring the organizational and strategic configurations of the far right to the center of attention.

The extant scholarship essentially bears an "externalist" tendency, in that it focuses on processes and factors happening outside far-right organizations (Goodwin 2006: 347). This has drawn researchers away from examining far-right actors themselves, thus neglecting their *agency* as a primary area of interest (de Lange and Art 2011; Mudde 2007). To fill this gap, some scholars have looked at their multiple organizational facets and arenas of engagement, discussing far-right activity across party-political, social movement, and subcultural fields (Caiani, della Porta, Wagemann 2012; Minkenberg 2003). We hold this specification valuable, precisely due to the far right's ability to bridge the conceptual space between party and movement (Gunther and Diamond 2003; Taggart 1995).

Contemporary far-right organizations have been likened to the Greens/left-libertarians in the way they emerge and mobilize. Moreover, these organizations apparently operate in multiple arenas, or directly stem from grassroots activism (Kitschelt 2006). However, while studies on progressive politics have placed attention on the interpenetration between movements and parties, overall this has been neglected in the case of populist organizations—and, even more so, on the far right (Hutter 2014; McAdam and Tarrow 2010; Roberts 2015).

In essence, we hold that a specific and nonnegligible subset of far-right collective actors presents similarities with political parties and social movements, albeit only transitorily. As noted elsewhere, "[t]his isomorphism can be recognized in the adoption of rather informal procedures and structures, the focus on similar concerns and the combination of electoral representation with extrainstitutional actions" (Mosca and Quaranta 2017: 2). In addition, we speak of a transitoriness of movement parties. The transitional character of this configuration rests in the dilemma of privileging the electoral over the protest arena in their institutionalization—a consideration that might be impossible to ignore in the phase of electoral consolidation. Far-right "hybrids" would include the French *Front National* (National Front, FN), the *Sverigedemokraterna* (Sweden Democrats, SD), the Greek *Chrysí Avgí* (Golden Dawn, XA), the *Ľudová Strana—Naše Slovensko* (Slovak People's Party—Our Slovakia, ĽSNS). This is, of course, a nonexhaustive list referring to a specific phase in the life cycle of these organizations.

On the whole, research on the "internal supply side" of the far right has made slow progress (Mudde 2016). Elements such as organizational arrangements, leadership, and factionalism have been predominantly deployed as independent variables explaining far-right electoral performance, suggesting that strong organization and effective leadership offer important scope for success (Betz 1998; Carter 2005). Ideologically extremist organizations have often delivered weak organization and poor leadership (Carter 2005: 66-77). To what extent more or less authoritarian tendencies reflect on the internal governance of far-right collective actors however remains an under-researched question. Several authors agreed on the centrality of charismatic leadership to far-right parties (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008: 7; Taggart 1995: 40-41). We believe that a first step has been made to isolate organizational aspects from the question of leadership and overcome "one of the most significant lacunae" in the literature on the far right (Ellinas and Lamprianou 2016: 1; Heinisch and Mazzoleni 2016). Still, other relevant questions have remained at the margins of this scholarship. We include among them movement-like arrangements outside the institutional arena and levels of intra-party democracy (della Porta and Diani 2006; Wolkenstein 2016).

Far-right politics have been predominantly read through party-political lenses, notwithstanding the challenge they posed to the "conventional ideas of parties as organizations" (Taggart 1995: 41). The internal configuration of far-right parties especially contrasted with the catch-all professional-bureaucratic party model, as they exhibited a charismatic-based model rather than a "devolved, decentralised and depersonalised leadership" (Taggart 1995).

Similar persuasions were taken up by Kitschelt with his work on movement parties (2006: 279). Movement parties qualify as transitional and fuzzy organizational arrangements, whose configuration depends on the investment in solving problems of collective action and of social

choice. This perspective values the hybrid nature of these organizations, casting light on their internal structures and external mobilization strategies. We do not oppose using established theories on party organization in the assessment of the far right (Heinisch and Mazzoleni 2016); however, interpreting them as "normal parties" neglects the social movement component that these collective actors might preserve in the midst of their institutionalization process. At the same time, we find it difficult to interpret other organizational variants such as "memberless parties" in terms of movement parties, due to their evident lack of a grassroots component (Mazzoleni and Voerman 2017).

Far-right collective actors have broken into the electoral scene through "new combinations of identities, tactics, and demands" often crafted on the ground (Koopmans 2004: 25). Grassroots participation and membership is therefore far from secondary, and a strong organization may allow nativist collective actors "to respond quickly and without too much internal debate to hot issues or shifts in their constituencies" (Immerfall 1998: 258; Albertazzi and McDonnell 2010). From yet another angle, we should acknowledge that social movements hardly qualify as full-fledged organizations, but rather as emergent orders (Diani 2013; McCarthy and Zald 1977). Collective actors, wherever located along the movement-party continuum, may then require some form of organization, albeit only partial (den Hond, de Bakker and Smith 2015).

In the following sections, we explore how far-right movement parties combine social movement and party-political practices. We specifically follow Kitschelt's contribution (2006) and elaborate on aspects such as internal organization, decision-making processes, and external mobilization strategies.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Kitschelt has defined movement parties as "coalitions of political activists who emanate from social movements and try to apply the organizational and strategic practices of social movements in the arena of party competition" (2006: 280). Far-right organizations do not always originate from movements and do not necessarily transition to the electoral arena, but often resort to intersectional organizational models and tactics (Kitschelt 2006: 278).

A three-part metric is used to address their articulation of problems of collective action and social choice. First, they invest little in formal party structures and lack formal membership, staff, and infrastructures. We refer to this dimension as *organization*. Second, they invest little in developing formal ways to aggregate interests (through devoted organs and officers) and make decisions binding for the entire organization. This notwithstanding, these processes vary widely, ranging from the tight control of a charismatic leader with patrimonial staff and personal following (far right), to the participatory democratic model centering on the decisional role of assemblies of activists (Greens/left-libertarians). We refer to this dimension as *processes*. Third, they combine activities within and without the institutional arena, engaging in parliamentary debates as much as protest activities (Kitschelt 2006: 280-281). We refer to this dimension as *external mobilization,* as these activities pertain to the "external" grassroots practices of movement parties. To sum up, the transition from movement to party entails investments in the structuring of the organization, the formalization of the internal procedures, and an increasing emphasis on activities in the institutional arena. We shall use these three dimensions as heuristic devices to interpret the extent to which far-right movement parties subscribe to a single configurational model.

Analyzing these three features should not suggest that organizational and strategic aspects unfold independent from each other. To the contrary, organized forms of activism directly depend on the interaction of organization, processes, and external mobilization. At the most abstract level, we would indeed assume that the same decision to take the electoral option would come from a core of committed movement activists, based on a series of considerations on the human, financial, and organizational resources available to them. After all, social movements' own ability to mobilize support had been partly attributed to the presence of a semi- or

quasiprofessional structure (della Porta and Diani 2006: 141). These matters would virtually apply to all collective actors; here, we are concerned with the degree of formalization of these aspects within the far right.

When we look at movement parties' organization, we address questions concerning members and membership, the presence of professional staff and proper infrastructures, and financing. The element of membership is crucial in the distinction from voluntary associations. Formalized individual-movement relationships are central to the definition of movement parties; moreover, members would generally provide them with continuity, legitimacy, and financial resources (Ahrne and Brunsson 2011; den Hond et al. 2015). Hence, we would expect that *far-right movement parties make little investment in formal organizational party structures, have no formal definition of the membership role, and lack intensive and extensive formal organizational coverage* (Kitschelt 2006: 280).

The dimension of processes considers internal decision-making procedures and the role of leadership in steering the ideological and strategic trajectory of the organization. We essentially refer to the ideal continuum between hierarchy and direct democracy. Hierarchy can be defined as the "right to oblige others to comply with central decisions" (Ahrne and Brunsson 2011: 86); conversely, the plight for direct democracy would point at developing binding consensus decisions (den Hond et al. 2015). We would expect that *far-right movement parties present a fluid decision-making structure and the dominance of a single charismatic individual* (Kitschelt 2006: 287).

External mobilization is relevant to investigate the movement-like repertoires of these organizations, i.e., their engagement in demonstrations, street protests, etc. We would expect that *far-right movement parties deploy contentious performances next to more conventional practices of political engagement* (Kitschelt 2006: 286).

In order to explore these dimensions empirically, we focus on two far-right movement parties that emanate from social movements, field candidates at elections, and are represented in local and/or national institutions: the Hungarian Jobbik and the Italian CasaPound. Examining two relatively novel organizations seems compelling for three reasons. First, we need collective actors that did not attain full institutionalization; institutionalized organizations may indeed privilege party survival over (movement) founding principles (Panebianco 1988). As noted above, we deem the movement party type a stage along the institutionalization trajectory of collective actors; putting our propositions to the test with older, more institutionalized, far-right organizations would not serve our analytical purpose. Second, we also have to account for a certain degree of endurance, which is implicitly guaranteed by excluding "flash" phenomena; at the time of writing, the two movement parties have been politically active for over a decade. Ephemeral organizations may simply lack the time, or incentives, to transition from movement to party. Third, focusing on active far-right collective actors makes it possible to assess the organization and strategies of movement parties with an internalist perspective, and at the time of their unfolding. We deem this a notable advancement compared to studies that have only explored the movement component of the far right externally and retrospectively (Birenbaum 1992). While acknowledging the limited generalizability of our cases to the broader far-right universe, we nonetheless deem them representative of the specific subset of far-right movement parties in light of their different ideological, electoral, and—presumably also—institutional trajectories. Moreover, we do not rule out the influence that context may exert on movement-party configurations, but we are interested to see how these options are elaborated internally, rather than imposed from the outside.

Both organizations emerged from social movement milieus in the early 2000s and entered the electoral arena in response to a growing disillusionment with the national right. Jobbik and CPI have experienced varying electoral fortunes, which can be attributed in part to diverging political opportunities for far-right mobilization. While Jobbik is represented in local, national, and supranational institutions, CPI has gained electoral traction exclusively at the local level. Besides their performances at the polls, they are recognized as notable far-right collective actors in respective countries. The two organizations also vary with regard to ideology. Jobbik qual-

ifies as a (populist) radical-right collective actor for its compliance with the rules of parliamentary democracy (Pirro 2015), whereas CPI can be classified as extreme right for its self-proclaimed ideological connection to historical Fascism (Albanese et al. 2014). Ideological and electoral variations do not preclude the inclusion of Jobbik and CPI in a single movement party category, which indeed lumps together extreme as well as radical, and successful as well as unsuccessful, far-right organizations (Kitschelt 2006: 286-288). By looking at movement parties that are ideologically and electorally different, we seek to maximize internal variation within a framework of established generalizations—i.e., their recognition as hybrid collective actors, irrespective of their location on the left-right ideological continuum, propitious arena of engagement, or context of belonging (della Porta et al. 2017; Kitschelt 2006). Following an established tradition in comparative politics, we wish begin by ascertaining whether the single configurational model theorized for different far-right movement parties is confirmed or not (Lijphart 1971).

We conducted nine semistructured interviews with high-ranking officials; four interviews for Jobbik and five for CPI. This is a remarkable feature of our study, which complements the small scholarship relying on in-depth interviews with far-right activists (Albanese et al. 2014; Art 2011; Ellinas and Lamprianou 2016; Goodwin 2011; Klandermans and Mayer 2005; Pirro 2015; Pirro and Róna 2018). In securing interviews, we privileged the role of interviewees within respective organizations over the sheer number of testimonies collected. Hence, the status of interviewed officials adds to the picture; interviewees included the highest ranks of respective organizations, from elected members in institutions to coordinators of various kinds (e.g., press coordinators, coordinators of local sections, and of specific campaigns). We specifically addressed people with firsthand knowledge of the internal workings of the organizations, as well as with direct involvement in different arenas of engagement. The semi-structured interviews, intended for crossnational comparison, touched on general questions concerning the internal workings and strategy of their organization, and then specific issues pertaining to the three dimensions outlined above. Interviews were analyzed qualitatively and the most important elements relating to the organization, processes, and external mobilization of Jobbik and CPI presented with illustrative quotations. Finally, the interviews, held at different times between 2013 and 2016, and combined with substantive knowledge of the cases at hand, made it possible to account for cross-organizational and cross-temporal variations.

ORGANIZATION, PROCESSES, AND EXTERNAL MOBILIZATION

The Hungarian Jobbik and the Italian CPI directly emanate from social movements and enter the electoral arena only at a later stage. Jobbik emerged in 1999 as a network of Christian right-wing students from different Hungarian universities (*Jobboldali Ifjúsági Közösség*). The movement initially showed keenness about the Civic Circles initiative promoted by Fidesz after the 2002 elections. The growing disenchantment with the state of the Hungarian right led the movement to form as a party in 2003. Jobbik contested its first elections in 2006 in an unsuccessful alliance with the *Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja* (Hungarian Justice and Life Party, MIÉP). Jobbik secured 14.8 percent of votes at the 2009 European Parliament (EP) elections, following a long and fiery anti-Roma campaign; and yet the movement party cannot be simplistically reduced to a single-issue phenomenon. Jobbik further improved its performance at the general elections of 2010 and 2014 (16.7 and 20.2 percent), articulating and expanding on its nativist, authoritarian, and populist profile (Pirro 2014a, 2014b). Jobbik ranked second at the 2018 general elections with 19.1 percent of votes. The limited payoffs of the moderation strategy undertaken after 2013 prompted long-standing leader Gábor Vona to step down from chairmanship in May 2018.

CPI first appeared in 2003, with the squatting of a building in Rome by a group of disenfranchised militants close to the youth section of *Fiamma Tricolore* (Tricolour Flame, FT) (Di Nunzio and Toscano 2011). The group was initially embedded in FT, but tensions soon

emerged with regard to the accountability of the party leadership (Castelli Gattinara, Froio and Albanese 2013). In 2008, the group splintered from FT and established itself as a nonprofit association under the name *CasaPound Italia*. CPI openly rejects left-wing and right-wing labels, and distances itself from traditional parties. This notwithstanding, CPI started out as a single-issue movement focusing on "social housing" rooted in the socioeconomic tradition of Italian Fascism. Starting from 2011, however, CPI regularly took part in local and national elections, and progressively expanded its programmatic agenda on socioeconomic affairs. At first, its candidates ran as independents within center-right coalitions (2011-2012); since 2013, CPI presented its own electoral list and integrated its agenda with anti-immigration proposals. CPI's evolution is also testified by changing electoral slogans between 2013 and 2018: from "Direction Revolution" to "Direction Parliament." While the results at the national level have been poor (0.14 percent in 2013), CPI has contributed to the election of a *Lega Nord* (Northern League, LN) candidate to the EP in 2014, and secured the election of its own officials to local councils in 2015 and 2016. In the 2017 local elections, CPI scored results above five percent and elected council members in different municipalities of Central Italy. Moreover, a former member has been elected to mayor of L'Aquila as part of a right-wing list. In 2018, CPI ran with an independent list at the local and national elections. On this occasion, CPI failed to elect any candidates to parliament (scoring a meager 0.9 percent), yet doubled its electoral support compared to the previous national elections—from 50,000 to about 130,000 votes.

The interdependence between the three dimensions we set out to investigate is by no means exceptional. A substantial continuity between the protest and the electoral arena characterizes both collective actors. The upper echelons of Jobbik and CPI—i.e., what we would expect to be the *loci* of decision making—include personnel formed, or still active, within far-right extraparliamentary networks and with firsthand experience in contentious politics. As an additional testimony of this, Jobbik had signed an official cooperation agreement with the groups *Hatvannégy Vármegye Ifjúsági Mozgalom* (Sixty-Four Counties Youth Movement, HVIM), *Betyársereg* (Army of Outlaws), and *Magyar Gárda* (Hungarian Guard) in 2009. Also, most of its ranks are filled with members of its grassroots youth division (*Jobbik Ifjúsági Tagozat*, Jobbik IT) (Pirro and Róna 2018). CPI supports the electoral bid of far-right street activists. Most of the candidates have long records of militancy in the group's extraparliamentary networks and involvement in grassroots campaigns on housing and the economic crisis.

Organization

We start out by looking at the number of members of each group. Jobbik has steadily increased its figures over time. By the 2010 general elections, members mounted to 11,000 (Bíró Nagy and Róna 2013). These numbers grew to 12,430 in 2011 (MTI 2011) and almost 14,000 in early 2013 (Interview HU2). The latest record available from Summer 2016 is 17,943 (Interview HU4), thus signaling a steady increase in membership over time. Decisions on membership, and on whom to accept as a member, rest on local branches with discretional approval from the central office. Practically, the procedure entails filling out a form, providing personal information, and a statement of purpose; information is then tracked down before approval (Interview HU3). With regard to staff, Jobbik had by 2016 ten employees on the payroll, in addition to three contracted workers. The number of volunteers is, however, much higher and varies according to periods; during electoral campaigning, volunteers reach 5-10,000. The organization uses thirty-seven offices across the country, excluding those in the Hungarian Parliament and local municipality councils; while two of these offices have been conceded for free use by Hungarian citizens, the rest are rented. The national headquarters office in Budapest is being paid for in installments and, thus, is not technically owned as of yet (Interview HU4). The changes introduced with the new electoral law, which entered into force in 2012, prompted a substantial restructuring of the organization, mostly due to the redrawing of constituency boundaries (Interview HU3). Still, the opportunity to open up a branch rests on "local interest,

the right kind of human resources, and sufficient numbers" (Interview HU4). With regard to financing, Jobbik officials consider themselves as part of a "low-budget" organization:

> Compared to six years ago, we rely on generous state contributions. . . . We have the opportunity to set up foundations, which work beside the party—of course, under state audit and supervision. . . . We also have means to draw private resources from private contributors. . . . We don't have the big multinationals and Hungarian oligarchs standing behind us, but those taxpayers who have a few thousand forints to spare (Interview HU3).

Although membership in CPI is considered on the rise, it is difficult to rely on declared figures. While the founding group included a few dozen individuals (Interview IT1), data from the official website claimed over 2,000 members in 2008. The national leadership declared that figures had risen to about 5,000 in 2013 (Interview IT4). At the 2016 national congress, its president, Gianluca Iannone, suggested that membership doubled compared to the previous year, although he did not provide any figures to substantiate this (CPI 2016c). It is important to underline that CPI does not envisage membership without active militancy; becoming a member entails active participation in the events and activities promoted by the group at the local and national levels. CPI does not have staff or employees on its payroll, and elected officials are required to devolve most of their emoluments to the organization:

> Once elected, our councilors give back everything to CasaPound, they don't keep anything for themselves. There's no such thing as the profession of councilor like in other parties, where one is allowed to keep his remuneration as an elected official and use it as a second salary (Interview IT2).

The selection of members follows very strict, yet informal, criteria, and generally occurs by cooptation. After being introduced to the group by other militants, prospective members are invited to public events and activities organized by CPI, "as a way to test their motivation, before introducing them . . . to the circuit of real militancy" (Interview IT3). Sympathizers unable to become active militants can be appointed as "web supporters" in charge of promoting CPI's messages, images, and activities online. Today, CPI manages 88 offices across Italy; to these, one should add those belonging to CPI's youth section (*Blocco Studentesco*, Student Bloc) and linked organizations, which make up for a total of 120 offices. The vast majority of these spaces are rented, though two are occupied buildings hosting Italian families with housing problems.

Neither of the two movement parties presents small formal memberships, nor do they lack extensive organizational coverage. To the contrary, they both deliver significant figures in terms of member-voter ratios and presence on the ground. The key differences mainly pertain to the professionalization of staff and, thus, the financial resources available to Jobbik and CPI, which might depend on access to electoral reimbursements.

Processes

Jobbik meticulously regulates positions on its organizational chart. All officials, including the president, six vice-presidents, and treasurer, have to be openly elected by a dedicated national body, comprising national and local delegates, once every two years. The same holds at the local level, where representatives are elected by the local branch. Changes in procedures have taken place over the years and there are rules in place to amend these mechanisms; the organization has recently granted the president powers to narrow down the number of candidates running for presidency to eight individuals, out of which six are elected as vice-presidents (Interview HU3).

Policy proposals put forward by Jobbik are elaborated following a cabinet system. Simply put, there is an internal apportioning of labor on the basis of competencies and expertise. Such a configuration does not preclude members and sympathizers from contributing, as cabinets are indeed conceived as loose consultative bodies or networks.

> I have received a lot of help and proposals from local branches. . . . You can imagine a retired diplomat, living in a particular county, who starts sympathizing with Jobbik, goes to the local branch—and I get a phone call from them saying, "There is a man who has an insight into this area, would you please receive him?" "Yes, please!" . . . There are some people who want to keep it informal . . . some other are active and want to become members, sit there at the local level when they decide about what type of campaign material we put together (Interview HU3).

There is also strong cooperation between different cabinets on potential overlapping issues (e.g., foreign affairs, defense, and Hungarians living abroad), which is aided by personnel working alongside the parliamentary fraction.

The chairman is the head of the presidency, the main decision-making body of the organization.

> The functioning of the party has been more or less adjusted to suit Gábor Vona. He is quite a charismatic individual; he knows how to put forward his ideas. . . . [Strategic matters] are discussed within the presidency, [which are decided upon] with a majority, but the word of the president does count. . . . Vona is the one who knows best which direction the ship is going, and it is his leadership that has brought us from zero to here (Interview HU3).

The virtues and capabilities of then-chairman Vona have been deemed essential for the way things evolved after 2006, hereby including instrumental decisions such as the establishment of the *Magyar Gárda*, the politicization of "Roma criminality," or the attempt to relocate Jobbik toward the center of the political spectrum (Reuters 2015). Despite a rather hierarchical organization, there are also several initiatives originating at the grassroots level, which directly complement the work carried out in central and public office.

The definition of organizational roles and duties in CPI follows similarly strict, yet considerably less formal rules, compared to Jobbik. All procedures take place under the explicit initiative and unique responsibility of the leader (Interview IT4). Our interviewees justified this choice on the basis of ideology, referring to Julius Evola's concept of "personal equations," according to which each individual (and, thus, each militant) is defined by a predefined set of intellectual and spiritual inclinations (Furlong 2011). One of the main qualities of the leader rests in the ability to understand these predispositions, so that he can successfully appoint militants (Interview IT3). The apportioning of responsibilities is based on expertise and commitment:

> The organization of CasaPound is hierarchic and meritocratic at the same time. . . . Those who work the most, who are most capable to commit, are recognized as leaders, and followed. It applies to everyone, from the national president, to people in charge of local branches, including normal militants (Interview IT2).

CPI thus presents a hierarchical structure with neither formal decision-making procedures, nor discernible internal democracy. The leadership is officially embodied by Iannone, who is the national president and founder of CPI, and a widely recognized figure in the subcultural milieu of the Italian extreme right. His involvement in the everyday politics of CPI has however decreased over time; most of the ordinary business is now delegated to the vice-president, who acts as spokesperson, and runs as candidate in national and local elections (CPI 2016c).

All strategies and policy proposals are decided upon by the inner leadership in Rome, and simply communicated to members, militants, and local branches. The central body then sets up a number of cabinets in charge of coordinating activities across main policy areas: public housing, positive discrimination in the labor market, as well as banking regulations and anti-

austerity measures (CPI 2016a). Decentralized grassroots initiatives are possible and welcome but have to be ratified by the offices in Rome. The central office also provides funding and logistic support, whenever necessary (Interview IT5). Political activities are further differentiated through separate organizations with thematic responsibilities (CPI 2016b). There are groups in charge of social voluntary work (e.g., health, workers' rights, environment), ideology and propaganda (including a daily paper, web radio, and web TV), and specific campaigns.

Against this backdrop, both movement parties deliver a leader with a clear steering role. Yet, while Jobbik is open to grassroots input in its decision making, thus adhering to movement-like principles, CPI's guidance comes unexceptionally from the top of its organizational charat.

External Mobilization

Jobbik has engaged in protest activities ever since its foundation and without discontinuity to note. Its protests centered on a wide array of contentious issues (Jobbik 2012a, 2012b, 2015a, 2015b), and the organization places remarkable emphasis on extraparliamentary mobilization—an element that has led to internal self-questioning after turning to the electoral option and entering the parliamentary arena. At first, Jobbik was confronted with the inherent dilemma underlying antiestablishment organizations: changing the system from the outside, as a movement, or from within, as a party. The organization faced yet another dilemma upon entry to the Hungarian Assembly: whether to abide by parliamentary rules, or not. Jobbik claims its commitment to defeat political opponents and contribute to legislative activities in accordance to the rules of parliamentary democracy.

> But we should never forget that the parliament is only one sphere of politics. The real sphere is the *agora*. . . . It is extremely important that we are present [in every city, town, and village]—among the people. . . . Our main emphasis is on the public sphere (Interview HU3).

Notably, Jobbik did, and still does, engage in extraparliamentary activities. The *Magyar Gárda*, the unarmed paramilitary-like organization set up to restore "law and order" in rural regions with a high concentration of Roma, is considered the stratagem that thrust Jobbik into the limelight (Bíró Nagy and Róna 2013). Disbanded by court ruling in 2009, the guard has splintered into different groups and continues its activities, though it is now only informally linked to Jobbik (Interview HU1). Other extraparliamentary organizations, such as the HVIM and *Betyársereg* maintain links with the movement party (Pirro and Róna 2018). Jobbik has—in the words of its own representatives—"introduced very unconventional methods into politics." These include direct social actions such as the mobilizations that occurred in Spring 2008, when the Tisza river overflew in North-East Hungary. The *Magyar Gárda* was present on the banks, putting sand sacks to contain the river, digging ditches, and taking the water out (Interview HU1).

While President Vona has often engaged in the assistance of elderly and sick people in hospitals, harvesting, or delivering pizzas, the organization had formalized these practices by requiring that each MP undertook such kind of activities every month throughout the year 2015. Jobbik also demands each official benefitting from state salaries to devolve ten percent of their income to a charitable foundation set up by Jobbik. A portion of this money is generally used to organize activities such as summer camps for children coming from the Ukrainian Carpathians (Interview HU3)—a region predominantly inhabited by the Hungarian diaspora.

Other activities have seen Jobbik directly involved in protesting against foreign-currency-denominated debt—i.e., one of the critical factors in Hungary's recent economic downturn. Prior to the financial crisis of 2008, the Hungarian population had been encouraged to contract loans in Swiss Francs or Euros due to favorable interest rates; the situation however spiraled downward after the outbreak of the Great Recession, and the banks laid claim to those properties and goods for which payments had lapsed.

When the executors from the banks came to confiscate properties, Jobbik groups took the streets to negotiate and stop them. . . . We've been pressuring with demonstrations . . . we have given political voice to those people battling for their lives . . . and, in such cases, we have had very efficient legal backup from lawyers providing counseling to people—and to us MPs to present necessary proposals (Interview HU3).

CPI privileges the protest arena, without however neglecting the electoral option. In its early years, the group stood out for its unconventional repertoires of action, most notably showcasing highly demonstrative protests, occupations of state-owned buildings for housing purposes, and squatting for political and cultural activities. In this sense, the group's first public act was the seizure of an abandoned building in Rome. These socially oriented occupations resonate with the group's attention to social housing for Italian families (Interview IT4). Even during electoral campaigns, CPI combines conventional party activities (such as handing out leaflets, collecting signatures, and promoting fundraising events) with contentious politics, including the storming of rival candidates' offices (CPI 2013a), clashes with antiracist and antifascist organizations (CPI 2013b), and direct actions and interventions (CPI 2013c). The elected officials of CPI often use their position to provide further visibility to the extra-parliamentary actions of the movement party (e.g., CPI 2016d).

CPI is prone to direct social actions. Unlike conventional forms of activism, they do not seek the mediation of representative authorities to solve public problems, but directly aim at redressing a problem perceived as dysfunctional (Bosi and Zamponi 2015: 371). These actions laid at the core of campaigns on housing rights and extended to other issues over time. CPI then mobilized on environmental requalification, and voluntary work to help disabled, unemployed, and elderly people (Interview IT3). The breakout of the economic crisis motivated solidary direct actions, including the distribution of food to Italian families, the provision of free health and fiscal services, and setting up a unit of civil protection associated to CPI (Interview IT4). As the attention progressively shifted to immigration, direct actions hinged upon antirefugee blockades, patrolling migrants' detention centers, and squatting buildings originally meant for refugees.

CPI's repertoire of action also includes disruptive protests such as violent confrontations with opponents and public authorities. About a third of press releases issued by CPI over the past ten years dealt with protest events, including legal and illegal demonstrations, confrontational protests, and actions involving physical or symbolic violence (Castelli Gattinara and Froio 2017). CPI's youth section engaged in violent clashes with left-wing student movements in Rome in 2008 and the group organized a number of illegal actions against the EU in 2013, which led to the arrest of CPI's vice-president. In December 2011, a sympathizer of CPI gunned down two street vendors in Florence and then took his own life. While this episode was condemned by CPI's leadership (Interview IT2; CPI 2011), their stance towards violent repertoires of action remains ambiguous: "We are open to dialogue, but we do not reject confrontation when this is imposed on us and when our political and physical survival is at stake" (CPI 2016e).

The analysis of external mobilization shows that both movement parties upheld activities in the protest arena through the period covered by this analysis. This largely resonates with their social-movement origins. Therefore, the different electoral fortunes and degrees of institutionalization attained by the two collective actors does not seem to affect their movement principles—at least, so far.

A Comparative Assessment

The analysis conducted so far helps elaborate on the fuzzy organizational and strategic configurations of far-right movement parties in a comparative fashion. The collective actors examined are in transition from the movement to the party form, and preserve elements of both. The simple fact of having taken the electoral option signals an explicit attempt to bridge the gap between

"ballots and barricades" and, thus, move beyond street-based protests (McAdam and Tarrow 2010). At the same time, the prominent emphasis placed on extraparliamentary activities and engagement in direct social actions, their presence on the ground, and their levels of grassroots activism differentiate these collective actors, not only from the majority of contemporary parties, but also from a few far-right ones (Mazzoleni and Voerman 2017).

Furthermore, the analysis revealed a fairly composite picture with regard to the three dimensions of organization, processes, and external mobilization. However, we consider the two organizations to bear a number of substantive similarities, and in what follows we engage with their (more or less) nuanced differences. First, membership in Jobbik and CPI is neither small nor informal. To the contrary, access to membership is formalized and carefully monitored—we believe for both image and legal reasons. It is in fact essential for organizations that are (directly or indirectly) involved in vigilante activities (Jobbik) or confrontational practices (CPI), to keep more violent and extremist elements at bay by implementing some initial screening. For instance, Jobbik has denied allegations of involvement with the (deadly) attacks perpetrated against Roma communities between 2008 and 2009 (BBC 2013); similarly, CPI has strenuously dissociated itself from violence perpetrated by its supporters and sympathizers over the past years (Rai News 2016; Repubblica 2011). Both rebuffs were justified by murderers' lack of formal affiliation with their groups. The spread of these organizations over national territory also strays a long way from loose associational forms. However, Jobbik and CPI vary with regard to the financial resources available to them and the number of employees on their payrolls. These differences could be attributed to the varying number of seats in public office. This suggests that the level of institutionalization ostensibly affects movement parties' access to state contributions and, thus, investments in the professionalization of staff.

Second, neither organization analyzed in this study presented an open-ended structure. To the contrary, though for different reasons, the internal organizations of CPI and Jobbik are well structured. To different degrees, both organizations are hierarchically arranged. Our interviews have indeed confirmed the importance of respective leaders. However, while Jobbik presents a rather "diffuse" leadership, which is spread across different individuals and normally receives input from grassroots members, CPI's decision making solely rests on its leader, who personally appoints officials. In other words, the Hungarian organization comes across as internally more democratic than the Italian one. The principal consequence is that the more institutionalized Jobbik places greater emphasis on participatory practices (*à la* social movements). The less institutionalized CPI, instead, shows poor internal democracy and little interest in decisional input from assemblies of members. We argue that one possible factor underlying these differences could rest in the distinct ideological variants of the two movement parties. This would be in line with previous work on the internal organization of the far right, which evidenced a divide between radical and strongly organized parties, on the one hand, and more extreme and weakly organized ones, on the other (Art 2011: 21). If the demarcation between "extreme" and "radical" right bears any substance in practice, the different takes on democracy of Jobbik and CPI would also reflect in the internal workings of their organizations (Mudde 2000).

Third, both collective actors consistently deploy contentious performances such as demonstrations, rallies, sit-ins, occupation of buildings, etc. Their presence at the grassroots level is also confirmed by the array of direct social actions and the investment in activities on the ground. These elements demonstrate Jobbik's and CPI's continued engagement outside the parliamentary arena, irrespective of their levels of institutionalization or electoral success.

While the actors analyzed presented a number of similarities across dimensions, their articulation partly questions the original conceptualization of movement parties. Previous generalizations regarding the organization of far-right movement parties (Kitschelt 2006) were confuted by the presence of formal membership and infrastructures in both Jobbik and CPI. The expectation concerning decisional processes was also partly disproved, in that both collective actors presented rather formalized decision-making structures; Jobbik, however, displayed a much more diffuse leadership compared to CPI. The proposition on the external mobilization of far-right movement

parties was effectively the only one met in practice. The strategies of Jobbik and CPI were, indeed, key to substantiate their continued social movement character.

In conclusion, we believe that the concept of movement party is still useful to qualify far-right collective actors emanating from social movements, and to translate their organization and strategies from the protest to the electoral arena. The conceptualization of hybrid collective actors along these lines, and the three dimensions provided to analyze them, provide useful tools to delve more deeply into the workings of these organizations. Our empirical analysis, however, calls for a more nuanced reading of these phenomena, and a willingness to consider elements such as ideology or different levels of institutionalization.

CONCLUSIONS

Movements and parties, long appraised as separate entities, also have laid at the heart of distinct streams of literature. Few attempts have been made to reconcile them by looking at collective action happening at the intersection of the protest and the electoral arenas. A notable exception had been the case of "movement parties," conceptualized by Kitschelt on the basis of European left-libertarian/ecologist and far-right experiences. At least in the case of the far right, organization and strategies turned out to be some of the most neglected aspects of an otherwise extremely vast research corpus.

With this article, we delved into the empirical aspects of these notions by looking at far-right collective actors. We examined the extent to which these hybrid organizational types subscribed to a single configurational pattern and used original data derived from interviews with high-ranking officials. The data gathered allowed us to take an "internalist" perspective and overcome well-known limits of access to far-right organizations.

The analysis of the Hungarian Jobbik and the Italian CPI confirmed that it is correct to appraise these organizations as intersectional collective actors ideally bridging movements and parties. Their external mobilization practices still directly recall the repertoires of social movements, despite taking the electoral option. At the same time, the variance in their organization could be ostensibly attributed to their distinctive institutional trajectories. A crucial, and not necessarily intuitive, difference between far-right movement parties was found at the level of decision-making procedures and internal democracy. These are under-researched aspects that remain still shunned from view, and that we partly associated with their different ideology.

Our findings resonate with recent research on movement parties "against austerity." These hybrid collective actors were found to adopt the participatory model ingrained in social movements—at least as long as it served to achieve power (della Porta et al. 2017: 194). The ability to diversify repertoires of action, uphold links with movements, and sustain internal participatory practices, may be thus temporally bound. Therefore, while many parties "begin life as movements," not all of them should be expected to preserve these features throughout their history (Tarrow 2015: 95). Similar to movement parties "against austerity," our two cases either sprung from, or took advantage of, the weaknesses of older (far-right) parties. We could also speak of overlaps between party organigrams and movement activists (Albanese et al. 2014; Pirro and Róna 2018). And yet, we feel that the galvanizing effects of electoral success might subdue to the logics of incremental learning and professionalization. In other words, those cumulative effects observed on party transformation may be transitory and could be partly reconsidered if no longer serving a greater electoral goal (della Porta et al. 2017: 188). Further research should highlight if, how, and for how long, movement-party features are preserved, and tackle the more or less condensed time of transition towards a full-fledged party form.

This article critically enhances knowledge on the internal workings of far-right actors in transition from the protest to the electoral arena, notwithstanding the limits deriving from a small-N study. On the one hand, this pursuit is informed by a conscious attempt to overcome those epistemological divisions that have set social movement studies and the literature on party politics apart. On the other, our strategy places far-right actors at the core of inquiry into

movement parties, providing initial empirical evidence to support their different organizational and strategic configurations. We offer this article as a first pluralist step in addressing oscillations of nativist collective actors along the movement-party continuum.

NOTES

[1] By "hybrid nature," we explicitly refer to the combination of social movement and political party elements in the organization and strategies of collective actors. Conversely, the question of origins, pertinent to the "old" labor movement and the formation of Socialist and Social Democratic parties, largely falls beyond the remit of this study.

[2] According to David Art, activists are "those people who do not just vote for radical right parties, but work actively on their behalf. This group includes everyone from party leaders, to elected representatives in local councils, to ordinary members whose level of involvement exceeds paying their yearly dues" (2011: 19–20).

[3] Such a differentiation rests on their "hostile" or "oppositional" attitude towards constitutional democratic principles (see Mudde 2000).

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