SICKNESS OR SYMPTOM?  
THE CRISIS OF REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY & THE RISE OF “ANTI-POLITICAL-ESTABLISHMENT” PARTIES

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POLARIZATION IN WE (1848-2016)
APEp, MENACE FOR DEMOCRACY?

[Map showing political parties in Europe with a caption: "The Stellar Growth of National and Conservative Movements in Europe."

[Image of a cancer ribbon with the word "Cancer." 

[Cartoon of two people discussing democracy: "WHAT'S DEMOCRACY?

DEMOCRACY IS THE FREEDOM TO ELECT OUR OWN DICTATORS.

[Image of Adolf Hitler addressing a crowd.

[Image of a question mark: "WHAT'S DEMOCRACY?

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WHAT ARE THE CAUSES?

- It's the economy, Stupid!
- DE ALIGMENT-FACTOR
- Rapid Realignment™
- ECONOMIC CRISIS:
HYPOTHESES

- **H1**: Poor economic development/performance increases electoral polarization
- **H2**: The more severe the withdrawal of parties/voters, the *higher* the electoral polarization
  - H2a (de-alignment): The higher the electoral fragmentation, the *more polarize* the electorate will be
  - H2b (re-alignment): The higher the volatility of the electorate, the *higher* its polarization
- **H3**: The more severe the crisis, the *more pronounced* are the effects in H1
- **H4**: The more severe the crisis, the *more pronounced* are the effects in H2a and H2b
WELCOME to the Party Systems and Governments Observatory!

Ever wondered who governs the countries of Europe? Like to know who governed more than a century ago? Not sure about which ministers came from which parties? Interested in how stable European party systems have been? Here with just one click you will be able to find data on government formation and party system institutionalization in all 48 European democracies, from the Second French Republic, through wars and crises, through the births and deaths of countries, all the way up to the present moment.

1876-1914

1918-1940

1945-1989

1990-2016
VARIABLES

- Dependent variable:
  - Electoral polarization: % vote for anti-political-establishment parties (APEp)

- Independent variables:
  - Economic development (GDP per capita) & performance (GDP growth)
  - Electoral fragmentation (ENEP) & volatility (TEV)
  - Control
    - Institutional: electoral disproportionality (LSq.) & type of regime (ToR)
    - Sociological: religious & linguistic fractionalization
    - Temporal: years of democracy (YoD)
DE-ALIGNMENT vs. RE-ALIGNMENT

Coefficient enep = 2.46 t-statistic = 6.33

Coefficient tev = .501 t-statistic = 6.01
“GREAT” CRISIS & POLARIZATION

![Graphs showing economic indicators during the Great Depression (1929) and the Great Recession (2008).]
GREAT DEPRESSION (1929)
GREAT RECESSION (2008)
WHAT TREATMENT?
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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