Good Government
and Participatory Democracy
A Model of Social Partnership

Franco Manti

I

T he issue of good government and of the relationship between the rulers and the ruled is not a new one, nor are the principles that Rosanvallon considers fundamental to good government.[1] The debate on sovereignty, representation, executive power, constitutionalism that has gone through the English and French Revolutions finds a synthesis in the thinking of Constant, who, though affirming the indispensability of representative democracy, deemed it necessary to take into account the need for participation in the political decision-making process and in the control of management of public affairs as the expression of a citizenship that doesn't only express itself in the vote. My thesis is that we must start from here by taking into account the effects of globalization and of a long and heavy economic crisis that has generated mistrust, a sense of impotence, and rage against politicians and politics. The answer that some give is direct democracy that, thanks to ICTs,[2] could take the shape of a cyber agora capable of reviving the democracy of the ancients and Rousseau's ideal of general will. What I propose, even in the light of the building process of modern Western

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[1] Legibility, responsibility, responsiveness, true-speech, integrity (*lisibilité, responsabilité, réactivité, parler vrai, intégrité*). See P. Ronsavallon, *Le bon gouvernement* (Paris: Editions du Seuil 2015), pp. 215-301 e pp. 327-379.
[2] Information and Communications Technology.

social consciousness, is a participatory democracy model, based on social partnership, capable of strengthening representative democracy by introducing elements of direct democracy. With an awareness, though, that seems to be missed by many, including Rosanvallon: the theme of good government, requires a *glocal* approach.[3] Local administrative experiences such as the formulation of participatory budgets can be an example of good practice that, at least as far as method is concerned, can find an extension at the national and global level.

II
A look at history

The issue of good government, of which institutions are best suited to practice it on the basis of a proper rulers-ruled relationship, is a central theme faced by philosophers and constitutionalists in 17th century England. This debate had as background the one on the source of sovereignty. Jurists and constitutionalists such as H. Bracton,[4] J. Fortescue,[5] and A. Horn[6]

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[3] See R. Robertson, *Globalization. Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd), pp. 97-114.

[4] See H. Bracton, *De legibus et consetudinibus Angliae* (London: published by Richard Tottel 1569).

[5] See J. Fortescue, *De laudibus legum Angliae* (London: *Companie of stationers* 1616); *De Laudibus Legum Angliae: A Treatise in Commendation of the Laws of England* (Rochester - N Y: Scholar's Choice Edition 2015).

[6] See A. Horn*, La somme appelle Mirroir des iustices, Vel Speculum Iusticiariorum* (London: Printed by E. Griffin for Matthew Walbanke and Richard Best 1642); A. Horn, *The Mirror of Justices* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1895). Locke quotes Horn as the author of *The Mirror*, see: J. Locke, "Letter to the Reverend Richard King", August 25, 1703, in *The Works of J. Locke*, Vol. 10 (London: printed for T. Tegg; W. Sharpe and Son, G. Offor; G. and J Robinson; J Evans and co; also R. Griffin and co. Glasgow; and J. Cumming, Dublin; Reprinted

are the sources that Hooker[7] and Locke draw upon. The common key idea was the one already stated by Bracton: "lex facit regem", that is, "rex nihil potest nisi quod iure potest" from which Fortescue and Horn derive the rightness of the people's disobedience to princes when they do not act in the respect of laws and for the people's good. The king's power is above all and in every way limited[8] and ruled by the laws.[9] This thesis is emphasized and strengthened by Locke, according to whom all are equal for the law, the source of legitimacy and coercive force of which lies in the people's consent.[10]

During the 17th century, the Whigs had elaborated the contract of government theory as the foundation of mixed monarchy:[11] a sovereign who does not respect the covenant renders null and void the legal rights to rule and dissolves the subjects' obedience obligations. Locke, starting with the *Epistola de Tolerantia*, moves away from that theory by proposing a de-

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by Scientia Verlag Aalen 1963), p. 308. In this letter Locke quotes, also, a law-book known as *Fleta,* dating back to the kingdom of Edward the 1st, see *Fleta* (London: Bernard Quaritch 1955 e 1984).

[7] See R. Hooker, *The Ecclesiastical Polity*, in *The Ecclesiastical Polity and other Works of Richard Hooker* (London: Holdsworth and Ball 1830), pp. 1–447; R. Hooker, *Of the Laws of ecclesiastical polity* (Cambridge and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press 1977).

[8] See R. Hooker, *The Ecclesiastical Polity*, pp. 242-246.

[9] See Ph. Hutton, *A Treatise of Monarchy*,
www.yorku.ca/comninel/courses/3025pdf/Treatise.pdf.

[10] See J. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, in *Works*, vol. 10, II*,* Ch. XIII, & 149, pp. 426-427.

[11] See R. Ferguson, *Brief Justification of the Prince of Orange's Descent into England*, in *State Tracts* I (London: Printed for J. S. and sold by Richard Baldwin 1689), in *State Tracts* I (London 1705), p. 136.

contractualization of the people-rulers relationship and a new view of the legal and constitutional nature of revolution.[12]

The sovereign, but also the members of Parliament, stipulate neither a *pactum subiectionis* nor a government contract, but are fiduciary administrators. The model Locke drew inspiration from, which derived from his concept of property right, is that of the fiduciary management of goods. When trust fails, because of bad administration, resistance and withdrawal of empowerment are legitimate. The rulers who repeatedly demonstrate to govern without taking into account the common good must be removed. Theirs is a very serious crime so that if the possibility of resolving the conflict with the law fails, nothing remains but the use of force.[13] Such removal is not a contract termination, but it finds its justification and legitimacy in the betrayal of trust on which the empowerment to rule is based. Therefore, preventive actions are desirable so that the situations do not degenerate thus creating the conditions for the dissolution of the government and the revolution.[14] In addition, the trust pact[15] allows the possibility to prevent and manage conflicts, and does not require the

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[12] See F. Manti, *Locke e il costituzionalismo. Etica, politica, governo civile* (Genova: Name 2004), pp. 216-218.

[13] See J. Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. M. Montuori, (The Hague: Njhoff 1963); J. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, Ch. XIX, §§ 240-243, pp. 483 -485.

[14] See J. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, Ch. XIX, § 220, p. 468-469.

[15] This theory has been preceded in little-developed and ambiguous terms by R. Williams in his book *The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution* published in London in 1644, where, sometimes, the trust delegation gets confused with the *mandatum* contract of Roman law. See R. Williams, *The Bloudy Tenent of persecution for Cause of Conscience*, in *Publications of the Narragantsett Club*, First Series, (Providence: Providence Press Co., 1867), Vol. III, pp. 249-250. It seems that the first to support a theory of trust delegation was Ponet, see J. Ponet, *Short Treatise of Political Power* (Menston: Scolar Press, New ed. of 1556, 1970).

stipulation of a government contract, even after a revolution, since rulers are legitimized by the people's trust. The consequence of this is that even if the sovereignty is popular, the people, once the legislative – which is the only supreme power to which others must be subordinated – is constituted,[16] has no power to exercise, even the constituent power, if not the "supreme" one to remove or alter the legislative if it decides against the trust which is placed in it.[17] The executive power, in turn, has the task of enforcing the laws and can in no way override, alter or replace the law.

If this were to happen, it would put itself in a "state of war with the people, who have a right to reinstate their legislative in the exercise of their power"[18]. Actually, the formula that "salus populi suprema lex esto"[19] was generally shared[20] so much that it is taken as a reference both by Hobbes and Locke, but was also deeply ambiguous. The most urgent problem was, however, from Whigs' the point of view, that of the predominance of the executive through the use of the prerogative, since it constitutes a rather large discretionary power.[21] The prerogative, in fact, can be exercised "without the prescription of the law, and sometimes

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[16] See J. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, II, Ch. XIII, §§ 149-150, pp. 426–427.

[17] Nothing to do with the idea of constituent power elaborated by da Sieyès, see F. Manti, *Locke e il costituzionalismo*, pp. 44–45.

[18] J. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, II, Ch. XIII, § 155, p. 430.

[19] See *ibid.*, II, Ch. XIII, § 158, p. 432.

[20] See T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, (New York: The Crowell-Collin Publishing Company 1962), Ch. XXX, p. 247 e pp. 255-256; J. Selden, *Table Talk*, (London: E. Smith 1689) p. 112; B. Spinoza, *Tractatus theologico–politicus* (Napoli: Bibliopolis 2007), Ch. XIX, pp. 456–477.

[21] See J. Selden, *Table Talk*, pp. 82–83; R. Filmer, *Patriarcha or the Natural Power of Kings* (London: R. Chiswell 1680), III, Ch. VIII, pp. 101–105; J. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, in *Works*, II, Ch. XIV, § 159, pp. 434–435.

even against it".[22] Locke notes that the incapable prince ingests the golden pill of arbitrary power by mistaking it with prerogative and forgetting that the latter is legitimate and justified only if its effects are beneficial to the people and the latter recognizes them as such.[23] Phenomena such as the pursuit of personal gain, the concealment of the truth by the rulers together with the lack of certainty in the law and with their impunity are the ones to create such distrust that rulers and ruled are opposed and the latter are given "an occasion to claim their right, and limit that power, which, while being exercised for their good, they very consent should be tacitly allowed".[24] One last note: although corruption and dishonesty are widespread among the rulers, the failure of trust in them cannot be general and indiscriminate, because responsibilities are individual, but honesty and fairness, which are the requirements of good government, are not enough. Ignorance about corruption and in the act of government is actually a serious form of political responsibility.[25] Therefore, rulers must be able to interpret the people's needs so that everyone, in compliance with the laws, can pursue his own well-being and happiness.[26]

Locke's and English constitutionalists' idea of popular sovereignty finds its foundation in making the subject (later on

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[22] J. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, in *Works*, II, Ch. XIV, § 160, p. 435.

[23] See J. Locke, *Old England's Legal Constitution, to Mr.___ a Member of Parliament*. The text was published in H. R. Fox Bourne, *The Life of John Locke* (London: H. S. King 1876), II, pp. 318-324. It must be stressed out how the *Petition of Rights* (1628), written by Clarke e Selden, already excluded from prerogative taxation without Parliament's authorization.

[24] J. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, in *Works*, II, Ch. XIV, § 164, p. 437.

[25] See, J. Locke, *Old England's Legal Constitution*, pp. 321-322.

[26] See, H. R. Fox Bourne, *The Life of John Locke*, I, p. 164.

the citizen) sovereign for one day, the one of the vote,[27] as Rosanvallon points out, referring to representative democracy.[28] Just what will be the object of criticism by Rousseau, on the one hand, and by Sieyès on the other. The former considered direct democracy the only form of government with which popular sovereignty expresses the general will to the extent of considering the political trust delegation as degrading.[29] The latter, distinguishing constituent power from constituted power, representative mandate of public law and imperative mandate of private law, distanced himself both from English constitutionalism and from Rousseau's idea of democracy.[30] He considered, in fact, that the constituent power, which he does not hesitate to define almighty as belonging to the Nation itself, could be an expression of the trust granted to representatives who gather only for constituent purpose and must not exercise any of the constituted powers. In this way the Constituent Assembly becomes the depositary of sovereignty. Moreover, the election of representatives is not a delegation of power, but it proves the

[27] Here I do not discuss the question of census suffrage since for the discussion that is carried out it is relevant the form in which delegation and representation are expressed.

[28] See P. Rosanvallon, *Le bon gouvernement*, p. 384.

[29] See J. J. Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, trans. G. D. H. Cole, (New York: Dover 2002), Ch. XV, pp. 360-362. Rousseau affirms openly: "The idea of representation is modern; it comes to us from feudal government, from that iniquitous and absurd system that degrades humanity and dishonour the name of man" ("L'idée dés représentants est moderne: elle nous vient du gouvernement féodal, de cet inique et absurde gouvernement dans lequel l'espèce humaine est dégradée , et où le nom d'homme est en déshonneur").

[30] See also E. Sieyès, *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers État?* (Paris: Au Siège de la société 1888), pp. 27-93. In particular, Sieyès is against the imperative mandate (see *ibid.*, pp. 49-50 e 70-71).

public character of the representative function.[31] As Compagna points out, in Sieyès' thinking there is no clear distinction between constituent power, auditor power and legislative power. Constitution, Representation, Nation, and Third Estate are, therefore, contiguous and in continuity among themselves.[32] The adjective 'almighty' attributed to the constituent power, the Nation with capital N, mean that he "lies in the vicinity of Rousseau more than what he would have liked".[33]

The need for a distinction between sovereignty and freedom leads Constant and Laboulaye to definitely distance themselves from constitutional models based on direct democracy (Constitution of 1793) and to reflect on their relationship starting from the very definition of freedom. The dichotomy freedom of the ancients – freedom of the moderns, according to Constant, shows that the former is incompatible with the ethical and political values of modernity due to the individual's subjection to the social body that characterizes it.[34] Laboulaye, in turn, underlines how the Conventions, "being imbued with Mably's and Rousseau's Greek and Roman ideas, they tried to build public freedom on the ruins of individual liberty, causing oppressive despotism".[35] However, it has to be emphasized that, by

[31] See L. Compagna, *Gli opposti sentieri del costituzionalismo* (Bologna: Il Mulino 1998), note 45 e 46, p. 41.

[32] See *ibid.*, p. 25.

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 69

[34] See B. Constant, *De la liberté des anciens comparée à celle des modernes*, in *Cours de politique constitutionnelle et collection des ouvrages publiés sur le gouvernement représentatif* (Paris: Guillaumin 1872), Vol. II, pp. 549-550.

[35] E. Laboulaye, *Questions Constitutionnelles* (Paris: Charpentier et C[ie,] Libraires – Editeurs), Préface, p. III. See also E. Laboulaye, *Etudes morales et politiques* (Paris: Carpentier 1866), pp. 276 -303, where French and American Revolutions are compared.

recapturing aspects of Sieyes' thinking, Constant supports the need to combine direct democracy and representative democracy, since the citizens "must nevertheless consecrate their influence over public affairs, call them to contribute by their votes to the exercise of power, grant them a right of control and supervision by expressing their opinions; and, by forming them through practice for these elevated functions, give them both the desire and the right to discharge this".[36] Not only that: according to Constant the municipal power must be valorised and protected from central interference by guaranteeing some form of direct participation of the citizens in the administration.[37]

III
Insecure and demanding

Issues concerning good government and representation are not a legacy of the past: they still arise, but in a very different context.

First of all, there is no longer a question of the origin of political society and of the forms of representation, but there is the one of their functioning with particular reference to social security. Substantial parts of the population of Western countries are perceived as increasingly marginal, deprived of the possibility of planning their own future, considered as losers in a sort of social lottery. It could be argued that security is a fundamental

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[36] B. Constant, *De la liberté des anciens comparée à celle des modernes*, p. 560; trans. B Fontana, in Id. *Political Writing*s (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1988, p. 327).

[37] See B. Constant, *Principes de politique applicable à tous les gouvernements* (Paris: Eymery 1815) p. 203; on this topic, see G. Bedeschi, *Storia del pensiero liberale* (Roma-Bari: Laterza 2003), p. 168.

aspect in the various theories and the concrete practices of the modern State. In fact, these are two different types of security that respond to different vulnerabilities. The former can be defined as civil security with the aim of protecting individuals from aggression and abuse of others by means of a system of certain rules and the function of a third judge who is responsible for inflicting proportionate penalties, based on such rules, for infringements. With the emergence of social rights, the State also exercises a social one.[38] As a matter of fact, Welfare State has as its aims: protection of work, access to social property, that is to a substitute property of the private one for those who were excluded from the protections that the latter guaranteed. The right to pension and then the right to survivor's pension for spouses and children is made starting from work and wages.

The State presents itself as an institution whose fundamental task is not only civil security, but risk reduction: it is perceived as a large insurance[39] and as a provider of services. Therefore, the main trend line, in the West, was not so much that of redistribution of income, but the one of social security and social protection. However, such a protection system can be supported by a strong economic expansion, such as the one occurred between the 50s and the 70s of last century[40], and by the development of a concertation between collective groups made of homogenous social and professional categories, substitute of individual bargaining. The State, in short, acts as a balancer of economic and social development by governing the economy according to Keynesian policies. World economic crises that have

[38] See R. Castel, *L'insécurité sociale. Qu'est-ce qu'être protégé* (Paris: Editions du Seuil 2003).
[39] See P. Ewald, *L' Etat Providence*, (Paris: Grasset 1986) p. 343.
[40] At that time in the West productivity, consumes and wages triplicate.

occurred since the 1970s up to the present one, which can be dated starting from 2008 and not fully finished yet, along with the construction of the E.U. according to an essentially economistic and functionalistic view, the tensions induced by globalization have created a breakthrough: the shift from the centrality of the State in the economic-social programming to that of the enterprise, especially multinationals. The social protection system guaranteed by the State appears as being fragile and expensive. Moreover, owing to the slowness of the political system, governments are unable to make quick decisions. Many of these, above all in economic and financial terms, transcend their jurisdiction, while the E. U. has a limited political role. In this context, social security is beginning to be perceived as counterproductive, a source of excessive costs that weigh on work and of legal constraints imposed on companies that limit their competitive capabilities in a globalized economy, in which countries that do not have such constraints emerge.

The answer, which is actually prevalent in the West, can be summarized as: limitation of the pressure created by wages and social burdens, through tax reduction, deregulation, rigorous fiscal policies, and labour flexibility. It is a true subordination of politics to economy in which markets are presented as independent entities having decision-making power and where the financial dimension of the economy often prevails over production. In this way, the responsibilities for the choices are de-personalized. Generalized outcomes, although in different proportions, are the decrease of the purchasing power of wages, mass unemployment (especially for young people), precariousness of work relationships. I believe that it is from here that we must begin to understand the depth of the problems that, today, lie beneath the relationship between rulers and ruled, and, more generally, the role of politics and its relationship with ethics. The shift from a condition of social security to one of insecurity is

deeply affecting the way in which significant parts of society recognize themselves not only of traditionally vulnerable sectors, but of the vast majority of the middle class. In the life experience and, above all, in the collective consciousness the expectation is to live in permanent insecurity, which creates mistrust in the ability to handle the present and planning the future in a positive way. Moreover, a result of unemployment and precarious work relationships, besides eroding the reasons for the forms of collective organization of defense of the wage earners (the lack of planning and organization of trade unions is evident) is the growth of disparities and competition among equals that emerged in the late nineties of the last century and increased in the last fifteen years.[41]

The predominant model that the collective consciousness projects over the future is that of telematic work online where individuals or very narrow groups directly manage production, its quality and negotiate working and salary conditions. In this biographic model, to say it with Beck, each one, individually, is confronted with and has to deal with the risks of a career path characterized by the discontinuity in the required performance, in the type of contracts and also in the profession.[42] Some believe that the self-employed worker is a great opportunity for affirming skills and merit, an expression of everyone's freedom in the free market. Others have stressed that workers are, in fact, obliged to be free and in ruthless competition among themselves with the threatening risk of unemployment. I think it can be realistically stated that, in the face of the undeniable success of some, there

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[41] See J. P. Fitoussi e P. Rosanvallon, *Le nouvel âge des inégalités* (Paris: Editions du Seuil 1997).
[42] See U. Beck, *Risikogesellschaft: auf dem Weg in eine andere Moderne* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp 1986), pp. 205-219.

are the difficulties of many, with their frustration of feeling unable to influence reality, unheard regarding their needs, victims of economic and political dynamics for which they pay the costs without seeing any possibility of compensation. The fact is that politics has not been able to create real conditions for equal opportunities as a credible response to the crisis of social protection.[43] The lack of prospects and the conviction of being victims of injustices create, historically, rage and resentment with the resulting discovery of responsible persons and scapegoats at the individual and collective level.[44] These may be, from time to time, politicians (commonly referred to as one category considered as a privileged caste) or vulnerable persons, such as migrants, with the request of repressive policies that echo those on the vagrancy of the 17th and 18th centuries.

Anger and resentment, especially of young people, are found in ICTs, particularly in social networks, a privileged tool for expressing discomfort and, sometimes, organizing the protest. The idea of those who support the democratic potential of the web is to give voice to the citizens and to allow civil society self-government by replacing a representative system dominated by political parties reduced to political committees and by a caste of politics professionals who, without distinction of ideal or membership, act in their exclusive interest. The novelty is that all can have access to events without filters and mediations and can also make their views known and communicate with the others (whom, for the most part, they do not know personally). It is a more participative and diversified flow of information and opinions than the one we have known so far, but it is also much

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[43] Protections like that of family (most of all) or groups people belong to or get in touch with become relevant again.
[44] See P. Ansart (ed.), *Le ressentiment* (Bruxelles: Bruyant, 2002).

more partisan. Moreover, a characteristic of digital natives is the tendency not to distinguish between official news of agencies, newspapers, television (for which professionals assume responsibility) and those produced by their own fellows[45] which are given greater credit as they are not the expression of power groups or economic lobbies.[46] The social and political effects of the web are being debated, but I think it is important to take the conclusion, which I think it is still valid, to which *Italty Watch* came in 2011: considering the entrance of the majority of the population in the digital society, the cultural and press divide increases. The proliferation of messages, the hybridization of languages create serious problems of quality and independence of information in the web since "in the world of reality shows, it becomes increasingly difficult to understand the border between truth and fiction".[47] It is the "society of inexperience" in which

[45] See M. Dassù, *Media 2.0, Potere e libertà*, in *Aspenia* (Milano: Gruppo 24 ore 2011) p. 6.

[46] According to the 9th Censis/UCSI Report on Communication regarding Media Reputation, 76.9% of Italians agree that the internet is a powerful tool for democracy, allowing everyone to express themselves freely, while TV is at the last spot in the ranking of reputation, see Censis/Ucsi, *Nono rapporto sulla comunicazione. I media personali nell'era digitale* (Milano: Franco Angeli Editore, 2011). The 49th Censis Report on the Social Situation of the Country, published in 2015, points out that, for the Italians, the media that have increased their credibility in recent years have been the new media: for 33.6% social networks, 31.5% all TV news, 22.2% and 22% respectively online newspapers and other information websites. What is the credibility of an information medium based on? For Italians, credibility is based primarily on clear and understandable language, appreciated by 43.8% of the population. Independence from power (36.1%) and professionalism (32.8%) follow. The recipe for credibility is complemented by other key ingredients: objective adherence to the facts (31.7%) and the speed of news updates (31.1%).

[47] M. Valerii, *Italy Watch*, in *Aspenia*, p. 10.

everything is present, we assume that we know events, have culture and critical skills without experience, study, reflection.[48]

Whatever the judgment on the impact of ICT and on the issues they pose, it should be kept in mind that the opportunities offered by web 2.0 and 3.0[49] allow the creation of new social organizations characterized by modes and forms of communication deeply different from an alternative to the traditional ones.

The growth of social insecurity,[50] caused by the economic crisis and the crisis of traditional welfare, and of inequalities perceived as profoundly unfair and generated by incapable, corrupt politicians, enslaved by so-called strong powers, have found broad expression on the web, helping to determine, above all, but not only, among young people, a new type of citizen insecure and demanding at the same time. Unsure about his future, demanding as he claims, from those who govern, civil and social protection based on knowledge, conceptual schemes, etc. they learned, to a great extent, through the web and sometimes convinced that the "web government" should replace, being more honest effective and efficient, the parties system and the representative democracy.

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[48] See *ibid.*, p. 25.

[49] With Web 2.0 I mean a Web in which users participate and interactive. The user can interact with the Web, for example, through blogs, chats, forums, wikis or platforms such as come Flickr, YouTube. Web 3.0 seems today to embody the possibility of a reinforcement and further extension of the Web's interactivity that allows the development of a *social reference* whose *feedback* effect on the Web generates forms of auto-organization and the creation of telematics communities.

[50] See R. Castel, *La montée des incertitudes. Travail, protections, statut de l'individu* (Paris: Points 2013).

IV
Good government or government of good?

In the face of the demand for security and morality, government action in many Western countries shows slowness and difficulty in responding to emergencies. The personalization and

spectacularization of politics, the identification of parties with individual characters to which they link their consensus and their fate, cannot compensate the gap between electoral programs and real capability to govern. TV talk shows and, even more so today, the use of ICT accentuate the possibility of direct and immediate contact between governors and governed by giving, moreover, the illusion of a relationship that is capable of overcoming the limits of the language of politics and of the so-called political correctness. The show-State, essentially based on the visual image, tends to be replaced by the show of a simplified and simplifying language, but a one that is also able to impress with its immediacy and, above all, to support frustration and rage. In the face of the still undeniable personalization of politics, made more evident by the overwhelming role assumed by the executive, whose weaknesses and risks are underlined by Rosanvallon,[51] it must be taken into account how many political leaders, through the use of social networks, are not only trying to propose themselves as "close" to the citizens, but also as their spokesman. The attempt to gain consent, in the immediate future, thus brings into play the mediation and synthesis function of political decision-making. Nevertheless, the degree of credibility of politics is so low[52] that ethical requirements, which are pre-political, end

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[51] See P. Ronsavallon, *Le bon gouvernement*, pp. 15–16.
[52] The report Italians-State 2016, made by *Demos*, shows how the confidence in political institutions (communes, regions, EU, State, President of the Republic)

up being considered as a feature of political activity. In other words, it is significant that telling the truth, integrity, etc. are considered political "virtues" on which to establish a society of equals.[53]

A vision that, as Rousseau wished, recomposes the modern fracture between man and citizen and makes congruent ethics and politics. The task of the latter, then, is not to ensure welfare conditions or everyone's right to pursue happiness, but to build a community committed to promoting the virtues and morals of its members. For this reason man and citizen join together in a vision of democracy in which he does not only emanate laws but applies them without any delegation. The people are the only subject that, together, is the depositary of sovereignty and exercises it. It follows that if man and citizen are fully identified, what must be pursued is not good government, but the government of good that educates on civic virtues. The interpretation of it given by Robespierre is well known[54]: the

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decreased from 41% in 2005 to 26% in 2016, while there is a strengthening of the participation to Internet-based political discussions that go from 14% in 2015 to 24% in 2016. Eurobarometer 2017 has variable data on the various items and for individual States. European citizens show dissatisfaction with the state of democracy in the EU, with 43% of respondents satisfied and 47% of dissatisfied. The results vary from country to country, for example in Greece only 20% express satisfaction. Europeans are also concerned about social inequalities. Overall, many people think that the Union is heading in the wrong direction, although the percentage is decreasing compared to last year (from 54% in September 2016 to 50% in March 2017).

[53] See P. Ronsavallon, *Le bon gouvernement*, p. 392

[54] See M. Robespierre, *Discours sur les principes de morale politique qui doivent guider la Convention*, in *Œuvres de Maximilien Robespierre* (Paris: Sociétè des études robespierristes 1961–1967, vol. X, pp. 350–366: 351); trans. R. Bienvenu in *The Ninth of Thermidor* (New York: Oxford University Press 1970, p. 33).

purpose a government must tend to is "the peaceful enjoyment of liberty and equality; the reign of that eternal justice whose laws have been inscribed, not in marble and stone, but in the hearts of all men […]. We seek an order of things in which all the base and cruel passions are enchained, all the beneficent and generous passions are awakened by the laws; In our land we want to substitute morality for egotism, integrity for formal codes of honor, principles for customs, a sense of duty for one of mere propriety, the rule of reason for the tyranny of fashion, scorn of vice for scorn of the unlucky; self-respect for insolence, grandeur of soul for vanity".[55] Therefore, public officials and rulers must be controlled by the people, judged at the end of their mandate and punished if they do not act according to virtue.[56] We know the dramatic results of this vision. Nobody today refers to Robespierre as his ideal reference, unlike Rousseau, who was the philosopher he drew inspiration from.[57] Therefore, I believe that the ideas of general will, sovereignty, citizenship of the philosopher from Geneva cannot, so to speak, be taken "lightly". The Rousseauvian individual is, in fact, the total citizen[58] "called to participate from morning to evening to exercise his [...] duties.

[55] *Ibid.*

[56] *Ibid.*

[57] See *ibid.*, M. Robespierre, *Discours sur la constitution*, vol IX, pp. 495-508.

[58] See R. Dahrendorf, *Cittadini e partecipazione: al di là della democrazia rappresentativa?*, in G. Sartori and R. Dahrendorf, *Il cittadino totale. Partecipazione, eguaglianza e libertà nelle democrazie d'oggi* (Torino: Centro di Ricerca e Documentazione Luigi Einaudi, *Quaderni di Biblioteca della libertà*, n. 3, 1977), pp. 33-59.

And the total citizen is nothing, at a closer look, but the other face not less threatening of the total state".[59]

The idea that direct democracy, imperative mandate, judiciary control but also popular one, the reference to general will as a source of legitimization of government action can be the basis for the (first of all moral) regeneration of politics questions the social consciousness which is prevalent in Western modernity by identifying the notion of good government with that of government of the good.

Based on the definition given by C. Taylor,[60] social consciousness has to do with the ways in which individuals imagine their social existence, how their existences relate to those of others, how they structure their relationships, the expectations that are normally met, and the deepest notions and normative images on which these expectations are based. In addition, social consciousness is a common knowledge that makes common practices and a widely shared sense of legitimacy possible.

If, as C. Taylor affirms, and as I think we can agree with, the ethical and political conceptions of Grotius and Locke constitute the theoretical background around which the modern social consciousness prevailing in the West was formed,[61] it is characterized by the secularized vision of society, the predominance of the centrality of the individual, the distinction between the political and the private sphere, the acceptance of the inevitability of competition in the market and of the conflict

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[59] N. Bobbio, *Il futuro della democrazia* (Milano: RCS 2010), p. 41, trans. Roger Griffin, *The Future of Democracy: A Defense of the Rules of the Game*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota press, 1987).
[60] See C. Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham - London: Duke University Press 2004), p. 23.
[61] See *ibid.*, pp. 3- 22.

between different concepts of good life. In *Prolegomena al De jure belli ac pacis*, Grotius highlights how the rationality of law makes it autonomous both from human arbitrariness and from faith. The spheres of law, morality and faith are therefore to be regarded as autonomous.[62] Locke, in turn, believes that Political Society (Body Politic) is a company of men whose purpose is exclusively to preserve and promote the civil goods.[63] The task of the parliament is to legislate in this sense, the task of the civil magistrate is not to affirm morality, but to ensure compliance with the laws. Therefore, the State must be neutral with respect to the controversial concepts of good life.[64] In the social consciousness that is affirmed in Western modernity only a civil society governed according to the principle of trust delegation and where there is a functional distinction of powers provides the most appropriate conditions for everybody to fully express their abilities. In a society founded on the, necessarily unstable, balance between cooperation and conflict (both in the economic field and in terms of religious conceptions and the ones concerning good life), the maintenance of social peace and, together, the possibility for everyone to achieve economic success and to profess and

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[62] See H. Grotius, *De jure belli ac pacis libri tres. Prolegomena* (Oxford: Claredon Press 1925), § 9, p.13.

[63] See J. Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. M. Montuori (The Hague: Njhoff 1963, p. 15): "The Commonwealth seems to me to be a society of men constituted only for the procuring and advancing of their own civil interests. Civil interests I call life, liberty, health and the indolency of body. And the possession of outward things such as money, lands, houses, furniture and the like".

[64] See *ibid.*, pp. 67-71.

practice their own vision of good, constitute the very reasons for the existence of that society.[65]

That is why, in the scope of economy, civil government must guarantee freedom of enterprise and competition against monopolies, in the scope of ethics, i.e. visions of good, must be politically neutral if they are not a threat to social peace, and adopt tolerance policies. The Greek *polis* and the Roman *respublica* are not, therefore, models of societies to take as a model. Indeed, in the social consciousness that is determined by taking as a background the reports of Grotius and Locke, the space reserved to the private and to non-political social relations is too relevant.[66]

V
E-democracy as a new frontier for direct democracy?

The questioning of the social consciousness prevalent in Western modernity and of political institutions that are its expression could be justified by the fact that we have entered into a new reality: digital society. Therefore, if the model of direct democracy of derived from Rousseau and the reference to *agora* can be appealing, actually the direct democracy that is now taken as a reference is e-democracy. To sum up, ICTs and, in particular, social networks would make it different from that of the ancients

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[65] See *ibid.*, pp. 73-97. See J. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government,* in *The Works of J. Locke*, § 149, pp. 426-427.

[66] In this view it is interesting the new meaning that Locke gives to the term 'civility' that becomes similar to 'politeness', i.e., courtesy, good manners, kindness. See L. Smith Pangle and T. L. Pangle, *The Learning of Liberty* (Lawrence: Kansas University Press 1993), pp. 69-70; B. Casalini, *Nei limiti del compasso* (Milano: Mimesis 2002), pp. 37-38; F. Manti, *Kultur, Zivilisation, Decivilisation. L'immaginario sociale moderno di fronte alle sfide della globalizzazione* (Genova: Name 2008), pp. 18 -21.

and in line with our time direct democracy that, in its classical form, would not in fact be appropriate. Actually, according to the supporters of e-democracy as an alternative model to representative democracy, the latter represents a contingent response due to the inability to participate directly (at that time it meant to be physically present) at parliamentary meetings. The web, instead, makes technically possible remote synchronous communication and, with it, a model of democracy that can disregard trust delegation and the mediation and synthesis functions that parties and parliaments perform in representative democracy. Since, still according to the most convinced supporters of e-democracy, the web would be, in itself, democratic, direct democracy would live again in a new form, purified by the limits of the ancient one which belonged to an elitist and slavery-supporting society, in the *cyberagoras*. Citizens would be free from the rules of the market economy as well as the ones of the State.[67]

The blog would inaugurate the new era of "disintermediation" by creating a virtual public space open to everyone and where everyone can freely discuss:[68] electors and elected get confused in the electronic parliament.[69] However, it has to be emphasized how the interventions in the web in support of direct democracy often express other needs that are related to what has been said about the insecurity and the crisis of the welfare state: good government, transparency in the use of resources, tax equity, reductions or absence of privileges (always of so-called politicians almost never of other categories such as magistrates, senior

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[67] See P. Becchi, *Ciberspazio e democrazia. Come la rete sta cambiando il mondo*, in *e-democracy?*, a cura di F. Chiarenza, *Paradoxa*, VII, 3, luglio-settembre, p. 72.
[68] See *ibid.*, p. 74.
[69] See *ibid.*, p. 79.

officials and Public Administration officials, etc.). The request for participation in political deliberation is limited, and even more so, are the identification and discussion of project proposals. In fact, the majority of those who intervene, besides the sometimes improper manners and the expression of anger, mistrust, helplessness, ask to be (well) governed. Hence the (ingenuous) consensus that proposals such as the introduction of imperative mandate receive (many intend such proposals as a way of controlling the acting of the representatives). Hence, also, the everlasting "myth" of the simple citizen representative as the citizens' "spokesperson". All this, however, has little to do with the real direct democracy.

As Bobbio points out, it implies that the individual participates personally in the deliberation that concerns him, i.e., it is necessary that there is no intermediary between the deliberative individuals and the deliberation. The delegate or spokesman, though revocable and subject to imperative mandate, is an intermediary. First of all because, although he has to comply with the instructions received from the base, he has in fact some freedom of movement and if, together with him, this freedom wasn't also given to all the others who have to come to a collective deliberation, the latter would be impossible. Secondly, because he cannot be revoked at any time and replaced with another without the risk of paralyzing the negotiation.[70] In fact, the processes of building consensus and of political deliberation that are proposed by the supporters of the integral e-democracy appear , nowadays, reserved for an elite, very unclear,[71] and, in

[70] See N. Bobbio, *Il futuro della democrazia*, p. 51.
[71] See E. Morozov, *The Net Delusion. The Dark Side of Internet* Freedom (New York: Public Affairs 2011), pp. 275-276, 288-298, 314-315, 319-320; M. L Best and K. W. Wade. *The Internet and Democracy: Global Catalystor Democratic Dud?*, in

some respects, similar to the ones of the Athenian "model". Rarely in the agora, there were three thousand participating people, while the seats available were for 25,000 people standing and 18,000 seated, and there was actually a small number of people involved, and the majority was exposed to the conditioning of rhetoric of demagogues. Even the participants in the *cyberagoras* (or a pseudo one) are a small minority[72] and high is the risk of conditioning of the demagogue in charge.

Another aspect, not to be underestimated, is what Farrel calls the dilemma of web democracy. Those who use it to affirm direct democracy also point out that they are not interested in persuading other people, but in organizing political actions. "Left wing blogs readers do not read right wing blogs and vice versa."[73] Therefore we have, on the one hand democracy that should favor an exchange between different opinions, on the other hand active political participation that refuses to confront those with different opinions since that is not considered possible in advance. It is no coincidence that the politics based on dialogue and discourse, that the supporters of direct democracy through virtual agoras wish for, does not have the purpose of confronting, mediating and synthesizing between different orientations present in civil society, but sees as protagonists movements capable of expressing a "molecular politics "and whose purpose is not to

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Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society 30, n. 4, August 2009, pp. 255-271; F. Chiusi, *Dittature dell'istantaneo* (Torino: Codice Edizioni 2014); F. Chiusi, *Critica della democrazia digitale. La politica 2.0 alla prova dei fatti* (Torino: Codice Edizioni 2014).

[72] The data published by Eurostat for 2012 show that 63% of Italian families use Internet, but 40% of the population has never used. In addition, only 6% creates websites or manages blogs (EU average is 9%), of course not all of them with a political aim.

[73] H. Farrell, *Le conseguenze di Internet per la democrazia*, *Reset*, 20 settembre 2012.

improve politics, but to create something better than politics itself.[74] This "millenarian" vision of the *cyberagora* appears to be illusory in the state of facts. In any case, it has to deal with the fact that Becchi himself points out, that control over the network by large economic groups has strengthened and they are now the intermediaries of new information and cultural production, while surfing on the web is less free than it seems and paths are getting more and more uniform.[75] Not only that, the risks that web 3.0 is creating are also to be underlined regarding the choices made and the autonomous ability to give reasons for it. Indeed, instead of the individual who, by comparing himself with others, conducts experiences and creates content that remains online, "... there is the nomadic individual, and still only with his tablet, an instrument he uses, but of which he has by now reduced, lucidly, the ability to involve him in ever-new relationships".[76] Such an individual, especially if uncertain and demanding, not only has serious difficulties in managing relationships with those who express different views and opinions but is exposed to risks of instrumentalization both in terms of his private life and in terms of the formation of consensus and of political commitment".[77]

[74] See P. Becchi, *Ciberspazio e democrazia*, p. 82.
[75] See *ibid.*, and P. Ronsavallon, *Le bon gouvernement*, p. 279.
[76] A. Fabris, *Etica e Internet*, in A. Fabris (ed.), *Guida alle etiche della comunicazione*, Nuova Edizione (Pisa: ETS 2011), p. 99.
[77] See F. Manti, "L'utopia della ciberagorà. Problematicità, limiti, possibilità della democrazia digitale", in *Free Speech, meriti, limiti, dilemmi, Biblioteca della Libertà,* IX, No. 211, September–December 2014, pp. 75-76.

VI
Participatory democracy: care and social partnership

For the supporters of representative democracy, trust delegation (without imperative mandate), the existence of party forms, as representative of the pluralism and complexity that characterize our society, are indispensable. In any case, on the one hand a real direct democracy today is not plausible even for structural and operational reasons, on the other, the model of the *cyberagoras* appears utopian and, together, dangerous, exposed to demagogic instrumentalization and tyranny of majority (of those involved in platforms, blogs, meetups, other social networks, etc.). Is it really possible to exercise citizenship beyond sovereignty for one day (that of elections)?[78] Is this exercise compatible with representative democracy? As it has been said, Constant believes that a combination of direct democracy and representative democracy must be reached to allow citizens not only a function of control and surveillance, but also so that they are able to compete with the exercise of power. I think this is a very topical point of view for at least two reasons. 1. It empowers, through a request for proactive participation and not just criticism and opposition, the citizens making them less uncertain and isolated, enabling them to "involve" their own needs and to compare proposals and projects.[79] 2. It provides the opportunity to use ICT as a means of comparison in the perspective of cooperative resolution of social and political problems.

If the social consciousness we inherited from Western modernity was based on a moral background view that allowed philosophers such as Grotius and Locke to lay the foundations

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[78] See P. Ronsavallon, *Le bon gouvernement*, p. 384.
[79] See *ibid.*, p. 299.

for what has become, over time, liberal-democracy, the empowerment of the citizen so that he is effectively competent on the ethical and political level implies an update. Such an update should be caused by a context in which it would be premature to think of good government as a national matter and as a matter of moralization of politics through instruments of control of it. In an increasingly globalized world, the combination of direct democracy and representative democracy leads to an idea of glocal participatory democracy, capable of dealing with local problems and emergencies related to individuals or groups, also in a global perspective. As for (2), participatory democracy does not mean that citizens vote at the same time on other people's proposals (as would be the case of direct democracy), but in encouraging the elaboration of projects, possibly identifying priorities based on availability to cooperative confrontation and co-responsibility between those who govern at different levels, public officials and citizens. The conscious use of ICT can be an important tool for making citizens' participation possible by overcoming, at least in part, difficulties related to space and time typical of political communication but also of accountability of local governments and administrations.

For this reason, the assumption of moral responsibility by rulers and ruled is possible by thinking of a moral order based on the general principle of care that can be expressed as follows: *we should take care of ourselves, of others, of what surrounds us and of the ecosystem in which we live.*[80] As I will try to demonstrate, this principle can be the reference for the building of institutions and for the taking of political and social decisions from local government to international relations. At the same time, the

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[80] Among "the others" I think that also non-human animals deserve moral consideration.

permanence of a representative system, at various levels, capable of listening to needs and operating political synthesis by identifying priorities, assuming the responsibility of them and accounting for them, constitutes an antidote to the total citizen and total state evoked by Bobbio. Care is[81], in fact, practicable, as a political ideal, only in the context of liberal, pluralistic and democratic institutions. It concerns not only individual morality, but also politics: taking care, describes the qualities necessary for living as citizens of a liberal, democratic and pluralistic society, and together it opens new prospects for democracies. Therefore, good governance is only practicable if responsibility for care is placed at the center of political programs and if citizenship is expressed in taking care, in a cooperative way, of democracy and its institutions,[82] also assuming responsibility towards the future generations.

The most appropriate model for translating into effective practice of relationship between rulers and ruled implied in care as a political ideal (taking inspiration from Austrian experience and adapting it) seems to be that of social partnership,[83] that is, a system of cooperation between self-organized associations representing citizens, and the national and local government. Laws do not rule the Austrian social partnership system. The essence of partnership is the commitment of the most representative groups of interest to pursue a common long-term social and economic policy and their shared conviction that these

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[81] For an analysis of the phases in which the care takes place, see J. Tronto, *Caring Democracy. Markets, Equality, and Justice*, (New York: New York University Press 2013), p. 22.

[82] See *ibid.*, Preface, p. X, where Tronto states: "what it means to be a citizen in a democracy is to care for citizens and to care for democracy itself. I call this practice 'caring with'".

[83] *Sozialpartnerschaft*,

goals can be better achieved through a debate oriented towards cooperation and coordinate action rather than through conflict. This does not imply that the existence of conflicting needs and interests is denied, but that a method of comparison is adopted which enhances cooperation with respect to finding solutions negotiated in the interests of all parties. Social partnership is characterized by the desire to take into account, in the negotiation process and in the decision-making, the general interests of society. In the Austrian experience, for example, through their profound involvement, interest groups have developed a strong sense of responsibility in the awareness that decisions do not only affect their members, but also the economy and society as a whole. In this respect, social stability is also considered as a competitive asset in the international market. It must not be omitted, however, that in Austria, from the eighties and nineties of the last century, social partnership has experienced a downsizing which can be related to two concomitant factors: the new economic conditions that result from globalization and a progressive loss of recognition of the traditional representations of the social parts.

It remains, however, operative, since: "While it is safe to argue that the Austrian social partnership model had reached its high point in the 1960s and 1970s, the past decade has shown that the social partners can still wield significant influence in times of economic crises, adapting to changes in the social, political, and economic context".[84] The Austrian model can be a reference point, above all, for the principles and practices that characterize it, with respect to a participatory democracy. The evident limits, in the face of the globalization processes, lead to develop the

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[84] *The Austrian Way*, http://www.austrianinformation.org/winter-2015-16/the-austrian-way.

model in glocal terms. At a global level, it appears as necessary to think of a system of international relations that could be defined as multistakeholder, i.e. one that involves in the planning and decision-making processes on issues that are important and relevant to them not only the national states, but also representations of international and regional organizations, NGOs, cultural institutions, enterprises, trade unions.[85] At the local level, partnership implies ways of involving citizens and civil society organizations in territorial planning. I think this is the most propitious and immediately practicable ground for building a profitable relationship between citizens and local political representatives.

It has been said earlier that Constant deemed it necessary to give value to the municipalities and, together, to ensure some form of direct citizen participation in local government. Participatory democracy, at the local level, responds to the citizens' necessity to be heard for the needs they express and to be recognized as stakeholders in decision-making processes. The transparency of the procedures, the accountability and the ability to implement the deliberations do not therefore constitute petitions of principle, but principles that work in the concrete action of local government and are placed as foundation of the trust relationship between governors and governed. A local social partnership system also makes the decision-making process the result of a knowledge path, of the building of a common language, of recognition among partners, and the assumption of co-responsibility regarding the choices made, their effectiveness and efficiency. In this way, direct democracy can be combined with the representative one by focusing on the care of the

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[85] See S. Maffettone, *La pensabilità del mondo* (Milano: Il Saggiatore 2006), pp. 38-47; F. Manti, *Kultur, Zivilisation, Decivilisation,* op. cit,, pp. 98-100.

environment, of the community, and of the local institutions. The administrators get consent and are elected on the basis of programmatic commitments that they take as their responsibility to implement, for which they commit themselves to account towards the citizens. The latter exercise their co-responsibility in acquiring knowledge about the administration, in making proposals and in exercising control over the timing and modalities of implementation of what is stated in the Administration's program and of the outcome of the consultation between the parties.

VII
A tool for local social partnership: participatory budgeting

The instrument that seems most useful to develop social partnership at the local level and co-responsibility between administrators and citizens is participatory budgeting. This is an instrument that, although born in Porto Alegre in 1989, still has a rather limited spread, probably because it implies a deep review of the way in which the relationship between administrators, officials of local authorities and citizens is understood. In addition, its elaboration and effective implementation imply project commitment, assumption of responsibility, negotiation skills, and availability to accountability from all the stakeholders. Participatory budgeting is, to sum up, an instrument to promote a real opening up of local authorities to direct citizen participation in territorial planning and decision-making on goals and the distribution of public investment, overcoming the traditional forms of consultation. This is not the place to describe in detail the steps needed to develop and manage a participatory budgeting. Based on the experience of Porto Alegre and other realities that, in various countries, have adopted this budgeting, the following moments can be identified.

1. Citizens are invited to participate in public neighbourhood district assemblies to define needs and priority. 2. Thematic commissions are set up, composed of significant representatives of civil society (trade unionists, entrepreneurs, students, members of associations, etc.) in order to add to the point of view expressed by the district assemblies another one that is able to face the general problems of the city (economic development, employment, education, etc.). These working groups also define their priorities. Representatives of the administration and municipal officials attend meetings with the task of providing the necessary technical and financial information. 3. A program cabinet is set up which, taking into account the indications which emerged from the assemblies and the thematic commission, elaborates the program and defines its budget. 4. The program and the budget are subject to further discussion and verification at the assemblies and thematic groups. 5. Beginning of the audit work carried out by the above-mentioned partnership organizations on the implementation of the program and the use of the budget while verifying at the same time how much of what was foreseen in the budget of the previous year was actually carried out. It should be emphasized that the municipal administration is present at all stages and how it continues to maintain, entirely, the deliberative responsibility. In this way, not only there is not a, impossible anyway, replacement of direct democracy with the representative one, but a participatory democracy system that enhances the function of both. The municipal administration intervenes in order to ensure that the quality of essential services is not affected by an excessive spending target on sectors that most closely match the expectations of the assemblies. As for the choice of priorities, it is

possible to proceed, as is the case in Porto Alegre, on the basis of a thoughtful voting system that takes into account various factors such as the number of residents, the lack of services, etc.[86]

Drawing up the participatory budgeting is therefore the outcome of a process that, in addition to requiring a responsible and aware approach to local governance by all the stakeholders through social partnership, promotes accountability and trust relationship between citizens and public administrators. It should also be kept in mind that participatory budgeting is the expression of a specific context and, therefore, there are no standard models valid in any situation. However, there are some conditions for the partnership to be effective and the building process of the participatory budgeting is successful: municipal administrations should not do a selective listening to the projects and reports that emerge from the consultations. There should not be privileged pressure lobbies; a spending budget must be set aside for the implementation of what is foreseen in the participatory budgeting.[87] Eventually, starting from the experience of drafting participatory budgets and considering the development of web 2.0 and 3.0, the question remains: can ICT favour and speed up social partnership processes? If e-democracy cannot be considered as a substitute for representative democracy, can it be a support to social partnership and participatory democracy?

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[86] For a more in depth description of the experience of Porto Alegre, see T. Genro and U. De Souza, *Orçamento partecipativo: a experiência de Porto Alegre* (São Paulo: Fundação Perseu Abramo 1997).
[87] See, C. Rogate, T. Tarquini, *Fiducia e responsabilità nel governo dell'ente pubblico* (Santarcangelo di Romagna: Maggioli Editore 2008), pp. 332-337.

I think it is possible to give a positive answer to both questions, provided that e-democracy is conceived as a form of citizen participation in government and public administration through the use of ICT that implies practices of e-government and e-governance. In particular: 1. the direct participation of citizens, individually or through associations, in the formulation of proposals and projects concerning the administration of the territory. 2. The consultation of citizens according certain and shared rules. 3. The access of citizens and associations to documents that allow them to verify, evaluate and formulate possible proposals regarding legislative and administrative procedures, allocation of resources, governance in and of the public administration. In conclusion, the social partnership model, which I have briefly outlined, is immediately practicable at local level, as exemplified by the building process of a participatory budget. At the same time, at the method level, it can be a point of reference for how citizens are involved, both in the national perspective and that of a new global governance.

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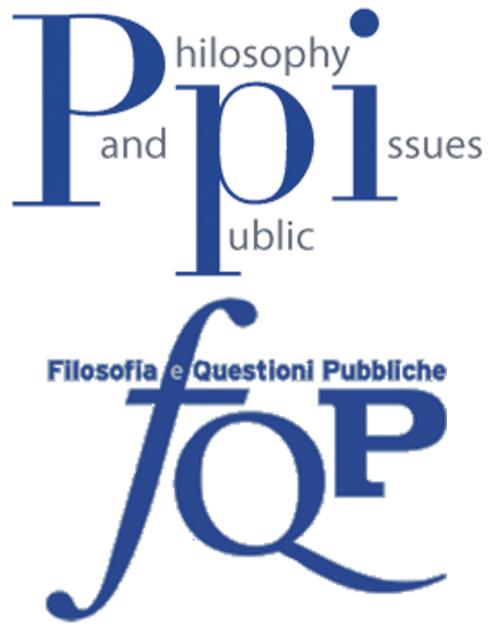
GOOD GOVERNMENT AND PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY.

A MODEL OF SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP

BY

FRANCO MANTI

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