'ARENDTIAN SARDINES' A failed attempt at participatory democracy

Gabriele Parrino

Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa – Italy

Introduction

So On the afternoon of November 14th, 2019, an unprecedented event occurred in the Italian city of Bologna. Against the discriminatory policies of former Interior Minister Matteo Salvini, four very different people, represented by Mattia Santori, began to sing in Piazza Maggiore. Within a few hours, this single chant became a call that grew into a crowd of six thousand people. In a couple of days, the new phenomenon of the 6000Sardines spread throughout the country. Journalists across Italy described it as a "joyful," "hopeful," and communal event "moved by feelings of humanity" (Pucciarelli et al., 2019).

It is no coincidence that in the same period Adriana Cavarero, using Arendt's idea of natality, defined democracy as a 'surging' sphere based on the exaltation of the plural character of action and as a space characterized by its detachment from fixed institutions. The 6000Sardines are a perfect example of this Arendtian paradigm. A group of young people singing and dancing together, without any political affiliation, inherently anti-fascist,[1] free to exist as a plurality that thrives on the sheer power of their physical presence in the streets, animated by a simple desire for public happiness.[2]

What I will present in this brief article is that the nascent democracy of these 'Arendtian sardines' tragically failed to take the necessary step of organizing its spontaneity,[3] and because of their anti-institutional choices, it lost its initiative power. In the first two parts of the paper, I want to offer a phenomenological description of the 6000Sardines showing the similarities of their acting with the Arendtian conception of politics and with the surging character of democracy as described in Adriana Cavarero's late work. The last and most theoretical section, however, will be focused on the post-event situation of the Italian movement that will be outlined as an unsuccessful attempt at participatory politics due to a lack of constituency. Taking seriously the Arendtian and Roman notion of authority and the necessary grounding of a new body politic that comes with it, in the conclusive part of the work I will define democracy as an irreducible tension

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1 See *Il Manifesto dei valori delle 6000Sardine* (https://www.6000sardine.it/manifesto2020/).

2 Cf. Guaraldo, Olivia, *Public Happiness: re-visiting an Arendtian Hypothesis*, «*Philosophy Today*», No. 62 (2), 2018: 395-416.

3 Cf. Flores D'Arcais, Paolo, *Troppe sardine piacciono a troppi?*, «*Micromega.net*», 3 Dicembre 2019 (https://archivio.micromega.net/troppe-sardine-piacciono-a-troppi).

between the plural act of 'manyness' which is constitutively dynamic and potentially limitless, and the internal bonds that any founding act presupposes.[4] This internal duality, which represents the circular nature of the political between power and authority,[5] allows power to flourish in a founded order that does not suppress freedom, but it also never leaves action to run out in an endless anarchic process, since we know, thanks to the lesson of the 6000Sardines, that any democratic space of appearance cannot survive without the institution of its own liberty.

1. The Ichthyic Revolution: the birth of the 6000Sardines Movement

Collective political action, however spontaneous, begins when opinions are shared through reflection and dialogue. On this note, a few days before the 6000Sardines' conquered all the Italian squares from Lombardy to Sicily, the founders of the movement were reflecting on the urgent worries of their daily lives at that time. As they tell us in their story, it is somewhat surprising that they decided to take a stance against Italian politics after a long talk around a kitchen table eating pasta.[6] Facing one another, they exchanged mutual concerns, thoughts and judgments that compelled them to find a critical response to the anti-democratic situation that was spreading in Italy in the shape of racist, homophobic, xenophobic, and overall fascist propaganda. At the end of 2019, Italy's political situation was very different than today: the pandemic crisis was not even in sight, the right-wing government – famously called 'Conte I' – faced its demise and a more moderate one, the 'Conte II', began its legislation.

Indeed, in the period before the international storm of COVID-19, one of the main issues of Italian politics were the anti-immigrant policies of the former Interior Minister Matteo Salvini. During 'Conte I', and especially after the Sea Watch case,[7] Salvini's anti-immigrant rhetoric and policies intensified; he attempted a forceful move aimed at depriving migrants of any chance of landing on Italian shores with an anti-constitutional bill. A ministerial proposal that would have left numerous refugees in their future graveyard, the Mediterranean Sea. It was his desire to see Italy turned into a uniformed fortress that would refuse to guarantee the fundamental right to asylum to anyone that was marked as 'undesirable'; as parasite for the internal economy and as a potential harm to the 'glorious' Italian identity.

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4 Cf. Ricœur, Paul, *Power and Violence*, «Theory, Culture & Society», Vol. 27(5), 2010: 18-36.

5 Cf. Guaraldo, Olivia, *«La libertà di essere liberi». Circolarità della politica e autonomia della rivoluzione in Hannah Arendt*, in «Filosofia Politica», Il Mulino, Bologna, 2/2018: 285-302; Esposito, Roberto, *L'origine della politica. Hannah Arendt o Simone Weil?*, Donzelli, Roma, 1996; Id, *Istituzione*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2021.

6 "Checked tablecloth, brown and yellow with slim blue stripes. The usual one, soft but thick, used for so many breakfasts, lunches, and dinners. [...] The smells of the pasta just after being taking out of the hot water goes away from the kitchen hood" (Garreffa et al. 2020, 6). The original text is in Italian. From now on, all the following quotes in Italian are translated by me.

7 Cf. Geddes, Andrew and Pettrachin, Andrea, *Italian migration policy and politics: Exacerbating paradoxes*, «Contemporary Italian Politics», Volume 12, 2020 – Issue 2: 227-242.

Nevertheless, Salvini's actions were not new. They followed the long history of the
immigration crisis, which is one of the most debated issues of Italian politics, especially
after the 2011 Arab Spring.[8] What made a significant difference in this case, however, was
that Salvini's decision broke abruptly the long thread of 'quiet politics' – a polite synonym
for lack of real political care – that was looming around the immigration situation. As a
matter of fact, in November 2018, he already was able to get approved the "'Decree-Law
on Immigration and Security'– also known as the 'Salvini decree' [that] among other
things, abolished humanitarian protection status for migrants, reduced barriers to
stripping migrants of Italian citizenship, lengthened the naturalisation process, stopped
asylum seekers from accessing reception centres and introduced a fast-track expulsion
system for 'dangerous' asylum seekers" (Dennison, Geddes 2022, 450).

Even though Salvini's procedures were not thoroughly followed during his time as a
minister – Italian law should guarantee every boat a safe arrival, with the Ministry of
Transport, not the Minister of the Interior, having the final say in matters of
authorization[9] –, his actions were nothing unexpected when center-right governments
rule. Nonetheless, the designed sanctions for NGOs rescue operations after the mentioned
Sea Watch event in June 2019 appeared as a loud anti-humanitarian message that
touched all politically active communities.[10] It was so relevant that it echoed as a clear
ultimatum: either silently follow the right-wing populist crowd that watched a racist and
anti-humanist act unfold before everyone's eyes or understand that it was time to
denounce this gruesome scenario.

Granting that this was not a black or white situation in the Italian debate on
immigration policy, there is to say that this dichotomic position was still strong enough to
affirm that hatred, xenophobia, and racism were generating a general sense of uneasiness
and distress throughout the political scene.[11] And, as a response, Mattia Santori, Andrea
Garreffa, Roberto Morotti and Giulia Trappoloni decided that they could no longer
remain in this state of uncertainty and silence. Around that simple table that nevertheless
"unites and separates people at the same time" (Arendt 1958, 52), they shared their
personal concerns about this humanitarian crisis, and they immediately transformed
them into a political commitment and practical action against the neo-fascist
discriminatory rhetoric of the Italian government.

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8 Cf. Paoletti, Emanuela, *The Arab Spring and the Italian Response to Migration in 2011*, in «Comparative
   Migration Studies», vol. 2, 2014: 127-150.

9 See article-83 of the *Italian Navigation Code*: "Il Ministro dei trasporti e della navigazione può limitare o
   vietare il transito e la sosta di navi mercantili nel mare territoriale, per motivi di ordine pubblico, di sicurezza
   della navigazione e, di concerto con il Ministro dell'ambiente, per motivi di protezione dell'ambiente marino,
   determinando le zone alle quali il divieto si estende".

10 Cf. Berti, Carlo*, Right-wing populism and the criminalization of sea-rescue NGOs: the 'Sea-Watch 3' case in
   Italy, and Matteo Salvini's communication on Facebook*, «Media, Culture & Society», Vol. 43(3), 2020: 532-
   550.

11 Cf. Farro, Antimo Luigi and Maddanu, Simone, *The Rise of Populism and the "School of Sardines"*, in
   Restless Cities on the Edge. Migration, Diasporas and Citizenship. Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2022: 159-
   184.

Namely, this sudden awareness was also triggered by a contingent fact. The Lega, the most important party of the time and the strongest representative of right-wing values, organized an event in Bologna – where the 6000Sardines were born – at the PalaDozza, to announce Lucia Borgonzoni as its candidate for president of Emilia Romagna. The PalaDozza is a famous sport-center that seats 5570 people. The founders of Sardines wanted to do something on the same day that would give everyone the opportunity not only to raise their voices, but also to create a freer political space that would surpass that number. And as it happens, numbers play a very crucial role in the distorted Italian way of making propaganda. In pictures, videos, or reportages, often spammed all over the internet, politicians always claim that Oceanic masses participate in events like the rally in Bologna, when the factual reality often proves the exact opposite: sparse participation and total loss of political experiences.[12]

The Sardines had in mind a different approach. Searching for an immediate dimension that would entice people in action, they publicized their idea in the most widespread place in our democracies today: social networks. Thanks to a Facebook post that said that they will be in Piazza Maggiore "without a flag, without a party, and without causing offense", they launched "the first ichthyic revolution in history" by "having a big party" (Garreffa et al. 2020, 8-9). With no strings attached to a specific policy, all that matters for them was the internal and shared need to express freedom publicly.[13]

This surging and free-spirited revolution began on November 14, 2019, at 8:30 p.m., when the space of the appearance of the 6000Sardines came out. It became quickly an ever-expanding political sphere that included everyone near it. A collective experience produced by the powerful act of the Sardines in peaceful rebellion. In this sense, what motivates an Arendtian understanding of this situation starts to be clearer. It was not an anti-sovereign revolt aimed at the reintroduction of a new form of rule (replacing Salvini with a more progressive leader), but the Sardines were the catalysts of a kind of power "that is realized only where word and deed have not separated, where words are not empty and deeds are not brutal, where words are not used to disguise intentions but to reveal realities, and deeds are not used to hurt and destroy but to establish relations and

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12 It is not very uncommon for the right-wing parties to falsify the numbers of the actual participants of their political rallies, thanks to poorly modified pictures and to a vulgar attack on whoever criticizes their political propaganda approach. As an exemplary case on that, cf. Puente, David, *No! Queste non sono le foto del comizio di Palermo pubblicate da Giorgia Meloni*, Open Online, 22 settembre 2022 (https://www.open.online/2022/09/22/elezioni-politiche-2022-fotomontaggio-giorgia-meloni-palermo-fc/); Mariotti, Claudia et. al, *La polarizzazione politica nel campaigning di Salvini. Il caso delle elezioni regionali del 2020*, in «Comunicazione Politica», 2/2021 (agosto), Il Mulino, Bologna: 199-222; Baldi, Benedetta, *The Strategic Use of Debasing and Vulgar Language in Italy's Contemporary Politics: Beppe Grillo and Matteo Salvini*, in *Debasing Political Rhetoric. The Language of Politics*, Springer, Singapore, 2023: 165-181.

13 The revolutionary act of 'freedom to the sake of being free' is recalled in Hannah Arendt's description on the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 in *The Hungarian Revolution and the Totalitarian Imperialism* that constituted the end of the second edition of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* now published in Arendt, Hannah, *Thinking Without a Banister*, Schocken, New York, 2018: 105-55. This idea of freedom is also described in a 1970's work called *The Freedom to be Free. The Conditions and Meaning of Revolution* that furthered some of her reflection of *On Revolution* now published in *Thinking Without a Banister*, cit., 368-386.

create new realities" (Arendt 1958, 199). Relativized in Salvini's attempt to propose a
more authoritarian State, Italian sovereignty was nevertheless challenged by the Sardines'
"manyness, [...] a multitude whose majesty resided in its very plurality" (Arendt 1963, 93)
that brought again into the world the thriving experience of collective joy and public
connection.

Accordingly, it was as if the 6000Sardines taught an Arendtian lesson in politics to the
Italian population that, in that critical period, was thirsty of fresh and democratic events.
The Sardines created the space that happens "wherever people are together in the way of
speaking and acting" (Arendt 1958, 200): the same circumstances that precede all
institutional forms and have the power to counter them critically. That evening in
Bologna demonstrated that at the heart of their festive political demonstration everyone
was joined in a concerted performance. A performative act in which, even if compacted
into a plurality, every single fish among the many had the chance of displaying its own
'uniqueness' through a reciprocal act of freedom expressed in singing, dancing, and
chanting in the streets. Being a sardine meant that finally the power to oppose an
oppressive and apolitical form of government was regained and it also gave to everyone
the occasion to feel the meaning of public happiness[14] and, for some of them that never
experienced publicity, the very first opportunity to came into the world as political
actors.[15]

In sum, organizing the 6000Sardines movement has revived a buried hope for the
salvation of two important factors that have been lost in the social arena that undermined
the political as such[16]: the rediscovery of the meaning of politics in a post-democratic and
virtual age,[17] and the realization of what can happen when individual subjects actively
participate in a restored and secure public dimension for the sake of their own freedom of
action and speech. But why, after all, choose the sardine as their representative animal?
Are they weak and easy to prey?

> ...yes, the sardine. A small and defenseless fish that is never alone. It moves in shoals,
> a big ensemble of fishes narrowed together that swim compactly, united, which is
> what we aspire to be: a mass of people stronger than a one man ruling that geminates
> hatred and divide. As Erri De Luca reminded us, "the sardines, when they feel some
> tuna under them, create a big balloon and the surface of the water shines with
> sparks". (Garreffa et al., 2020, 8)

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14 "Happiness is, in Arendt's view, the unexpected reward political actors receive when engaging in public
    affairs. Happiness signals that humans need political action in order to feel alive, and at the same time it is
    the reason why they keep embarking on action, in spite of its recurring frustrations" (Guaraldo 2018a, 22).
15 "With word and deed we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is like a second birth, in
    which we confirm and take upon ourselves the naked fact of our original physical appearance" (Arendt 1958,
    176).
16 Cf. Arendt, Hannah, *The Human Condition*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1958: 38-50.
17 Cf. Crouch, Colin *Post-Democracy*, Polity, Cambridge, 2004 and on the disintegration of individuality
    through virtuality see Han, Byung-Chul*, Im Schwarm. Ansichten des Digitalen,* Matthes & Seitz, Berlin,
    2013.

Thanks to this brief description made by the founders themselves, the 'flock of sardines' figures as the most apt metaphor for an Arendtian movement that was able to act and thus to "reach into the extraordinary" (Arendt 1958, 205). They gave an example of what an association of people, harmless in their singularity (if not exactly capable of using violence, which is the main characteristic of loneliness),[18] can do when a one-man rule tries to replace brutality with power. The sardines were a living statement of what power is and of its potentiality. While mainstream politics denied any kind of countermeasure and insisted again on authoritative rule – this happened in the PalaDozza, where everyone was confronted with the reality of an electoral campaign, represented by a Salvini and the Lega, who wanted to impose a leader that would decide the entire destiny of its voters – Mattia Santori and all the other Sardinian founders might have reminded us once again that "power [...] springs between men" (Arendt 1958, 200) and that democracy can only work if this energetic dimension remains at its center. Sadly, relying totally on this unconstrained character, as we will see, tends to obliviate another necessary ontological quality that defines democracy and political participation. If the Sardines' movement really wanted to change the current of the sea of democratic politics, this kind of forgetfulness produced by the eventfulness of their disposition needed a proper relation with an institutional form that never came to be.[19]

2. Sardines, selfish egos and the 'crowd-selfie'. Cavarero's Surging Democracy

Just a month before the birth of the 6000Sardines, in her book *Democrazia Sorgiva* (2019), Adriana Cavarero theorized both a democratic context responsive to the Sardinian event and its counterpart in the negative degeneration of the free political plurality showed in Bologna. Posited against the same antagonist of the Sardines, Matteo Salvini, Cavarero tells us of another kind of human association that defies standard classifications and not only goes directly against the democracy she wishes to outline, but it also jars with the Arendtian structure in which we have tried to frame the 6000Sardines ideal of political participation. Referring to a meeting organized by the Lega in Teramo in January 2019, the Italian philosopher affirms that, during this electoral campaign meeting, all the people that were present, rather than focusing on sharing the concerns proposed by the leader or even feeling some kind of publicness, they were all taken by their cellphones.

For everyone the leader's gravitational point, qualified by its charismatic presence,[20] shifted towards the reflection of a selfie that locked into the screen a portrait of the leader with the person involved. This weird multitude of people – a collection of faces that do not even meet the leader's gaze – has no interest in politics and, looking up only at their cameras, "one hesitates to call it a mass, and there are even good reasons to not call it a crowd" (Cavarero 2021, 91). This 'crowd-selfie', in Cavarero's definition, confronts the

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18 Cf. Arendt, Hannah, *On Violence*, in *Crises of The Republic*, Harcourt and Brace, New York, 1972: 103-198.
19 Cf. Arendt, Hannah, *Thought on Politics and Revolution. A Commentary*, in *Crises of The Republic*, cit., 199-235.
20 Cf. Weber, Max, *Economy and Society*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1922.

spectator with a phenomenon that goes beyond the openness, closedness, or denseness and coherent nature of a crowd, a mass or a genuine plurality. It is strange conglomerate of people that stays together but it is simultaneously separated in atomized singularities. Even metaphors do not work, like the sea remembered by Elias Canetti,[21] and the one thing left is trying to describe its one-of-a-kind qualities.

> If anything, it is a particular crowd, surprisingly choreographic, emotionally synchronized, composed of narcissistic subjects that highlight their individuality. An individuality that places itself next to others, imitating the same gestures and nursing the same desires, but that, in the moment of enjoyment, of solemnizing the relationship between the self and the leader, remains isolated and unrelated, entirely concentrated on the act of self-immortalization. (Cavarero 2021, 92)

Surprisingly, in this context, self-immortalization appears to be the reason for the shattering of plurality, because it does not operate as a positive drive that moves the agonistic dynamics of action, but it becomes the aim of an introverted act that resembles in some shapes Arendt's idea of loneliness.[22] Contrary to a strict reading of loneliness, since in its pure normative meaning it could not enter politics due to its singularized and life-bound qualities, the eerie form of togetherness of the Salvinian crowd-selfie – which is not just an Italian phenomenon since Cavarero says the same thing about the American former secretary of state Hillary Clinton[23] – seems like a type of public dimension that normally would suppress every publicity of the act-in-concert, but now can be realized thanks to the appearance of apolitical subjects who stay together while having no relation to each other.[24]

What happens is the mere juxtaposition of people who, without facing one another and focusing on the act of making a selfie, express only the private desire to immortalize themselves next to the leader in order to satisfy their own self-centered attitudes. The loneliness poured out by these selfish actors on the public and improvised community becomes the driving force that guides the fulfillment of the narcissistic impulses of the fragmented crowd.

21 "The sea is multiple, it moves, and it is dense and cohesive. Its multiplicity lies in its waves; they constitute it. They are innumerable. [...] The dense coherence of the waves is something which men in a crowd know well. It entails a yielding to others as though they were oneself, as though there were no strict division between oneself and them. There is no escape from this compliance and thus the consequent impetus and feeling of strength is something engendered by all the units together. The specific nature of this coherence among men is unknown. The sea, while not explaining, expresses it" (Canetti 1984, 80)

22 Cf. Arendt, Hannah, *The Human Condition*, cit., 59.

23 "We are in Florida and Hillary Clinton, smiling, having entered the room and stepped on stage, raises her arm to greet her numerous supporters, who are separated from her by a railing to contain the crowd. This crowd is mostly composed of young women who, simultaneously, turn their backs to Hillary Clinton and raise their smartphones to snap a selfie that depicts them with her. Technically, it is the separating railing that prevents her supporters from approaching the candidate to take a selfie with her in the usual way. But the solution, actually quite brilliant, of turning one's back to include oneself and her in the same frame resolves the problem. Hillary Clinton, evidently, appreciates it, because she, in turn, positions her back to the audience and, brandishing her cellphone, snaps a selfie herself." (Cavarero 2021, 93).

24 On this account, see a similar approach in Enns, Diane, *Thinking Through Loneliness*, Bloomsbury, London, 2022.

Egoistic subjects are allowed into a distorted dimension of politics, which is not the plural Arendtian sphere of the Sardines anymore, due to a crisis that is not produced by mass society, which troubled Arendt throughout the entirety of her body of work,[25] but by the horrific reality of a space of appearance generated by crystalized and lonely individualities. This unwelcomed presence meant that when this crowd comes-into-the-world it does not show the uniqueness of its own subjects, but it creates a web of relationships that goes directly from the cellphone to the self-centered character of the auto-directed focus of its participants.

As I already said, I argue that in Cavarero's 'crowd-selfie' it seems as if Hannah Arendt's notions of solitude and loneliness work in a perverted interaction to explain the qualities of this entireness of subjects that are simultaneously lonely when next to each other and, when facing the telephone camera, they are also falling into a solipsistic reality of their own ego that cares exclusively about its internal desires. The egocentric element, that Cavarero stresses more than enough, finds its natural habitat in the mediatic interrelations created in the virtual and depersonalized dimensions of non-politicalness of the empty rooms of social networks' *e-democracies*: digital communities that offer to these highly individualistic "I's" a platform. Namely, a public, but completely self-reduced sphere, that operates as a "shopwindow" of egos, in which everyone displays and competes for the most rich and egotistical life.

An immaterial dimension that become a space for harming when moved at the rhythm of a political agenda that, as Salvini had demonstrated in his unethical and hateful way of using Twitter,[26] increases the production of a more self-reduced individuality that constitutes the crowd-selfie itself; a subject that is a build-block for a more manipulated political discourse that endorse thanks to lies and disinformation the populist and right-wing ideas of a needed self-determination and individualization with the effect of making all others that do not fit into the chosen categories as (fake) enemies.[27]

In this worrying scenario, being an isolated identity implies that every mutual association and recognition between subjects is conformed to this self-absorbed character and lessened to a self-pleasure mechanism that does not produce public happiness, but the mere and infinite request for desires' satisfaction. The main consequence of this degeneration is the loss of any experience of plurality and a consequent and inducing narcissistic emphasis that appears as "an interesting example of 'public intimacy,' that of a subjectivity folded back on itself" (Cavarero 2021, 92).

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25 For a clear definition of Arendt's position about the social and mass society see the exemplary work of Pitkin, Hanna Fenichel, *The Attack of the Blob. Hannah Arendt's Concept of the Social*, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1998.

26 Cf. Macagno, Fabrizio, *Analizzare l'argomentazione sui social media. Il caso dei tweet di Salvini*, in «Sistemi Intelligenti», 3/2019 (dicembre), Il Mulino, Bologna: 601-632;

27 Cf. Berti, Carlo and Loner, Enzo, *Character assassination as a right-wing populist communication tactic on social media: The case of Matteo Salvini in Italy*, in «New Media & Society», 0/0, 2021.

Against this atomized identity, Cavarero saw in the Sardines, and in other recent movements like *Black Lives Matter* and *Fridays for Future*, positive counterexamples that sum up her idea of a surging democracy. Cavarero insist on an Arendtian understanding of these political events by way of seeing their power as a plural source that "engenders, nourishes, and delimits the space of interaction, and which she characterizes as absolutely nonviolent" (Cavarero 2021, 11). Starting from that, she proposes a redesigned democracy that, while sustained by a dynamic plurality of subjects, thrives on the generative and spontaneous character of their acts, without losing its own parts – the unique human beings that appear freely – to the oppositional character of a loose bond generated by monadic egos.

Therefore, Cavarero's conception of democracy thus seems to be concretely based on a clear and literal understanding of Arendt's notion of action. A strong position that seeks to restore the originality of the Arendtian idea of politics, against the numerous democratic readings that have for a long time sought to imagine democracy as a body politic that, while having participation and the realization of the plurality and action as its main objective, could still preserve the conflictual and anarchic dimension of politics.

For the Italian philosopher, Arendt's political account is indeed to be understood as it is presented by the German theorist herself. It cannot be mixed with the theoretical aim of founding true, agonistic, or anarchic democracies, like the ones of Claude Lefort, Miguel Abensour, Étienne Balibar, and Chantal Mouffe,[28] that are committed "to radicalizing the idea of democracy by conceiving of it in terms of permanent conflict and as a field of struggle" (Cavarero 2021, 3). These readings, while sharing some Arendtian roots, however, do not belong to Arendt's appraisal of politics, and accordingly her readers must come "to terms with her pure and, in a certain sense, untimely definition of the political. Political power, far from being a means, according to her, is an end itself, and exists only in its actualization." (Cavarero 2021, 13).

In truth, this reception of a pure condition of politics was clearly understood by the Sardines, that, even if not intentionally, responded to the severe and degenerative crisis of the 'crowd-selfie'. As discussed in the English preface of *Surging Democracy* published just two years after the Sardines' birth, Adriana Cavarero, amazed by the surging act of the 6000Sardines (basically she saw her own conception of democracy unfolding through the Italian piazzas), sees in the Italian movement the ontological condition that works as an antidote against the dismembered selfie's crowds. Adding to the Arendtian notion of power the bodily feature of corporeality imagined by Judith Butler,[29] Cavarero imagines a democratic framework that, with the 6000Sardines as a proven example, is entirely non-violent, filled with the noisy presence of bodies in motion and, most importantly,

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28 Cavarero critique is mainly referred to the Arendtian readings of democracy of Lefort, Claude, *Democracy and Political Theory*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1988; Mouffe, Chantal, *On the Political*, Verso, London, 2005; Rancière, Jacques, *Hatred of Democracy,* Verso, London, 2006; Abensour, Miguel, *Democracy Against the State,* Polity, London, 2010; Balibar, Étienne, *Citizenship*, Polity, Cambridge, 2015.

29 Cf. Butler, Judith, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2015.

antithetical to "the spreading of racism, intolerance, and hatred among the supporters of
a populist leader fomenting hostility toward ethnic minorities and fueling prejudices and
resentments" (Cavarero 2021, X).

In Cavarero's words, "the piazzas crowded with Sardines were not framed by the
typical marks of protest and struggle, and even less by rage and insurgency, but rather by
the thrilling emotion of participating in political demonstrations within a shared public
space" (Cavarero 2021, X). In a confrontational discourse that sees the ontological
positions of a self-seeking subjects against plurality, the Sardines are a preliminary
example of actors that base their intentions on the fact that belonging to the public sphere
does not mean, in the selfish sense mentioned, the individualization of ourselves into the
unifying body of a leader who, even in contrast to a Hobbesian Leviathan, serves only as a
focal point for our autoreferential contentment. The 'surgive' character of democracy
signifies a peculiar rediscovery of a potentiality that can be purely experienced in the
shared dimension of public happiness. By creating a sympathetic collectivity, Cavarero
insists that "happiness, as the word suggests, is something that happens when, by
interacting, we actively disclose the unique distinction and capacity for initiative that
make us human!" (Cavarero 2021, 38).

It is a real emotion that surpasses the mere fulfillment of self-centered urges and, as
political engine, makes more and more people attracted to act jointly into the generated
space of appearance. A joyful place that gives everyone an opportunity to appear in their
unique character, represented by their bodies and their now finally heard voices.

> The Sardines were rediscovering and experiencing that form of plural, horizontal,
> nonviolent, generative, and affirmative interaction, which, revisiting the Arendtian
> notion of politics in this book, I call 'surging democracy.' […] By gathering, they
> disclosed the significance of their main claims, which affirmed: We are plural, each
> an embodied uniqueness, distinct and equal, rejecting exclusion and enacting
> inclusion. We embrace and empower differences. We display differences in flesh and
> blood, freed of the political and cultural game of rejection. We congregate bodily to
> protest segregation and racism. And there is happiness in experiencing and sharing
> the public exhibition of our incarnate plurality. There is joy in physically engendering
> freedom. (Cavarero 2021, X)

Nonetheless, these 'oases in the desert'[30] that thrive on happiness and commonality, as
Cavarero points out above, might hint at some kind of utopianism that sees democracy
simply as an effervescent plurality that could not survive into defined political
institutions. Against the accusations of a misleading and optimistic attitude regarding
democratic assemblies built only on plural action and of a philosophical position that
lacks an institutional plan for her surging account of democracy, the Italian philosopher
affirms that "in order to change, to let things happen for the better, to overcome racism

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30 Cf. Arendt, Hannah, *On Revolution*, Penguin Classics, London, 2006: 267.

and inequality, to rediscover the birthing core of democracy and turn the shared
experience of freedom into constituted social and political institutions, we do need an
imaginary of hope" (Cavarero 2021, XVI). However, leaning on a background of hope that
makes sense of and strengthens democratic battles is still a weak response. Facing a harsh
reality in which surgivity, at some point, falls naturally into passivity, or worse, in an
unpolitical immunization against participation[31] – which is a phenomenon characterized
by the fact that emerging actions, while trying to find a permanent political dimension in
which to dwell, might fade away at the margins of the shared community, leaving the
political subjects with just their desire to self-preserve their private and 'idiotic' life – a
democracy founded entirely on its evenemential character must face the fact that lacking
in constituency can be fatal for political power.

Cavarero still has a point in saying that hope, working as the sharing force that might
entice people to act together, is a necessary part for a democratic future. Nevertheless,
political imagination cannot be based only on the Arendtian idea of praxis. In this
unilateral consideration, the indispensable foundation of an authoritative dimension of
the political lies in the dark. The same darkness of the deep ocean that led the Sardines,
lost in their spontaneity and without any safe anchor, into the ravenous belly of the
everchanging, amnesiac, and careless shark of a degenerated form of a hopeless political
scenario, represented by the uncanny and alienating specter of the neoliberal and post-
fascist populism that we are currently facing.[32]

3. No Tin for the Sardines. An institutional failure

"The Sardines as a mass movement were an experiment that today is only a good
memory" (Garreffa 2022). This short statement made by Andrea Garreffa – one of the co-
founders of 6000Sardines – at the end of 2022, in my opinion, outlines precisely what
kind of future was foreseen for their good but very naïve intentions. In the article in which
he mentions the end of the movement, he talks about the memories created in the Italian
political scene by the influence of the Sardines, saying that their last moments as a
collectivity in motion are the source for a new democratic beginning. Now that the part
that referred to their effervescent appearance ended and the citizens who had to put on
the sardine mask have returned to their normal lives, what is supposed to remain is the
awareness of democratic values that can be achieved only when people act together. In a
nutshell, the statement of Garreffa, who is certainly not a political theorist, seems to
coincide with Cavarero's 'imaginary of hope.' The Sardines have given to the people who
have joined them the possibility of participating in a political space free of an oxymoronic
anti-democratic morality with no intention of becoming a permanent part of the world.
When the 6000Sardines were born, an open crowd lived for a short and intense time, but

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31 On the immunization of life, cf. Esposito, Roberto, *Immunitas: The Protection and Negation of Life*, Polity,
London, 2011.

32 Cf. Puleo, Leonardo and Piccolino, Gianluca, *Back to the Post-Fascist Past or Landing in the Populist
Radical Right? The Brothers of Italy Between Continuity and Change*, in «South European Society and
Politics», 27/3, 2022: 359-383.

it never felt the need to close itself.[33] The Sardines were simply a powerful critical act that, carried by public happiness, made visible the main principles of democracy: freedom and equality.

Granted that, from my point of view, while this idea of communality works well as a critical tool that opposes discriminatory and negative unpolitical discourses with the power generated by the unique voices of a 'manyness' of active citizens, it still leaves some complex threads unresolved. Is plurality all that matters in politics when even a political space can become self-centered and completely fractured from reality? Is it okay to ignore the question of institutionalization of democracy while acting for democracy's sake? As far as I am concerned, these questions can only be answered with some dissatisfaction. In short, as we see nowadays in Italian debates, if there is something left of the momentary events of the Sardines it is a political instance completely unhinged from institutional thinking which resulted in the oblivion of their own act. As apocalyptic as it might sound, reality has shown us that the Sardines' wave is totally forgotten. Even after their brief realization, Italy is still facing an enormous deficit in participation worsened by its own government led by a more advanced Sardines' nemesis: Giorgia Meloni's post-fascist administration.[34]

It can be said, and I believe it to be true, that the *ichthyic revolution* had not the strength to maintain the radicality of its principles: it was hardly continuous, focused only on the present and had not thought thoroughly about institutional planning. As already mentioned with Cavarero's democratic theory, the Sardines are in essence fleeting subjects who, even if they could create a new popular dimension, still had no project that would have let them to endure as an institutionalized part of the political world.

In an anticlimactic sense, we learn with the Sardines that stepping into politics is more than just appearing into the public sphere as a revolutionary force that may challenge constituted institutions thanks to a new action generated by a bodily and loud plurality. Acting politically means also addressing seriously the problem of permanence. If one strictly follows Cavarero's notion of a democracy of natality, stability and continuity in time seems to be not related to the democratic question as such. To my mind, Cavarero's assumptions, as well as those of many Arendt scholars,[35] stem from the fact that these phenomena are understood through a redundant neo-Aristotelian reading of *The Human*

33 Canetti's definition of the closed crowd anticipates the problem of durability ignored by the 6000Sardines: "In contrast to the open crowd which can grow indefinitely, and which is of universal interest because it may spring up anywhere, there is the closed crowd. The closed crowd renounces growth and puts the stress on permanence" (Canetti 1984, 17).

34 Cf. Agnew, John, *Is Fascism really back in Italy?*, in «Human Geography», 0(0), 2023: 1-6.

35 Cf. Canovan, Margaret, *The Contradiction of Hannah Arendt's Political Thought*, «Political Theory», Vol. 6, No. 1 (Feb. 1978): 5-26; Habermas, Jürgen, *Hannah Arendts Begriff der Macht*, «Merkur», Nr. 341, Oktober 1976; Portinaro, Pier Paolo, *Il problema di Hannah Arendt. La politica come cominciamento e la fine della politica*, Il Mulino, 1/1986: 76-94; Volpi, Franco, *Il pensiero politico di Hannah Arendt e la riabilitazione della filosofia pratica*, Il Mulino, 1/1986: 53-75; Euben, J. Peter, *Arendt's Ellenism*, in *The Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt*, ed. by D. Villa, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000: 151-164; Arndt, David, *Arendt on the Political*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019: 108-165.

Condition that places action above any act of foundation.[36] Genuinely, Arendt's entire contribution is read as ephemeral politics characterized by the recovery of praxis, and so qualitatively impoverished of the possible contribution of other traditions that might enrich it.

This is not to say that these readings are still grounded on an interpretation of Arendt in terms of an uncritical Graecophilia. The central point is that these democratic accounts, like Cavarero's, are still fixated on the ontological qualities of action that derive from Arendt's political concepts that originated in her engagement with Greek political philosophy and, in seeing only this Hellenic origin, they ignore the more institutional components of her understanding of action. Nonetheless, Arendt's late work especially from the essay *Was ist Autorität?* (1956) to the last part of *On Revolution* (1963) together with *Crises of The Republic* (1972) and *The Life of The Mind* (1978) – even if it is also partially accounted in *The Human Condition* (1958) – shows traces of a different theoretical territory marked by the Republicanism of Niccolò Machiavelli and Montesquieu and by a specific use of Roman Political Thought[37] that overcomes the limitations of Hellenistic readings and expands the intention of her politics. As it is my intention to demonstrate, parallel to the aporetic quality of action based on novelty, if we shift her concept of the political towards a more Roman and republican reading concentrated on authority, the instability of the Sardines can be mended by an Arendtian political ontology structured on a double origin. An ontological definition of politics that keeps in a paradox freedom and foundation reduces the fugitive character of democracy, basing it both on the plural power of its subjects and on the necessary founding moment of its own institutions (*constitutio rei publicae*).

Before we return to the main question, I think it is important to address how Arendt's notion of natality shifts in this complicated relationship between freedom and foundation. If we follow the surging approach already described by Cavarero's democracy, even if it seems reductive, it is very clear that natality means just novelty. However, this does not lead further into the richness of its meaning. As it was shown broadly by the recent positions of the biopolitical and anarchic interpretation of Miguel Vatter and Peg Birmingham, which insist on the biological nature of birth and so on the necessary separation of life and politics,[38] natality figures as a political concept that can be hardly pinned to a comprehensive definition and specific quality. In the mist of it, it is my opinion that Wolfhart Totschnig's work, especially his *Arendt's notion of natality: An attempt at clarification* (2017), centers more clearly the core of natality's nature and it

36 Cf. Tsao, Roy T., *Arendt against Athens: Rereading the Human Condition*, in «Political Theory», 30, no. 1 (2002): 97-123.

37 See Pocock, John G.A, *The Machiavellian Moment. Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1975; Geuna, Marco, *La tradizione repubblicana e i suoi interpreti: famiglie teoriche e discontinuità concettuali* in «Filosofia politica»,1998/12, n. 1: 101-132; Pettit, Philip, *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government,* OUP, Oxford 2001; Skinner, Quentin, *Liberty before Liberalism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2012.

38 Cf. Vatter, Miguel, *Natality and Biopolitics in Hannah Arendt*, in «Revista de ciencia política», 26(2), 2005: 137-159; Birmingham, Peg, *Hannah Arendt & Human Rights: The Predicament of Common Responsibility*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2006.

seems to be congenial with a definition of politics as the combination of immediacy and permanence.

In his brief article, Totschnig affirms that natality is "the constant arrival of newcomers [that] underlies the continuing existence of the realm of politics" (Totschnig 2017, 344). What I believe makes his analysis compelling is that he takes into consideration continuity and durability of action as effects of natality; the everlasting force stays into the world as the engine that ensures that the political sphere never fades away and perdures the continuous change of its inhabitants.[39] Imagining birth as an ontological trait balanced between permanence and novelty, makes the case for a more grounded demand to keep the realm of politics always in motion not only thanks to the endless appearing of new human beings, but also due to the permanence of the act of beginning embedded in a collective and shared 'web of relationships' that requires care and stability.

Of course, the Sardines were not thinking of Hannah Arendt's natality when they decided to act, but it is still relevant that the interpretations given about their existence are still under the suggestion of democratic theories revolving on the rehabilitation of her practical character of action, while compulsively forgetting that any revolution, in order to survive politically, has its goal in "the constitution of freedom and on the actual business of revolutionary government, the foundation of a republic" (Arendt 1963, 132). If one leaves out the pervasive problem of founding that appears throughout Arendt's political discourse, and with it the 'permanent' character of action that also lingers in natality as seen in Totschnig's description, any Arendtian reading of the democratic process is doomed to fail. I would say that an Arendtian Democracy needs to consider the architectonical part of Hannah Arendt's political ontology, which does not revolve exclusively around a "Greek" origin, but as mentioned also has its roots in Roman political philosophy.

The Latin texts from Cicero to Virgil – authors hidden but very consistent in her work[40] – while indicating the coordinates of an unprecedented space of appearance, the *Res Publica*, represent the indispensable constituent value of politics, which is not thought as a counter-dimension of the freedom to act, but as ulterior aspect that must be conjugated with the evenemential quality of the Arendtian-Aristotelian praxis.[41] From

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39 A similar understanding of natality based on authority's permanence is traced in Revault d'Allonnes, Myriam, *Les pouvoir des commencements. Essai sur l'autorité*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris, 2006: 261-264.

40 A genealogy of Roman political philosophy in Arendt's work can be reconstructed thanks to her notes and remarks written on her personal notebooks from the XVI to the XVIII in Arendt, Hannah, *Denktagebuch 1950-1972*, 2 vol., Piper, München 2002.

41 On the double presence of Rome and Athens in Arendt's work, cf. Cassin, Barbara, *Le paradigme de l'antiquité*, in *Ontologie et politique*, ed. M. Abensour, Paris, Tierce, 1989: 24; Taminiaux, Jacques, *Athens and Rome*, in *The Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt*, (ed. by) D. Villa, Cambridge, 2000: 165-177; Maggini, Golfo, *Europe's Double Origin: "The Greek" and "the Roman" in Hannah Arendt's Phenomenological Genealogy of Europe*, in «Phenomenology and Mind», No.5, 2015: 224-237; Hammer, Dean, *Hannah Arendt and Roman Political Thought: The Practice of Theory*, in «Political Theory», Feb 2002, Vol.30, No.1: 24-149; Id., *Roman Political Thought and the Modern Theoretical Imagination*, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 2008: 38-77; Id., *Authoring within history: the legacy of Roman*

ancient Greece comes the spontaneity and agonality of action, while from Rome grows the need for an institution whose being endures, grounds itself, and is ultimately preserved in the caring narrative of the past. It is no coincidence that Arendt, in *Between Past and Future* (1961), said that authority, with its disappearance, has created that vacuum of "authentic and undisputable experiences common to all" (Arendt 1961, 91). When authority and then functional political institutions are missing, that indispensable narrative and relational point of reference the *in-between* – the world of human beings – stops to be alive. But what is authority in Arendt's work and how it can be retrieved for the foundation of a body politics?

Firstly, as already mentioned, Arendtian authority is not related to any Greek political theory[42], but it goes directly to the conservative power of Roman tradition and religion.

> The perduring force of the act of foundation of the City: *ab Urbe condita*. In this engendering force is contained in nuce the cohesion of the trilogy authority-religion-tradition. If authority is in the first foundation, religion is that which joins it immediately by the link of piety, and tradition mediately by being transmitted from the Ancients. The constraining power of the foundation is at the same time authority, tradition, religion. What is specific to the idea of authority is the augmentation (*auctoritas* comes in fact from *augere*, 'to augment') that power receives from this transmitted force. (Ricœur 2010, 31)

As Paul Ricœur explains, the authoritative dimension of politics creates a lasting contact with the world. Foundation, in the Roman sense extensively explained in *On Revolution,*[43] does not work only as the constitutive act of building durable institutions, but has its power in its own narration. The force of authority is transmitted from generation to generation that, in the light of the narrative of an exemplary past, can give substance to political institutions that have suffered a totalitarian drain. The Roman experience of authority is not a paradigm that defines aprioristically what need to be done politically. The tradition of authority is a horizon of expectation that, in the words of Alexis de Tocqueville, not only makes the past illuminate the future, but also allows the opening of an innovative space of experience that can thrive on the stability of a contingency that, through the juxtaposition of the two extensions of time, produces a dynamic *novus ordo saeclorum*: a vital and energetic institution. Restoring authority, then, means uniting the rupture between a lost past and a potential future; understanding action with the "sacredness of foundation" (Arendt 1961, 120) indicate at a synergical union between new political events and the exemplary role of time.

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    politics in Hannah Arendt, in «Classical Receptions Journal», 2015, Vol 7. Iss. 1: 129-139; Id., *Arendt and the Roman Tradition*, in *The Bloomsbury Companion to Arendt*, ed. by P. Gratton – Y. Sari, London-New York, Bloomsbury Academic, 2021: 13-28.

42 Cf. Arendt, Hannah, *The Promise of Politics*, Schocken, New York, 2007: 5-39.

43 Cf. Arendt, Hannah, *On Revolution*, cit.: 171-206.

After all, the Romans counted time *ab urbe condita*, from the birth of Rome by Aeneas and Romulus and so from "the foundation of a new body politic [...] the central, decisive, unrepeatable beginning of their whole history" (Arendt 1961, 120). Religiously traced back to the founding act (*religare*), the next protagonists of history move consciously in the world because, with their eyes fixed on the past, they increase and preserve with each advance toward the abyss of the unknown future – with every new free and spontaneous action – the narrative of the grounding event in the sense of perpetual renewal that anchors them safely to a stable world. The power of *auctoritas*, then, focusing on the maintenance of a narration that is passed down through generations, builds a common world for the political subjects in which they can act freely.

Its meaning, then, is not command or coercion, but a form of authoritative advice, a *consilium*, filled with historical exemplariness, that guides human's activity without determining their ends. Each action, shrouded in the *gravitas* of authority, adds "to every single moment the whole weight of the past," (Arendt 1961, 123) arranged not as an absolute pattern to be respected, but as a sure foundation on which the new can emerge through its renovation.[44] The density of Roman *gravitas* is a guide that does not leave the actor without a grounded leeway to be free. It is a dimension of caring and endurance that takes seriously the question of the fragility of powers, like the ones opened by the Sardines. Understanding authority remarked the fact that even if plurality's "power is volatile, foundation is that which alone can render power durable; because action is more fragile than labor, the power from which action emanates always needs to be augmented by something equivalent to the Roman experience of foundation" (Ricœur 2010, 33-34).

However, as we mentioned with Cavarero, foundation is, in the Ricœurian formulation, the "forgotten of politics" (Ricœur 2010, 35). In the contemporary events, the utopian sense of a surging democracy became the only parameter to measure political participation, since the tradition of authority is not anymore explored, resulting in a cycle of failures caused by the absence of constituency that every fragile moment of spontaneous action ignores. In my opinion, when the authoritative agency that appears in Arendt's political ontology is acknowledged, the political cannot remain in its pureness and, consequently, its character "can only be preserved by remembering its impurity and incompletion, and with it the fact that political freedom always comes at a cost – the cost of being implicated in various forms of violence and unfreedom" (Keenan 1994, 320). Following that, democracy can function as a real critical power that opens a space of appearance that is built up on our own action but with the scope of preserving, inside concrete and not always functioning institutions, the memory of plurality after it disappears. And perhaps, the 6000Sardines left us with the same good memory when their movement collapsed, which still reverberates in the minds of all the people who dealt with them. An echo that cannot remain as a mere trace, but it must become part of our political narration by being preserved, told, and remembered for the sake of a past that can work both as a ground and as an inspiration for future powerful actions.

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44 Cf. Vatter, Miguel, *Between Form and Event: Machiavelli's Theory of Political Freedom*, Springer, Berlin, 2000.

Today, this Roman heritage strongly anchored to the power of authority could be another building block in that complex mosaic of democratic solutions that have been used since the end of the last century to restore the broken image of political participation. A way that combines the institutive moment with the an-archic power of liberty portrayed so vividly by the energetic street protest of the 6000Sardines, without mixing constitutive form and institutive energy into an undifferentiated democratic pastiche. An attempt that Arendt had already sketched in those unique historical models that were the republics of the councils.[45] Republics in which the power that emerged from the outbreak of revolutionary events was ultimately distributed horizontally and in a tense equilibrium.

> The councils say: We want to participate, we want to debate, we want to make our voices heard in public, and we want to have a possibility to determine the political course of our country. Since the country is too big for all of us to come together and determine our fate, we need a number of public spaces within it. The booth in which we deposit our ballots is unquestionably too small, for this booth has room for only one. (Arendt 1972, 232)

As Arendt suggests, the councils worked because they were participative and local in nature. They are spaces of appearance where novelty is combined with the *auctoritas* of an institutional form whose grounding principles[46] (liberty, equality and, in this case, also conflict) guarantee the preservation of freedom and the possibility of acting publicly for its actors. A post-foundational politics[47] that, overcoming the impasse of the Arendtian democracies mentioned above, appears in the form of a council democracy and that can hold together the evenementionality of power with the necessary foundation of the plural dimension of freedom. Having present the institutional failure of the 6000Sardines' political act, by combining the exemplary role of councils with the Roman-qualified Arendtian political ontology, a viable alternative for democratic theories can be traced. This powerful ontological duplicity is like an open possibility that must encourage us to try to imagine potential democracies that, by thinking foundation as an ever-growing and mindful narration, might provide legitimacy, continuity, and a whole inexhaustible horizon of new and free beginnings.

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45 Cf. Sitton, John F., *Hannah Arendt's Argument for Council Democracy*, in «Polity», vol. 20, no. 1, 1987: 80-100; Isaac, Jeffrey C., *Oases in the Desert: Hannah Arendt on Democratic Politics*, in «The American Political Science Review», vol. 88, no. 1, 1994: 156-68; Muldoon, James, *The Lost Treasure of Arendt's Council System*, in «Critical Horizons», 12:3, 2011: 396-417; Id., *The Origins of Hannah Arendt's Council System,* in «History of Political Thought», vol. 37, no. 4, 2016: 761-789; Id., *After council communism: the post-war rediscovery of the council tradition*, in «Intellectual History Review», 31:2, 2021: 341-362. Totschnig, Wolfhart, *Arendt's argument for the council system: a defense*, in «European Journal of Cultural and Political Sociology», 1:3, 2014: 266-282; Smith, Brian, *Anarcho-Republicanism?: Arendt and the Federated Council System*, in «Science & Society», vol. 83, 2019: 87-116.

46 Cf. Totschnig, Wolfhart, U*npredictable yet Guided: Arendt on Principled Action*, in «Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology», 50 (3), 2018:189-207.

47 Cf. Marchart, Oliver, *Post-Foundational Political Thought. Political Difference in Nancy, Lefort, Badiou and Laclau*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2007.

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