Lost in Ideologies: Comparing Thatcherism and Blairism

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of the Master Degree in British Civilization

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Academic year: 2016-2017

Dedications

To my parents for their love, support and encouragement

To my beloved people who have meant and continue to mean so much to me

Aknowledgments

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Houari Mired for his patience, understanding, and extensive knowledge.

I am also grateful to the board of examiners Mr. Sebbah Djamel and Ms. Bentamra Soumia

Abstract

Throughout the twentieth century, British politics saw major transformations in which various political parties came to implement similar policies. In fact, Thatcherism shook British politics and had a profound impact on the Labour party. This dissertation explores the policies of the Conservative and Labour parties under Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair from 1979 until Blair's resignation in 2007. It aims at showing and analyzing how New Labour under Tony Blair adopted and embraced Thatcherism. These analyses take places through studying similarities and differences between Blairism and Thatcherism. As to the approach, which is comparative, it was used to unveil both ideologies. The Labour Party reestablished itself by adopting a liberal approach and Blairism was considered a continuation of Thatcher's capitalism with a preservation of some social principles. Hence the term "Blatcherism" was created.

Key words: Thatcherism_ Blairism_ Conservative_ Labour_ Blatcherism

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General Introduction

The term revolution doesn't always refer to wars; it is rather a range of fundamental changes throughout a certain period of time. Actually, the various changes that took place in Britain when Margaret Thatcher came to power in 1979 were in many regards revolutionary.

Indeed, in the 1970s, Britain was seen and very often described as the sick man of Europe. Unemployment rate was high, and the economy was declining steadily. The Labour Party, which remained in power between 1974 and 1979, relied heavily on the support of trade unions and followed a very interventionist policy, despite successive economic failures. There was a decline in economic development, and there were only the oil fields in the North Sea to support the economy. When the Conservatives won the 1979 general election, Margaret Thatcher and her Tory government set out an ambitious plan that proved particularly radical. It consisted in a vast movement of privatization, a reduction of state interventionism and structural changes. There have been great social conflicts that were positive. These aspects explain the reasons for which the Tories win the 1983, 1987 and 1992 general elections. Therefore, the Labour Party had to change profoundly to regain the support of the British electors; putting aside the old ideology that had caused Britain's difficulties in the 1970s. By accepting a neo-liberal orientation in the British economy, Tony Blair and the Labour Party were eventually elected in 1997 and re-elected in 2001 and 2005.

This dissertation shows how the political attitudes within the Conservative and Labour parties have changed fundamentally. It concentrates on selected areas of government policy and strategy between 1997-1990 and 1997-2007 and on specific reforms. It also analyses the similarities and differences between the ideologies of the two governments during the aforementioned periods, which were respectively referred to as "Thatcherism" and "Blairism".

It is highly agreed that the main issue of the twentieth-century Britain was the rise of Thatcherism. Thatcher, her ideology and her legacy remain both controversial and divisive issues. So, was the emergence of Thatcherism a real turning point in the British political arena? Moreover, the last decade of the twentieth century was also a time of the re-emergence of the Labour Party as "New Labour". So, what were the main causes and circumstances that helped the Labour Party to rise again? Furthermore, several criticisms and unfinished analyses came as a result of Tony Blair's modernization to the Labour Party and his adoption of a significant part of Thatcherism. So, to what extent were Tony Blair and his New Labour Party Thatcherite?

General Introduction

From these research questions we may hypothesize the following statements: Thatcherism may be a turning point in the British political arena, or may be not. Indeed, the reason that helped the Labour Party to rise again may have been the weakness of the Conservative Party, or perhaps because of the Labour Party's modernization, or perhaps because of Blair's personality compared to the then Prime Minister John Major. Further, to what extent were Tony Blair and his party Thatcherite.

The choice of this topic "Lost in Ideologies comparing Thatcherism and Blairism" came after a deep thinking about the importance of studying the main ideologies that dominated British politics and Britain's most controversial Prime Ministers. Studying the origins, nature and aims of Thatcherism; and their impact on British society as well as looking behind the policies that were adopted by Tony Blair in order to restore the party's political standing and remain in power for three consecutive terms. This dissertation has two main aims: on the one hand, it explains how Thatcherism succeeded in bringing about a major restructuring of power in British politics and the economy. On the other hand, it explains how Thatcherism forced other political parties to reassess their positions; particularly, how it influenced the policies of the Labour Party.

To answer the previous questions, this dissertation is divided into three chapters. Chapter one offers an analysis of the Thatcher era in British politics, how power shifted to the conservatives in the 1979 general election, Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister and Thatcherism as an ideology.

Chapter two thus presents Tony Blair's politics from 1994 to 2007. It addresses some of his political beliefs and principles from his New Labour project, to the 1997 general election victory, as well as the reforms that he implemented along his three terms in power and his departure in 2007.

Chapter three deals with the legacies of both leaders and their actual impact on the British society. It examines the common points and the differences between the two leaders and between their policies. It focuses on how much Thatcherism was in Blairism.

The methodological process of this work is historical and comparative because of the nature of the topic which is a comparison between two different ideologies that belong to different political spectrums. I organized this work chronologically starting by Thatcher and Blair policies and the reforms they both undertook from their beginnings consecutively. Then, I conducted a comparison by dealing with common and different points between them, and

the last section analyzes the compound of Thatcherism and Blairism: "Blatcherism". The objective is to show how Blair and New Labour have embraced Thatcherism.

Chapter One

The Ideological Roots of Thatcherism

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Introduction

Being the first lady to be Prime Minister in the British history, Margaret Thatcher was one of the prominent figures of global politics for the twentieth century. The woman who was dubbed "*The Iron Lady*" because of her purely liberal economic policy in running Britain and her struggle against trade unions, was the long lasting in the leadership of the Conservative Party; as the opposition leader firstly from 1975 to 1979, then as prime minister from 1979 to 1990 by winning three consecutive general elections with two landslide majorities.

Margaret Thatcher and her Tory government came to power when the country was in peril; rising inflation rates, high unemployment, struggles in the wake of "*The Winter of Discontent*" and an ongoing recession. However, she introduced a series of right-wing solutions as implementing privatization laws, promoting a free economic market and reducing the power of trade unions, those were popularly Thatcher's neoliberal policies that have come to be known as "Thatcherism".

This chapter presents the social, economic and political policies of Margaret Thatcher. It also considers the nature of Thatcherism and its impact on the British society during Thatcher's premiership and afterwards.

Chapter One. The Ideological Roots of Thatcherism

A Mrs Thatcher's Political Rise

Margaret Thatcher, often referred as the grocer's daughter, grew up in a political and religious house. Her father encouraged her to enter politics but he never imagined that his daughter will become a leader of such a great nation. She owed almost everything to him.

A.1 Margaret Thatcher: The early years

Margaret Thatcher was born Margaret Hilda Roberts on October 13th, 1925 in Grantham, Lincolnshire. She was brought up as a strict Wesleyan Methodist attending the Finkin Street Methodist Church since her father was an Alderman and a Methodist local preacher.

Margaret Roberts, the youngest child of the grocer Alfred Roberts and Beatrice Stephenson attended the Hunting Tower primary school where she won a scholarship to the Kesteven and Grantham girl's school. She was an active outstanding student and was constantly improving her academic level; according to school records. She then got her second scholarship to study chemistry at Somerville College at Oxford University.

At the University, Margaret Roberts was elected to chair the Conservative Association of Oxford University. She was exceedingly influenced by political works as Friedrich Von Hayek's, who believed that authoritarian regimes are leading to the state's disruptive economy (Reitan 31). In 1947, she graduated from the Chemistry Department with second-class honours.

After her graduation, Margaret Roberts moved to Colchester in Essex where she applied for a job at Imperial Chemical Industries but she was not accepted because she was assessed as "*headstrong, obstinate and dangerously self-opinionated*" (In quotes). She later joined the local Conservative Association and represented it in the Party Conference in London where the executive directors of the Dartford Conservative Association were looking for parliament's candidates. As she was a dynamic public speaker, she was unexpectedly elected in 1951. In the same year, she married the wealthy businessman Denis Thatcher whom she met in the celebration of her formal adoption as a conservative candidate. She worked as a research chemist and was a member of the team who developed the Ice-cream melting technology. Simultaneously, she qualified as a barrister specialised in taxation in 1953.

Mrs Thatcher's political tendencies were obvious from her beginnings. In 1958, Thatcher became the Conservative Party candidate for Finchley after many defeats. She was elected as MP in the 1959 elections as the youngest woman in the House of Commons.

As an MP, Thatcher strongly defended her opinions and her party's policies as the case of allowing tenants to buy their council houses, when she was spokesman on Housing and Land. She called for decriminalisation of male homosexuality and legalised abortion, voted against the abolition of capital punishment and the relaxation of divorce laws. She also voted for the restoration of birching as a judicial corporal punishment. In 1966, she criticised the Labour Party's tax policy at her party's conference, as it is "*not only towards socialism, but towards communism*" (Oborne). Mrs. Thatcher was promoted as Parliamentary Undersecretary at the ministry of Pensions and National Insurance then as Fuel and Power spokesman in the Heath shadow[1] government. She subsequently promoted to Shadow Transport spokesman then to Education.

After the 1970 general election, she was appointed as Secretary of State for Education and Science. During her first months in the ministry, Thatcher made cuts in spending budget. She abolished free school milk for children aged seven to ten years; she was therefore known as "*Milk Snatcher*". She was robustly criticised and faced many objections and protests. She was so upset by the public response that she considered quitting politics, "*I learned a valuable lesson. I had incurred the maximum of political odium[2] for the minimum of political benefit*" (Reitan 15). According to UK confidential published in 2001, Thatcher retreated from cutting off milk fear of public reaction. The cabinet later approved her proposals for high school meal prices as well as non-payment of school fees, while rejecting her proposal for library fees' exemption (UK confidential).

In 1974, Thatcher took over the Ministry of Environment and Housing where she worked on providing revenues for local governments to move to the relative tax system.

A.2 Thatcher as an Opposition Leader

After the conservatives defeat in the 1974 general election and the departure of Enoch Powell[3] the strongest competitor of Heath, Thatcher wanted Keith Joseph[4] to challenge

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[1] The Shadow ministry or cabinet is an alternative cabinet comprising members from the opposition who keep a close eye on the policies and actions of the government.

[2] General or widespread hatred or disgust directed toward someone as a result of their actions.

[3] John Enoch Powell (1912-1998), a member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire and a Member of Parliament from 1950 to 1987 firstly for the Conservative party then the Ulster Unionist Party from 1974. He was a strong enemy of Ted Heath because of his fierce opposition to Britain's joining the EC and that was the main reason for his departure from the Tory Party.

Heath[5] for the leadership of the Conservative Party. Indeed, Joseph's chances were diminished by his October 19th, 1974 speech, in which he suggested that the poor should stop having so many children, *"They are producing problem children... The balance of our human stock is threatened"* (Sherman). He then withdrew and supported Thatcher, who decided to stand against Heath. Mrs Thatcher proved herself to be a dogged campaigner; she got more unexpected votes than Heath and became the Conservative Party leader and the leader of the opposition by majority on February 11th, 1975.

As a leader of the Conservative Party, Margaret Thatcher harshly criticised the Soviet Union in her 19 January 1976 foreign policy speech:

> The Russians are bent on world dominance, and they are rapidly acquiring the means to become the most powerful imperial nation the world has seen. The men in the Soviet politburo don't have to worry about the ebb and flow of public opinion. They put guns before butter, while we put just about everything before guns. They know that they are a super power in only one sense—the military sense. They are a failure in human and economic terms (Speech at Kensington).

As a reaction to her position, the Soviet Army newspaper "Red Star", entitled one of its articles: "*Iron Lady Raises Fears*" (Speech at Kensington) by Captain Yuri Gavrilov. A nickname which was widely credited by Thatcher since it is attributed to the person who keeps his/ her word.

Thatcher adopted different views within the Conservative Party. She was strongly influenced by the ideological movement of Ralph Harris[6] and Arthur Seldon[7] who believed that less government, lower taxes and more freedom for business and consumers would be better for the economy than the welfare state which weakened the country (Blundell 190). Thatcher also believed that personal responsibility and hard work are the only ways to national prosperity, *"We want a society where people are free to make choices, to make mistakes, to be generous and compassionate. This is what we mean by a moral society; not a*

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[4] Baron Joseph (1918-1994), served under four conservative governments, from McMillan to Thatcher. He was the first to introduce the concept of the social market economy into Britain. He set up the Centre for Policy Studies with Margaret Thatcher and Alfred Sherman to defend the economic liberalism in Britain.

[5] Sir Edward Richard George Heath (1916-2005), known as Ted Heath was the longest serving MP from 1950 (elected under the king George VI) to 2001. He was a leader of the Conservative Party from 1965 to 1975 and British Prime Minister from 1970 to 1974. A fervent pro-European.

[6] Baron Harris (1924_2006) was a British Economist and the Head of the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), (1957-1988) which was established, as Friedrich V Hayek suggested, to combat the "Butskellism".

[7] (1919-2004), a neo-liberal free marketer. Editorial Adviser of IEA. He was the father of the historian Anthony Seldon.

society where the state is responsible for everything and no one is responsible for the state"
(Speech to Zurich).

Labour's situation worsened in the winter of 1978-1979 dubbed "*The Winter of Discontent*". The coldest winter since 1962, witnessed a situation of total economic, political and social chaos[8]. The trade unions rebelled against its ruling party headed by James Callaghan[9]. Conservatives said, "*The Labour Party is not working*" (Great Leaders 09) and criticized their market policies. Thereby, the Callaghan government fell in the 1979 general election and the Tories won 43 seats in the House of Commons.

A.3 The 1979 General Elections and the Triumph of Margaret Thatcher

The 1979 election was watershed and Margaret Thatcher became the first woman to have held the office of Prime Minister in Great Britain. Thatcher started her ministry with Airey Neave's words "*there is now work to be done*" (St Francis's) and with full awareness of her responsibilities and the challenges ahead: "*I know full well the responsibilities that await me as I enter the door of No. 10 and I'll strive unceasingly to try to fulfil the trust and confidence that the British people have placed in me and the things in which I believe*" (St Francis's prayer). As she was a woman of a strong religious conviction, she took the opportunity to quote from prayer of St. Francis of Assisi: "*Where there is discord, may we bring harmony. Where there is error, may we bring truth. Where there is doubt, may we bring faith. And where there is despair, may we bring hope*" (Blundell 89).

Crossing the threshold of No.10 Downing Street, Thatcher composed her first government at the request of Queen Elizabeth; most of them were Tories served in the Heath ministry. Among them was Sir Keith Joseph who had heavily influenced Thatcher's economic views.

When Thatcher came to power, Britain was at its worst. She stated that her goal was to restore pride and vigor to a nation in decline (Reitan 27). She used the first Queen's Speech on May 15th, 1979 to state that her government meant business (Seldon and Collings 31). Thatcher was brave enough to make such a radical change in the British political and

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[8] This major social unrest was due to industrial disputes, high unemployment, steeply rising inflation rate and deteriorating public services.

[9] Leonard James Callaghan, Baron Callaghan of Cardiff (1912-2005). British PM 1976-1979. His premiership dominated by economic recession and industrial militancy which led to Labour's exclusion from office for the next 18 years.

economic landscapes along her tenure. The distinctive ideology and the political policies that she followed in order to reach her goals came to be known as "Thatcherism".

B Thatcher Ideology: Project and Process

Thatcherism as a philosophy shifted from Butskellism[10] to Thatcherism. As Thatcher was a conviced politician[11], she rejected the post-war consensus[12] that was followed by both Conservative and Labour successive governments. She had attacked it as being devoid of values and challenged it to restore what she described as "*Victorian Values*".

B.1 Explaining Thatcherism: Concept and Interpretations

Mrs. Thatcher was neither a political theorist nor an economic thinker. Thatcher's ideology for ruling a nation was not an innovative economic doctrine but a path drawn and followed by her. It is her political and economic philosophy and leadership style. Thatcherism gave ideological ascendancy to the right wing.

According to Gamble, Thatcherism has no single unambiguous meaning. What makes the term Thatcherism appropriate for understanding events after 1975 is that Thatcher used her position as a leader to help the spread of New Right ideas. It was the result of the need to rehabilitate the State and protect its economy (1-3).

There were divergent views among political scientists about whether Thatcherism represents a coherent ideology or not. Among those who see that Thatcherism does not represent a coherent ideology; Charles Moore deputy editor of The Daily Telegraph who asserted that "*Thatcherism is not a technical economic doctrine at all. It is a powerful collection of beliefs about the capacities of human beings in political society*" (Evans 02).

On the other hand, Thatcherism was said to be inspired by monetarism with a strong relationship to "pragmatism, flexibility, compromise and common sense" (Evans 2-3). Conversely, Marxism, which stands against capitalism, considered it as a new ideology that supported the economic and political domination of capitalism over the lower class.

Among other interpretations of Thatcherism, there was Jim Bulpitt's. He argued that Thatcherism, as an ideology, didn't play an important role in the political performance of the

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[10] Is a term used to refer to the Conservative and Labour post-war consensus on economic policies as encouraging nationalization, strong unions and a generous welfare state. It associated with the Tory secretary Rab Bulter and the Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell.

[11] Someone who owns a fundamental values and ideas rather than representing an existing consensus.

[12] From Latin consensus: agreement, accord. It refers to a collective opinion.

Tories since they had always adopted a pragmatic approach and not a clear ideological plan. For him, Thatcherism was best understood as "statecraft"; the conservatives' art of winning successive elections, political dominance and governing competencies (Evans 02).

B.2 The Beginning of Thatcherism: Thatcherite Policies from 1979 to 1983

After their emergence as a strong right wing government under Margaret Thatcher, the Tories clashed with the leftist opposition in the country as well as the eastern bloc countries during the Cold War. Despite this, they began what they called "*the rolling back of the state*" (Collette and Keith 01) with ideas and policies that were so contradictory to the previous government mindset; self-help stakeholder capitalism instead of the welfare state, nationalization replaced by privatization, competitive market economy, undermining the trade unions and less government. In addition, restoring the political fortunes of the Conservative Party was one of their main objectives.

Dealing with social issues, Thatcher's attitudes toward ethnic groups and immigration were obvious,

> With some exceptions there had been no humanitarian case for accepting 1.5 million immigrants from south Asia and elsewhere. It was essential to draw a line somewhere... it was quite wrong that immigrants should be given council housing whereas white citizens were not... People are really rather afraid that this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture (Swaine).

On the other hand, since Thatcher believed in the independence that comes with ownership, she enabled council house tenants to buy their own homes from the local authorities.

In regards to economic policies, the Tories adopted monetarism[13] in order to control inflation. Since inflation was due to the rapid increases in the money supply, Thatcher and her chancellor Geoffrey Howe[14] implemented monetarist policies to defeat it. They controlled the money supply, reduced public expenditure and raised interest rates to prevent irresponsible borrowing. These measures succeeded in reducing the rate of inflation from 19% in 1979 to

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[13] The policy of controlling the money supply as the chief method of stabilizing the economy. It associated with the economist Milton Friedman.

[14] Baron Howe of Aberavon (1926-2015). Serving under Thatcher as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Foreign Secretary, Leader of the House of Commons, Deputy PM and Lord President of the Council.

five per cent in 1983 (Lynch 121), but unemployment had risen sharply from 1 million in 1979 to more than 3 million by 1983 (Collette and Keith 08).

Indeed, recession and rising unemployment led to a social unrest and serious riots in 1981. The "Wets"[15] within the Conservative Party began to doubt Thatcher's policy and the media took the opportunity to discuss a need for a policy 'U-turn'[16]. In her speech to the Conservative Party Conference on October 10[th]1980, Thatcher refused to perform a 'U-turn': *"To those waiting with bated breath for that favourite media catchphrase, the 'U-turn', I have only one thing to say: 'You turn if you want to. The lady's not for turning"* (Seldon and Collings 126).

Another main objective of Thatcherism was to undermine the trade unions. Thatcher was convinced that the control of the trade unions over the British industry was behind the poor economic performance of the UK. They, as she believed, caused an entirely economic stagnation under Labour's rule. She was also convinced that the trade union leaders were carrying out a personal agenda; she therefore described them as "*the enemy within*" (Blundell 121). This was the main reason for which she worked to eliminate their power. Indeed, trade unions followed the policies of blackmailing both Labour and Conservative governments by the constant threat of strikes and sit-ins whenever they felt that the government does not respond to their demands. The money provided to the strikers and the protestors was coming directly from the government and from the workers' salaries and employees themselves.

Thatcher decided to start an institutional battle to bring the unions into their knees. Among her proposals, giving more rights and power to individual workers and using secret ballots for union decisions, *"wide spread secret ballot around the trade union movement, wide spread secret ballot on union elections and wide spread secret ballot on industrial disputes"*(Winter of Discontent). Since her proposals were rejected by the other parties especially the Labour, she went to convince the ordinary union members that strikes had a negative aspect on them as well as on the British economy. Thatcher apparently managed to reduce the popularity of the unions. In 1983 general election, only 39% of union members voted for Labour.

In regards to privatization, Thatcher sought to restore the "Victorian virtues" that she was brought up with *"My policies are based not on some economic theory, but on things I and*

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[15] Senior members of government and Conservative Party who opposed the policies adopted by Mrs Thatcher especially her strict monetarist policies.

[16] It was applied to Edward Heath when he abandoned his free market policies that were in the conservative's manifesto of 1970 general election.

millions like me were brought up with: an honest day's work for an honest day's pay, live within your means, put by a nest egg for a rainy day, pay your bills on time, support the police" (Great Leaders 07). She defined these values as *"to work hard, to improve yourself, to live within your own income, to be a good member of your community, pride in your country, self-reliance and self-respect"* (Radio Interview). In addition, her influence by Hayek's notion of liberty gave her a belief that men should be free and responsible and the free markets are the economic expressions of free people. Hayek argued that free markets guarantee individual liberty. By contrast, it was the state interference in the market which distorted the operation of liberty. Indeed, Thatcher was determined to eliminate the government intervention in the economy. She announced an expanded program of privatization aimed at eliminating the powers of the major state enterprises. Throughout her first term, the denationalized industries were not widely known.

However, Thatcher's foreign policy was a combination of contradictory elements, including a strong relationship with the United States, a sharp hostility to communism and a distrust of Europe. From Thatcher's point of view, the "*special relationship*" with the United States serves the British interests. The common language and history remained a strong link between British prime ministers and American presidents after the Second World War. For Mrs. Thatcher, the Anglo-American cooperation was sacred. This was the lesson she learned from the failure of the Suez War in 1956, when American pressure forced Britain and its French and Israeli allies to abandon their aggression against Egypt, "*We should never again find ourselves on the opposite side to the United States in a major international crisis affecting British interests*" Thatcher said (McCormick).

In the European arena, Thatcher was not a supporter of Heath's belief that Britain's future is related to closer contacts with Europe. Despite her supports to Britain's membership in the European Community (EC) during the 1975 referendum, she had strongly believed that Europe must comprise individual states seeking their own interests. Her first disagreement with her European colleagues was in November 1979 about British contribution to the EC budget. She saw that the UK pays more than it receives from the European budget and therefore felt it was necessary to correct this imbalance. "*I want my money back!*" (Blundell 153), she exclaimed in Dublin summit. After a long diplomatic battle, she reached her

insistence at the Fontainebleau European Council in 1984, and the British contribution to the budget was reduced in line with the GNI[17] of the country (Evans 83).

In Northern Ireland, Thatcher took a firm stand against IRA[18] terrorists who sought to end British rule in the region using violence; when Irish military detainees staged a hunger strike at Maze prison, in Belfast, on March 1st 1981. Even when Bobby Sands, a beloved Republican figure, died in prison as a result of the strike; Thatcher refused to acquiesce and continued her position strictly, saying that, "*crime is a crime and has nothing to do with politics*" (Republican Hunger Strike). Nevertheless and contrary to her hardline position, she showed some flexibility when she signed the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985, which gave the Dublin government an advisory role in the Ulster affairs and allowed for greater security cooperation between the British and Irish governments.

By 1982, radical Thatcherism had been sending life into Britain's stagnant economy, but Thatcher had become Britain's most unpopular Prime Minister. She was only saved by the Falklands War. It was the turning point in Mrs. Thatcher premiership. When Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic, Thatcher "*reacted like a lioness whose cubs were threatened*" (Reitan 46). She sent special naval forces to drive the invaders out and retrieve the islands. The campaign, which was in danger as the islands were thousands of miles away from England, was successful. The Falklands War raised Thatcher to its peak of popularity, securing a sweeping victory in the 1983 general elections.

B.3 The Heyday of Thatcherism: Thatcherite Policies from 1983 to 1987

In their election's manifesto, the Tories indicated that they will continue their Thatcherite reforms. They won the general elections by an overwhelming majority. In fact, a number of the key Thatcherite policies only developed after Thatcher's second premiership.

According to Seldon, "*Mrs. Thatcher was not very interested in governing as a process; she was extremely interested in the outputs – the policies*" (101). Nevertheless, she continued her attack on State interference and government bureaucracy. One of her steps in this regard was the abolition of the Greater London Council (GLC) as well as other metropolitan councils. But her policy paradox was sharp; while the powers of elected local authorities were

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[17] Gross National Income

[18] Irish Republican Army

shrinking, she gave greater powers to the British Parliament in Westminster and the British central administration in Whitehall (Gamble 124).

Indeed, the most difficult battle for Thatcher was undoubtedly her struggle against trade unions. It was the biggest challenge for her leadership. She eliminated a one-year strike by miners who rose up against the closure of coal mines and the privatization of this industry. The strike paralyzed large parts of the British industry. In order to break it, the government stocked coal at power stations, broke down the closed shop[19] and passed a law that takes the right to declare a strike and sit-in from trade union leaders to workers themselves i.e., strikes are illegal unless the workers vote for it (Lynch 128). Also, the unions had become obliged to pay heavy fines if they called for illegal strikes.

Unlike the Heath government that had been brought down by the NUM[20], Thatcher refused to meet their demands and led a strong anti-union campaign. The latter succeeded in bringing the unions under the rule of law and their number fell from 13.5million to fewer that 10million during Thatcher's premiership (Evans 39).

In regards to economy, Thatcher remained interested in reducing inflation, but she didn't provide further sacrifices for it. This led to a large increase in inflation from 3% to 8% during 1988. On the other hand, Nigel Lawson[21] continued Thatcher's economic policies. Combining the reduced rates with the reduced allowances; shifting from direct to indirect taxes; cutting taxation and controlling public spending and borrowing. In addition, significant revenues were drawn from North Sea oil and continued to do until 2007 (Reitan 55). Indeed, these policies resulted the British economic boom by 1986. Unemployment decreased from 3.4 million in 1986 to 1.8 in 1990 (Lynch 122).

However and despite criticism from leftists, the policy of privatization has become synonymous with Thatcherism. It was a *"crucial ingredient of Thatcherism"* (Seldon and Collings 27). By 1987, Thatcher had privatized major state-owned companies such as: British Coal, British Steel, British Airways, British Telecom, British Petroleum, British Aerospace, regional electricity and water boards.

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[19] A closed shop meant that all employees in a union-organized occupation were required to join that union as a condition of their employment.

[20] National Union of Mineworkers, the great symbol of the British union movements.

[21] Baron Lawson of Blaby (1932). He served in Thatcher's cabinet (1981-1989). He was Geoffrey Howe's successor as the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Chapter One. The Ideological Roots of Thatcherism

Thatcher's focusing on this policy aimed at encouraging competition, improving efficiency, breaking monopolies, eliminating corruption, strikes, and bureaucracy, encouraging investments and creating "share-holding democracy". Furthermore, Thatcher government introduced the policy of deregulation in parallel with privatization in order to boost economic growth. They abolished credit and exchange control and deregulate bus companies. Thus, the government revenue from privatization rose from £377 million in 1979 to £7000 million in 1989 (Lynch 133) and shareowners grew from 2 million in 1979 to 9.2 million in 1987 (Holmes 59).

In regards to foreign policy, Thatcher was the only European leader who opposed the reunification of Germany after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. After two World Wars, in which Britain fought to prevent German domination of the European continent, she feared Germany could emerge as a growing power. "*We beat the Germans twice, and now they're back*". She believed that it should be waiting for other ten or fifteen years to allow the emergence of a united Germany at the heart of Europe. Her mistrust in Germany increased because German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, The architect of the process of unification of Germany, was behind the idea of a federal Europe (Allman), an idea that she had rejected. Although she welcomed the collapse of communist regimes in Europe, calling it the political change that will not be forgotten, she was unwilling to accept that Germany was the biggest beneficiary. *"Thatcher was highly criticised for myopia, and even worse xenophobia, over her German policy"[22]* (Roberts).

Despite her anti-European views, Thatcher helped passing the Single European Act (SEA) in 1985 which established non-tariff barriers to trade between the 12 member states of the European Community. The programme was in line with her philosophy of a free market. Conversely, later in 2002, she considered her decision on signing the SEA as "*a terrible error*" because it was the first step towards the EURO and so far the most important factor in creating divisions within her party.

In the international arena, Thatcher's association with the United States was largely due to her strong agreement with President Ronald Reagan on a personal level. The English grocer's daughter and the former Irish-American Hollywood star have become united by a single thought toward the free market and their extreme hostility to communism. Reagan and Thatcher became an ideological companion, and close personal friends. She stated that he was

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[22] Her nearsightedness and her intense and irrational dislike or fear of people from other countries.

the "*second most important man*" in her life. As Prime Minister, she has repeatedly confirmed her loyalty to the NATO and the need to develop a closer relationship with the United States.

When the United States invaded Grenada, an independent state and a member of the British Commonwealth, without consulting Britain in October 1983; it was therefore no surprise that Thatcher avoided any official condemnation to Washington, both in parliament and in the Security Council. Again, Thatcher was the only one among the European leaders to offer President Reagan the use of British air bases, when the United States bombed Libya on April 14th 1986. Although Thatcher faced opposition from her party and many of her Western allies, she supported the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) launched by US President Reagan, popularly known as "*Star Wars*". The plan aimed at intercepting Soviet ballistic missiles in space (Holmes 85). Britain thereby was regarded as the most powerful ally for the United States and the British Foreign Office has been granted freedom of direct contact or consultation with decision-makers in Washington.

After 1945, the simple equation that Thatcher believed was that Soviet Russia was equal to Nazi Germany, she did not really see a difference between Nazism and Communism, and she always liked to recall that the term Nazi was a derivative abbreviation of National Socialism. Since Thatcher believed that communism will never be in line with freedom, she played a major role in the overthrow of communist regimes and bringing the Cold War to an end. Indeed, relations with the Soviet Union and the Cold War were among the issues that dominated the British foreign policy agenda during Thatcher's premiership. She realised that changing the communist thought of the central and eastern European countries is the key element to the collapse of the Soviet Union. She strengthened the commercial, cultural and political relations of these areas with the West. She visited Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland in the 1980s. She encouraged economic and political reforms in those countries and took all the opportunities to confirm the benefits of democracy and the free market. Indeed, many commentators believe that Thatcher contributed significantly to the liberation of Central and Eastern Europe from communism, one of the greatest changes in Europe and the world since 1954.

Furthermore, Thatcher played an important role in improving relations between the West and the East. When Mikhail Gorbachev reformed the Soviet system, she was one of the first world leaders to realize that Gorbachev was an important factor in accelerating change. She described him as "*an unusual Russian*". Thatcher said that the success of the *Glasnost and Perestroika* is undoubtedly in the West's favor. Thatcher - the link between Moscow and

Washington - convinced Ronald Reagan that the West can establish relations with Gorbachev "*I like Mr. Gorbachev. We can do business together*" (Great Leaders 17). Therefore, she visited Moscow for the first time in 1987.

C The End of an Era (1987-1990)

Thatcher's second term witnessed undoubted vitality of the economy. The state was economically booming. She therefore secured a landslide victory in the 1987 general election, becoming the first British political leader to win three consecutive national elections.

C.1 The PM loses her way

During her third term Thatcher continued her revolution by implementing a standard educational curriculum[23] and returning health care and housing to private control. However, disagreements and divisions began within the Conservative party, resulting the eventual fall of Margaret Thatcher because of two main issues: "Europe" and the "poll tax".

Thatcher was highly criticised due to her efforts to implement the "*Community Charge*", so called the "*poll tax*"[24], which was a fixed tax to fund the local government as a replacement of the domestic rates. The policy was hugely unpopular because the tax was imposed equally on the poor and rich adults. It led to public protests and caused dissension within the Tory party then, the resignation of Nigel Lawson the Chancellor of the Exchequer in October 1989.

On the European issue, Thatcher expressed her strong hostility to the idea of European integration in a famous speech in Bruges, complaining of the danger of "*a European super-state exercising a new dominance from Brussels*" (Seldon and Collings 141). Her harsh words dominated most European newspapers. At Rome summit in 1990, the "*Delors plan*"[25] was introduced. It called for "*the European Parliament to be the democratic body of the Community, the commission to be the executive and the Council of Ministers to be the senate*" (UK politics). When Thatcher was asked about British position from these proposals, she replied in her speech in the House of Commons: "*No! No! No!*" she condemned it since it

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[23] National curriculum contained "core" subjects, such as English and maths, and "foundation" subjects such as geography, history and art. &

[24] Head tax or capitation, was based on ideas from the Adam Smith Institute. It was a tax imposed on all adults equally. The amount of community charge is determined by local authorities. Many objected it since they believe that taxes should be imposed only on income and property.

[25] Introduced by Jaques Delors. The French president of the EC commission (1985-1995). He was a strong federalist.

means that Britain would give up some of its sovereignty and authority in favor to the European Parliament in Brussels.

Furthermore, the plan called for a European central bank and a single European currency in which the member states use one "Euro" currency. Thatcher was hesitant about Britain joining the European Exchange Rate Mechanism because she felt it also means giving up sovereignty. She later declared that "*the European single currency was an attempt to create a European super state and would fail economically, politically and socially*" (UK politics).

The negative consequences of this very hostile attitude toward the European partnership emerged. The Foreign Secretary and the pro-European Geoffrey Howe, who was a supporter to the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM), resigned in November 1990. That was a heavy loss for Thatcher, and was the last factor to help fall. Following the resignation of Sir Jeffrey, another prominent Conservative politician, Michael Haseltine[26] decided to challenge Thatcher in the Conservative party leadership election. She managed to win him in the first ballot. Without referring to her advisers, she declared that she would "fight and fight to win". But her supporters in the ministry advised her to withdraw. In grief, she chose to give up and withdrew on November 1990. She then supported the "stolid"[27] John Major, the one who would continue the Thatcherite agenda. In November 27th 1990, The Tories elected John Major as their leader "even if he was a duller leader" (Lynch 154).

C.2 The Iron Lady after the Premiership

Ms. Thatcher asserted that she was not sorry for her tough attitude toward Europe. States, as she declared, are existing political entities and it is foolish to seek to ignore, in order to establish a larger entity, such as the European entity theory (Evans 85).

Thatcher said that leaving the Commons would give her more freedom to speak what she believed in, so she retired in 1992. Furthermore, she affirmed that she would stand against any plan for European integration whenever she felt that it would threaten British sovereignty. In the same year, she became a member of the House of Lords as Baroness Thatcher of Kesteven. She didn't stop intervening in politics, particularly in Bosnia and Maastricht

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[26] Michael Ray Dibdin Heseltine, Baron Heseltine (1933). A Conservative MP from 1966 to 2001. Served as Deputy Prime Minister under John Major.

[27] Calm and dependable person who show little emotion

Treaty[28]. She established the Thatcher Foundation to spread her ideas about the free market. She delivered a series of exciting lectures in the United States, where she was awarded the Medal of Freedom.

Later, she wrote her autobiography "*The Downing Street Years*" in 1993 then "*The Path to Power*" in 1995 and published "Statecraft" in 2002. She respectively lost the most important men in her life; her husband Denis who died in 2003 and her old friend Ronald Reagan in 2004. In 2005, Thatcher celebrated her eightieth birthday, a huge event that was attended by the Queen Elizabeth, Prince Philip, PM Tony Blair and a large number of former colleagues and friends. In 2007, she was honoured with the bronze statue in the Houses of Parliament which stands with that of Churchill.

After suffering a series of strokes, Thatcher died on 8th April 2013 at the age of 87. In the UK, reactions to Thatcher's death varied among those who showed respect, admiration and gratitude deemed her as Britain's greatest Prime Minister in peacetime. While those who celebrated her death, expressed their cruel and bitter criticism showing their deep hostility toward her.

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[28] The Treaty on European Union or TEU. Undertaken to integrate Europe. It was signed on 7 February 1992 by the members of the European Community in Maastricht, Netherlands. The TEU introduced several changes to the laws of the EC. It also formed the basis of the European Constitution, which was later agreed in 2004.

Conclusion

Thatcherism was an answer for those who were always in a debate as to whether a difference to the course of events could be made by individuals. Actually, Thatcher's achievements remain truly impressive; starting with the fact that she was the first female PM in British history, the long lasting in the office since Lord Liverpool in the nineteenth century, lost none of the three successive general elections and creating her own ideology "Thatcherism" with the help of three main factors; the new leader, the improvement of new ideas and Margaret Thatcher herself as a convinced politician. She combined a set of leadership qualities as self-confidence, conviction, determination, intellectual capacity, aggressiveness, clear beliefs, dominance pragmatic ambition, courage and patience provided she gets what she wants.

Thatcherism, as an economic project, did not achieve all its aims; nevertheless, it succeeded, as a political project, in achieving its main objective which was the restoration of the Tory electoral, ideological, economic and political hegemony. It created a new dominant party system that ruled for eighteen years.

Chapter Two

Blairism: from Old to New Labour

Chapter Two. Blairism: from Old to New Labour

Introduction

Tony Blair restored the prestige and the position of the Labour party after almost two decades in the opposition. He led the New Labour to its first election victory in 1997 general election with the largest parliamentary majority since the II WW. He was the only person to have led the Labour Party to more than two consecutive general election victories. He became the youngest Prime Minister since Lord Liverpool in 1812 and the only PM who has gained early large popularity receiving a 93% public approval rating. He was the Labour's longest-serving Prime Minister.

This second chapter presents the political career of Tony Blair, his domestic and foreign policies and reforms. It also examines the fall of the "Old" and the rise of the "New" Labour, Neo-liberalism and the Third Way ideology.

Chapter Two.   Blairism: from Old to New Labour

A Tony Blair's Road to Downing Street

Tony Blair, in full Anthony Charles Lynton Blair, a Scottish-born and a son of a barrister who worked to achieve in politics what his father couldn't do. Unlike his father –who was a conservative- Blair joined the Labour Party, became his leader then one of the youngest and longest serving Prime Ministers of Great Britain.

A.1 The Birth of a Leader

Leo and Hazel Blair gave birth to their second son Anthony on May 6th 1953 in Edinburgh, Scotland. Blair's family moved to Australia in 1954 and then returned to the UK to live in Durham where his father[29] lectured in law at Durham University.

Tony Blair attended Chorister Public School in Durham at the age of eight. He was an intelligent child from a young age. He was sent to the prestigious Fettes College, Edinburgh from 1966 to 1971. He was a rebellious teenager who was not liked by his teachers. His biographer, John Rentoul wrote: "*all the teachers I spoke to when researching the book said he was a complete pain in the backside and they were very glad to see the back of him*" (Pugh). Blair then studied Jurisprudence at St John's College, Oxford and graduated in 1975 with second-class honours. He then became a member of Lincoln's Inn[30] and enrolled as pupil barrister. At University, he was a singer and guitarist in the Ugly Rumors' rock band. He also lost his mother to cancer at that period.

As a son of a politician[31] and lawyer and a brother of a high court judge, Blair's surroundings encouraged him to enter politics. Indeed, his political tendency appeared when he was twelve. He stood as the Conservative candidate in a mock election at school. At University, Blair was highly influenced by the Anglican priest Peter Thomson[32]. He later stated that Peter awakened his religious faith, a desire for social change and left-wing politics (wheeler). Blair was liberal in his ideas and argued over philosophy every night with Thomson and other friends. Hinman wrote: "*it seems to have been at these late-night sessions*

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[29] Leo Blair worked as a junior tax inspector whilst also studying for a law degree from Edinburgh University

[30] Is one of the four Inns of Court in London to which barristers of England and Wales belong and where they are called to the Bar.

[31] His father was a chairman of the local Conservative Association. He was preparing for the election to become a Tory MP when he suffered a stroke.

[32] (1936–2010) was an Australian Anglican priest, His thought was deeply influenced by the Scottish philosopher John Macmurray. Thomson studied for the priesthood and became more radical in his Christianity and passionate about politics as a way for Christians to achieve their social objectives.

that Tony formed the political views that have guided him ever since." (26) After his graduation, he became active in left-wing politics.

In 1976, Blair became a trainee barrister in the chambers of Derry Irvine[33], where he met his future wife Cherie Booth. They married in March 1980 and had four children.

Blair joined the Labour Party in the early 1980s. He was nominated to be the Labour candidate of Beaconsfield in 1982. Indeed, Blair lost the election but he was seen as a potential candidate. After creating the Sedgefield constituency[34] for the 1983 general election, the local Labour Party nominated Tony Blair who was supported by the Trindon branch Secretary John Burton[35]. He was the last one to be added to the shortlist before the election. Blair was elected to the House of Commons representing Sedgefield District, despite the party's loss of the general election.

As an MP, Blair presented his personal beliefs about socialism in his first speech to the House of Commons on July 6, 1983: "*I am a socialist not through reading a textbook that has caught my intellectual fancy, nor through unthinking tradition, but because I believe that at its best, socialism corresponds most closely to an existence that is both rational and moral*" (Radice 44). He also highlighted the issue of high unemployment. He stated that without work, his constituents "*not only suffer the indignity of enforced idleness—they wonder how they can afford to get married, to start a family, and have access to all the benefits of society that they should be able to take for granted*" (Richards 31).

Blair's hard work impressed the members of his Party. The shadow employment secretary John Smith, who played a key role in Blair's success, recruited him on a committee to examine a bill introduced by the Conservatives to reform the trade union law. In 1984, he was appointed as the assistant Treasury spokesman.

Since Blair's entry into the Labour Party, the party witnessed one of its worst periods. The 1987 general election was not better than its predecessor of 1983. The party got only 31.5 percent of the vote (Hinman 44). However, the disastrous results of the election and the

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[33] later became Blair's first Lord Chancellor

[34] A body of voters in a specified area who elect a representative to a legislative body.

[35] A Labour Party councillor in County Durham, England. He was a member of Sedgefield Borough Council, representing the ward of Fishbum and Old Trimdon. The man who recognized Blair's capacities. He is most notable for being the constituency agent of Tony Blair.

decline of the Labour's position in the British political arena led the leader Neil Kinnock[36] and some members to think about modernising the party by changing its main policies. Tony Blair supported Kinnock's ideas, especially those related to the support of the Conservatives' privatization policy and, more importantly, the restriction of the trade unions power.

After the 1987 general election, Blair was promoted as the spokesman of Trade and Industry. At the same time, he was a member of the CND[37]. Then in 1988, he became a shadow cabinet member. He was made the shadow Secretary of Energy where he opposed the electricity privatization bill proposed by the Tory government in 1989. He also defended his party's opposition to the nuclear power, although he was personally against it.

By the end of 1989, Blair was appointed shadow Employment Secretary. As part of the party's modernisation plan, Blair had to eliminate the policy of a closed shop and thus confront the unions. After his efforts to deal with this issue and other employment issues such as minimum wage and full employment, he has gained support from his party members and became more known by the public.

With another Tory victory in the 1992 general election, Neil Kinnock had to resign and Tony Blair became the shadow Home Secretary under the new Labour leader John Smith.

As shadow Home Secretary, The most important event for Blair was his visit to the United States with the shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown. The two friends were influenced by President Bill Clinton's ideas and policies that helped bringing the Democratic Party back to power after 12 years. Clinton won after he led his party to abandon its leftist policies and moved to the centre. Actually, John Smith, the traditionalist labour, was fearful of Brown and Blair's influence by the "*Clintonization*" and warned of any attempt to change the party radically because it will certainly lead to divisions within the party: "*All this Clintonization business, it's just upsetting everyone. Stop boat-rocking with all this talk of change and modernization. It will just divide the party. If we remain united, we'll win. Do just shut up*" (Hinman 53).

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[36] Neil Gordon Kinnock, Baron Kinnock (1942). Served as MP from 1970 until 1995. The leader of the Labour Party and the Opposition from 1983 until 1992.

[37] Labour CND is a specialist section of CND, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

A.2 The Labour Party Leader 1994

Back to Kinnock's resignation in 1992, Blair asked his closest friend and political partner Gordon Brown[38] to run for leadership. He was convinced that the Labour party needed a young and powerful modernizer and no one but Brown can reform it and bring it back to power. Nevertheless, Brown refused to face John Smith, he supported him and so did Blair, of course, because of their strong relationship even before he entered Parliament. However, despite Blair's loyalty to Smith, he was convinced that the latter, regardless of his strength and experience, was traditionalist and will not allow any radical change to the party, and therefore it is difficult for them to achieve their goals if the party doesn't abandon its old policies. Blair has also become more convinced that he should do what Brown has rejected and that politics means nothing if he will not govern and applied what he believes in: "*what was the point of politics if not to win power, govern and put into practice the policies you believe in.*" (Blair 62).

In 1994, Blair's political career changed as no one expected, John Smith suddenly died of a heart attack, and Blair decided to run for the leadership election. The only obstacle he faced was Gordon Brown. Blair did not want to confront his political big brother and the man who taught him the business of politics –in Blair's words-. He sought to persuade him to withdraw from the contest. With the help of Peter Mandelson[39], a friend of both, who eventually managed to convince Brown that Blair likely to lead the party to win the next general election. Furthermore, opinion polls showed Blair was more popular among voters. Gordon Brown decided to withdraw in order to avoid the division of the pro-modernizing vote (historic figures).

On July 24th, through a very successful leadership election, Tony Blair was nominated as Leader of the Labour Party to become the youngest party leader ever elected.

As a leader of the Labour Party and the opposition, Blair promised he would put an end to the party's years in the opposition: *"Right, I'm bored of this Opposition malarky, I want to be*

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[38] James Gordon Brown (1951) a doctoral graduated of the Edinburgh University and a British MP from 1983 to 2015. A shadow cabinet member from 1989 to 1997. The longest-serving Chancellor of the Exchequer in modern history under Blair from 1997 to 2007. Leader of the Labour Party and British Prime Minister from 2007 to 2010.

[39] Peter Benjamin Mandelson, Baron Mandelson (1953). A British MP from 1992. He held a number of cabinet positions under Prime Ministers Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. He was one of those who rebranded the Labour Party as New Labour before its victory in the 1997 general election.

PM... what has come home to me more than anything else is the utter futility of Opposition. I did not join the Labour Party to protest. I joined it as a party of government and I will make sure that it is a party of government" (Metro). He criticized the traditional style of politics followed by his party and changed it to become known as the "*New Labour Party*". Blair and a group of modernizers led by Gordon Brown, Peter Mandelson and Alastair Campbell[40] have abandoned the Party's left policies and moved it to the centre. They abandoned the nationalization policy that the party was committed to by changing the constitution's Clause IV, reduced the trade unions control over the party, proposed policies to reduce inflation, and supported Britain's integration into the EU. In 1995, Blair led his party to a large victory over conservatives in nationwide municipal elections (Gallagher). He took the opportunity to criticize John Major at the dispatch box: "*I lead my party, he follows his.*" (Seldon 4)

A.3 The General Election 1997

In 1997, when the then Prime Minister John Major announced the dissolution of the Parliament and a general election on the 1st of May, the New Labour introduced their manifesto which included fresh and radical policies under "*New Labour, New Britain*". The manifesto promised not to raise income taxes, to rebuild the NHS[41], to increase the national income spend on Education which was their number one priority (it has been the Tories biggest failure), to create successful and profitable businesses by promoting competitive industry at home and abroad, to reform the Bank of England, to reduce unemployment, to be tough on crime tough on the causes of crime, to lay the foundation of a modern welfare state, to decentralize political power throughout the UK and to give Britain the leadership in Europe (Politics resources).

Tony Blair and his New Labour won a landslide victory with 418 seats; it was a political earthquake –as Tony Blair described it- (Blair 20) and a historic achievement for the Party. On the other hand, the Conservatives' defeat was also historic, with their lowest number of seats (only 165) since 1906 (Politics 97).

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[40] Alastair John Campbell (1957) is a British journalist, broadcaster, political aide and author. He wrote the speech that led to the party's review of Clause IV and the birth of 'New Labour'. He was known for his work as Tony Blair's spokesman and campaign director (1994–1997), followed by Downing Street Press Secretary (1997–2000), for PM Tony Blair. He then became Director of Communication and spokesman for the Labour Party (2000–2003).

[41] Reducing spending on administration and increasing spending on patient care.

The Labour Party could not have achieved this victory before Blair's radical changes and the abandonment of the leftist principles that ruled it. In addition, advertising and media relations played a determining role in the party's victory; Peter Mandelson presented a modern and attractive image of New Labour through a visual campaign on TV and Alastair Campbell gained support from popular conservative newspapers like "*The Sun*"*,* "*The Daily Mail*" and "*The Independent*" (Seldon 254-255). Furthermore, the success was due to a professional campaign led by a powerful, attractive, a good communicator, young and good looking leader like Tony Blair.

B The Context of Blairism

The term "*Blairism*" refers to the policies and principles followed by Tony Blair. Blair, who changed his party to become the "*New Labour*", took a position that was associated with a Third Way philosophy, an interventionist foreign policy, a large focus on education, a great support for European integration and a record investment into public services.

B.1 The fall of the "Old" and the rise of the "New"

Due to the successive failure of the Labour Party to win a general election since 1979, it was extremely necessary to make programmatic and organisational changes for the party. So, how has the Labour Party become "New"? And what are the main differences between "old" and "new" Labour?

Since the party's foundation by trade unions and social organizations, it had been seen as being directed towards socialism, where the government is responsible for health care, housing, and employment. However, after the great defeat in the 1979 general election, many reforms were carried out as Kinnock's abandonment of the unpopular old party positions, especially the nationalization of some industries. Kinnock also tried to move the party to the centre by fighting to remove the left-wing Militant tendency from the party, and worked to modernize the party to increase its possibilities to win elections.

Tony Blair's leadership was the most important turning point in the party's history. Indeed, since entering the Labour party in 1983, Blair has been convinced that the party needs not only a slight adjustment, but radical changes in its thinking, style, attitudes, programme and policies (Blair 58). He believed that the hard left had to modernize or die *"Parties that do not change die, and this party is a living movement not a historical monument. If the world change and we don't, then we become of no use to the world. Our principles cease being*

principles and just ossify into dogma." (Metro). He continued Kinnock's work for moving the party from the hard left position that was represented by the "Old" to a new centre-left party rebranded "New Labour"[42].

Blair was determined to reform the Labour party, his first step towards a new and modern one -before taking over the leadership of the party and after his "*tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime*" policy that differed from the Tory's "*tough on crime*"- was to support John Smith's "*One Member, One Vote*" decision (OMOV). The decision came to change the traditional method of electing candidates in a variety of elections within the party, where power was in the hands of trade unions since they had block voting privileges while members were considered as supporters. Later, the OMOV was approved with changes in the portions of the unions, party members, and MP's in the selection of party leadership. Tony Blair was elected as the party leader in 1994 under that system and a true OMOV was used for the first time in the 2015 leadership election (Rentoul 206-18).

On the other hand, Blair's most important task after he assumed power with the other architects of the "New Labour" was to amend the symbolic Clause IV[43] of the Labour's Constitution radically. It was the party's philosophy, ideology and the main element of its socialist identity. It defined the party's goals and values and was considered a direct commitment to nationalization and common ownership. Indeed, there have been many failed attempts to change the Clause for over 30 years, but Blair's insistence on changing the old party's foundations and winning the general election, and his belief in a free market policy made him declare his intention to abolish Clause IV at the 1994 party conference. After a long battle with the opposition, he succeeded in winning a controversial vote to amend Clause IV in 1995.

By comparing Tony Blair's new party to the Old Labour, differences are found in philosophy, ideology and position. The Old was hard-left, purely socialist and believed in common ownership. Whereas New Labour as a project follows a centrist philosophy, it is a mixed of right-wing and left-wing policies that believes in capitalism and socialism in what is

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[42] New Labour was a brand of the newly reformed party; it was first used as a slogan of the party conference in 1994 under Blair's leadership.

[43] The former Clause IV of the Labour Party constitution was drafted in November 1917 by Sidney Webb and adopted in 1918: "To secure for the workers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible up the basis of the common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange, and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service."

known the "*Third Way*" philosophy (Huntesmith). Additionally, another difference is in the shift from a party that provides a large welfare state for a more equal society to a party that believes in a small welfare state based on the principle of "*hand up, not hand-out*" and that government should stop its interference in businesses "*New Labour doesn't believe it is the job of government to interfere in the running of businesses*" said Blair (Metro). He added: "*we should and always would fight for social justice, but in today's world that didn't mean more state control*" (Blair 59).

Despite their opposition to Blair's reversal over classical social democracy, most left-wing intellectuals, critics and thinkers, however, welcomed his ideas at first as it was mainly aimed at restoring the party's position and ending the Conservatives' rule. They also predicted that Blair's ideas would put an end to the widely disputed effects of Thatcherism that had provoked many reactions. But they soon turned on what they called "*Blair's conservative radicalism*" accusing him of moving away from traditional Labour principles such as abandoning social democracy and social equality and becoming the party of middle and business class. In this context, Blair defended his decisions by saying: "*the reason we have been out of power for 15 years is simple, that society changed and we refused to change...what modernization for me is about is not dumping principle, it's the opposite. It's retrieving what the Labour Party is really about*" (Metro). Critics also accused Blair of adopting certain aspects of Thatcherism. They argued that New Labour is an extension of Thatcherism and it doesn't differ from Thatcher's attempts to blend the traditional conservative with the classical liberal principles (Romero 44-51).

B.2 Neo-liberalism and the Third Way Ideology

The New Labour took a way that is "*neither the first way of the old nor the second way of the right*" (Driver, Martell 67) since his leader was neither right nor left politician as he said: "*I was and remain first and foremost not so much a politician of traditional left or right, but a modernizer*" (Blair 10). Indeed, the political philosophy of the New Labour was influenced by the party's development of Anthony Giddens[44] Third Way which attempted to provide a synthesis between capitalism and socialism.

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[44] Baron Giddens (1938), a British sociologist known for his views of modern societies. He was listed as the 5th most-referenced author of books in the humanities. The director of the London School of Economics

According to Giddens, the concept of the Third Way is not new and has been used by writers and politicians. In 1938, Harold Macmillan wrote "*the Middle Way*" which called for a compromise between capitalism and socialism; it was an introduction to the idea of the Third Way (Robert et al).

Giddens used the term "*Third Way*" as a renewal of social democracy and an attempt to go beyond both classical social democracy and neo-liberalism. According to him, the Third Way ideology is based on two principles. The first is "*no rights without responsibilities*", where the government has a set of responsibilities towards its citizens and at the same time ensure that the welfare state doesn't discourage the search for work. The second principle is "*no authority without democracy*" where democracy is the only way to establish power.

In his explanation to the Third Way ideology, its aims, values and programme; Giddens said that neo-liberals want the state's role to be diminished just as social democrats were determined to expand that role. On the other hand, what is required in the Third Way is the need to rebuild the state by going beyond the rightists who say government is the "*enemy*" as well as beyond the leftists who say government is the "*answer*" (Mckenzie 66).

Tony Blair defined the Third Way as a philosophy that "*stands for a modernized social democracy*" (Romano 03). He embodied a mixture of left-wing and right-wing ideologies. He rejected the neo-liberal belief that the market can control the economy. At the same time, he saw that the left wing belief of the state's intervention in the economy is outdated (Mellbye). He adopted the neo-liberal principle of wealth creation and tempered it with traditional socialist values like equality of opportunity and redistribution in an attempt to combine neo-liberal economics and social ethics.

B.3 Domestic Agenda: the Reforms

After the great popularity he gained from the Great Friday Agreement[45] and the Kosovo War, Blair focused on implementing his domestic programme, where he expanded government control over public sector reforms and introduced new reform policies.

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[45] The Good Friday Agreement or the Belfast Agreement is an agreement signed in 1998 between Britain, the Republic of Ireland and the Northern Ireland parties. The agreement calls on Protestants to share political power in Northern Ireland with the Catholic minority and give the Republic of Ireland an advisory role in the Northern Ireland affairs. It aims to put an end to an era of sectarian civil war and achieve peaceful coexistence between the Northern Ireland communities and between them and the Republic of Oreland. The agreement was, therefore, a historic achievement for Tony Blair and his government since no previous administration succeeded in establishing peace in the territory.

Chapter Two.   Blairism: from Old to New Labour

In regards to economy, an undeniable success during Tony Blair's time as PM was with it. Indeed, economic power was handed over to Gordon Brown, Britain's most powerful ever chancellor who oversaw Britain's longest period of economic growth ever. His philosophy was to create wealth and regulate the state budget deficit in order to invest savings in the public sector (Romero 77). During the first 2 years, he kept within the spending plans of the conservative government in order to provide a budget surplus on public services for the next years (Lynch 175).

One of Brown and his team's first reforms was the independence of the Bank of England. They empowered it with control over interest rates following the conservative monetarist policy of "*non-interventionism*". In addition, the Reagan-Thatcher belief that "*economic growth was depend on encouraging greater private investment*", dominated the New Labour's economic policy (Denzau, Roy 08). Their neoliberal policies helped business and private enterprise to increase their financial activity. Furthermore, Blair and Brown's main economic success was keeping unemployment low. Also, inflation has been kept to a record low according to HM Treasury and the Bank of England (In pictures).

In 2001 electoral manifesto, Tony Blair announced radical reform of public services that included "*a much closer relationship with the private sector*" (Blair 314). He also announced a rise in spending. Actually, most commentators argued that Tony Blair secured his second general election victory in 2001, which was dubbed "*the quiet landslide*" by the media, due to his economic achievements of the first term.

During Blair's premiership, economic growth was steady and the real incomes of Britons grew 18 per cent during 1997–2006. It was the longest uninterrupted period of growth in 200 years. Nevertheless, UK productivity is still lower than its main competitors (US and Europe). In Addition, one of the key economic failures under Blair and Brown was the huge rise in personal debt due to high house prices and easy access to credit cards (In pictures).

On another issue, one of the major points of the Labour manifesto was the issue of constitutional reform. Blair's constitutional reform in a frame of modernization was "*inspired by notions of democracy, decentralization, accountability, community and co-operation*" (Coates, et al 80). Tony Blair promised: on the one hand, the decentralization of power in the UK that resulted in referenda for Scotland, Wales (1997), Northern Ireland and England (1998) on devolution. Each referendum got the "yes" vote and power was devolved. In Scotland, devolution took over legislative competences, fiscal policies, and other

responsibilities in health, education, social services, transport, environment and agriculture. The Welsh Assembly, however, lacked legislative powers as defence, foreign policy, social security, employment and constitution that remained under the Westminster Parliament. In England, the implement of a decentralization system by establishing eight Regional Assemblies to support the English Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) in order to foster economic growth around England. The members of the previous bodies were appointed by local government and not directly elected.

On the other hand, the parliamentary reform, with the modernization of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Blair presented various proposals to reform the electoral system in the House of Commons as the Alternative Vote[46] and the Proportional Representation[47] to replace the ongoing First-Past-the-Post system[48]. But the new Labour's electoral majority saw the reform unnecessary. As for the House of Lords, Blair's government introduced the House of Lords Act in 1999 that abolished the right of hereditary peers to sit in the House of Lords after 700 years (Lynch 175). Their number lowered from 759 to 92 in 2001. Briefly, the failure of reforms in the two Houses or the incomplete reforms "*prevented Parliament from becoming a fully representative body*" (Romero 76).

In regards to Northern Ireland, Tony Blair worked to continue the initiatives of Margaret Thatcher and John Major toward the peace process in Northern Ireland. He was the first British prime minister since Lloyd George to hold face-to-face talks with the Republican leadership. Thanks to his strong relationship with Bertie Ahern[49], the two governments worked together to overcome the obstacles to peace in the region (Bowcott).

Blair's proposals included: plans for a Northern Ireland Assembly with a power-sharing executive. A body linking devolved assemblies across the UK with Westminster and Dublin. Also, most controversially, plans to realise prisoners and allow the head of the IRA take his seat in parliament. However, that was deemed necessary to achieve peace.

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[46] (AV) also known as the Instant-runoff voting (IRV) or Transferable vote is a voting method used in single-seat elections with more than two candidates.

[47] (PR) characterizes electoral systems by which divisions in an electorate are reflected proportionately in the elected body.

[48] (FPTP) voting method is one in which voters indicate on a ballot the candidate of their choice, and the candidate who receives most votes win.

[49] Patrick Bartholomew Ahern (1951) is a former Irish Sinn Féin politician who served as Leader of the government from 1997 to 2008, Leader of "Fianna Fáil" which split from the Sinn Féin from 1994 to 2008, Leader of the Opposition from 1994 to 1997,

Blair's hard work helped to bring about the signing of the Good Friday Agreement that was seen as one of his greatest achievements whilst in power. But, the power-sharing executive or the Northern Ireland Assembly collapsed at the end of 2002 after claims of an "IRA spy-ring" at Stormont. In addition, the unsuccessful attempts to decommission the IRA weapons were the main obstacle to peace.

Nevertheless, Blair's refusal to "*abandon the process in its darken moments*" (Bowcott) helped restoring the Northern Ireland Assembly in 2007 (all-party executive formed) after the St Andrews Agreement of October 2006 additionally to the British Army withdrawal from Northern Ireland after announcing the end of its mission that it had been operating since 1969 (Lynch 210-213).

In social issues and public services, education has been Tony Blair's top priority since becoming Labour leader: "*Ask me my three main priorities for government, and I tell you: education, education and education*" (Metro). He took efforts to start the important changes that continued throughout his three terms. In its first year, the government published the White Paper in schools, which provided an analysis of the state of education and offered various measures to solve its needs. For this reason, the government implemented the Literacy and Numeracy programme of eleven-years-olds by devoting extra hours to basic subjects, as well as reducing the statutory curriculum for primary schools. In addition, the government introduced new formal tests in primary and secondary schools for assessment and evaluation of both students and teachers. Moreover, they approved a reward system to motivate teachers and improve the quality of education by compensating good teachers with extra payments. They also replaced under-performing schools with academies which work then became centres of excellence (Seldon 361-384).

Furthermore, Blair modernise Labour's philosophy of comprehensive education, and expanded school types such as: independent schools, grammar schools, foundation schools, comprehensive schools, secondary modern schools, Fresh Start schools in Education Action Zones (EAZs), and Beacon Schools[50]. With such measures, parents could choose the school they wanted for their children. Indeed, the most important step in Blair's educational reforms

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[50] Education Action Zones (EAZs) were areas with poor examination results, high unemployment, and a high rate of failing schools that needed state economic support so as to improve schooling standards. Beacon Schools were centres of excellence that would function as a model for other schools. The whole education system integrated a competitive market ideology that detached the egalitarian values that Old Labour defended.

was the introduction of tuition fees in higher education[51], which angers many but seen as necessary in order to achieve a "*more sober atmosphere*" at universities (Seldon 361-384).

Tony Blair kept to his word of concentrating on education by spending millions on new school buildings, more staff and better equipment. But that was not the case with the NHS. He continued the policies of the previous conservative governments with a growing marketization process in the health system

In the 1997 Labour manifesto, Tony Blair promised to "*save the NHS*". He said that waiting times would be cut; bureaucracy slashed and promised better services for all. In general terms, what did Blair do for the health service, could be summarized in different achievements and failures.

Waiting times are on their way down, overcrowding in hospitals has been dramatically reduced, new services are available (such as the Cancer Information Centre 2004) and in 1998, the NHS direct service was set up. This helped to reduce waiting times by giving telephone advice to non-emergency cases.

On the other hand, the MRSA bug is a problem in hospitals nationwide. Despite Labour pumping millions into this, it didn't go away. Additionally to the crisis of the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) that preceded the 2001 general election. However, despite criticism that highlighted a disappointing underfunding of the health system and the growing privatising tendency, New Labour managed to improve health rates and efficiency and quality in the system (Seldon 385-407).

In regards to foreign policy, Foreign Secretary in Blair's government, Robin Cook declared in 1997 that New Labour would follow an "*ethical*" foreign policy. However, finding a more powerful role in the world was a hallmark of Blair's premiership. Therefore, one of the important concepts that enable us to understand Blair's foreign policy is the concept of the "*Atlantic Bridge*". Blair believed that the crisis could be solved through multilateral means, but he saw the importance of using force if threats posed a danger to international security. He therefore founded "*Blair's Doctrine of International Community*" in 1999 (Ralph 5). According to this doctrine, the New Britain's foreign policy should assume that "*acts of*

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[51] The proposal included a loan system that allowed students to pay back their university costs and a grant system that exempted low-income families from paying fees

genocide cannot by any means be an internal affair"; and that any government violates human rights must lose its legitimacy in the international community. This is perhaps why Kosovo has become an international security issue that needed a necessary humanitarian intervention as Blair declared. By that time, NATO had begun its military operation against the Serbian forces under Slobodan Milŏsević in Kosovo and Europe and the US administration agreed on this because Blair had devoted his political will to building the *"Atlantic Bridge"*.

On another hand, and unlike Edward Heath, who was interested in the European relationship over the American's; and Margaret Thatcher, who was a symbol of the special relationship with the US while opposed the Anglo-European relationship. Blair was the first British Prime Minister who tried to stand at the center of European social and political relations, with a marked continuation of the principle of *"special relationship"* with the United States. He gave them the same importance on the British foreign agenda without risking any of the political arenas.

Indeed, Tony Blair, who was particularly pro-European, promised to make Britain a leading country *"at the heart of Europe"*. In a speech in Warsaw, Blair said that his government's attitude towards Europe would be neither with those who *"wanted the EU to have the minimum power and still committed to the nation state and free market"* nor with the *"superstaters"*, those who *"wanted the EU to replace the nation state and have maximum powers of control"*. He wanted a *"third way"*, where the states of the EU keep their individual sovereignty but co-operate on matters of common interest (Lynch 195).

Tony Blair has focused more than his predecessors on the development of a *"European security and defense policy"*. This development was seen as a major event after decades of hesitation. Thus, it is important to emphasize on the strategic importance of Britain's adoption of the defense position of the European integration file in the fields of security and foreign policy, since Britain has traditionally adopted a distinct position on the continent as an island, and its choice remains Anglo-Saxon. The concept of European security has for many years formed one of the contention points between the Western European countries, that had been divided into two flows: the first led by France and says the existence of an independent European defense concept that maintains a strong relationship with NATO, and another flow in which Britain and Germany represents its cornerstone, and calls for making the European defense part of NATO's own strategy (Lynch 195).

In 2002, the single currency emerged again to be the issue that most divided the cabinet. Blair, who was concerned with the political implications of the case as putting the UK at the heart of Europe, supported Britain's joining the single currency and described any rejection as "*crazy*": "*Should we stand apart from the alliance right on our doorstep as a country? It would be crazy to do that. It is an economic union. We shouldn't, for political reasons, stand aside. I don't believe that would be a fulfilment of our national interest. I believe it would be a betrayal of our national interest*" (key quotes). But, he was strongly opposed by Gordon Brown, who was more concerned with the financial aspects of the case, and didn't want to risk the British economy which was at its best by giving up the pound. He made the "*five economic tests*" as a condition to adopt the euro, such as judgments about its effect on jobs, inflation and trade (Ludlam and Martin 201-202).

Britain's relationship with Europe has often been unsteady, although Blair devoted considerable efforts to creating a favourable image of Britain in Europe. For instance, Britain declined to join Eurozone. Furthermore, regarding to Britain's budgetary contribution that was disproportional, Blair tried to negotiate retention of Britain's rebate[52] that was won by Margaret Thatcher in 1984 but he gave in to Europe in 2006. In addition, he was unable to obtain satisfactory reform of the CAP which had never worked in Britain's favour[53]. Moreover, in one year EU imposed over 300 regulations and directives on Britain, which government accepted without debate.

However, in the context of the special relationship with the United States, Blair's relationship with Bill Clinton was really special, since they shared the same modernising vision that changed their parties, and both of them defended the Third Way theory. In addition, Blair viewed Clinton as a role-model politician whose policies should be followed as a key to electoral success. However, Blair remains committed to the issue of friendship, even with George W. Bush, despite their differences in terms of ideology and approach. It was a major and controversial relationship that was sparked off by the events of 9/11.

Following al-Qaeda's 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington, the United States launched its "*war on terror*" from Afghanistan with the aim of changing the regime by eliminating the Taliban that guaranteed protection to al-Qaeda. Therefore, in the context of

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[52] The return to the UK of a proportion of its budgetary payment to the EU

[53] Britain received less from CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) than any of the major nations of Western Europe. In 2004, Britain received 9% while Germany received 14% and 22% for France.

the special relationship with George W. Bush, Blair called for an international coalition led by the UN and NATO as a necessary and urgent measure saying that the next war is a world battle against terrorism (Seldon 605). "*This is not a battle between the United States of America and terrorism but between the free and democratic world and terrorism. We therefore here in Britain stand shoulder to shoulder with our American friends in this hour of tragedy*" (Dyson 79).

Critics argued that Blair's unconditional support for America led Britain to defend American interests through worldwide wars. He ordered British troops into combat five times during his first six years contrary to his declaration that "*his could be the first generation where not a single British soldier was sent to war*" (Blair: the inside story). In addition, many people view the war as the beginning of the end for Blair, and there have consistently been calls for the withdrawal of troops since the US "*had no real need of any European military support*" (Seldon 605)

Although the Labour's 2001 election manifesto focused on domestic reforms, particularly the public services, Tony Blair devoted the British government's time and budget to foreign affairs. Furthermore, he did not stop supporting America in the previous wars, but formed with it another coalition in its war on Iraq which overshadowed his second term.

Indeed, under the pretext that Saddam Hussein possesses weapons of mass destruction (WMD), Blair said that Iraq causes a real and unique threat to the security of Britain and the rest of the world. He was convinced that regime change was the only solution to the danger before the American definite decision to use military force to overthrow Saddam Hussein (Dyson 98-126). Indeed, although Blair's government -after the UN resolution 1441[54] in 2002- called for another resolution to launch legal military action, it secretly agreed with Bush's administration to go ahead on the war against Iraq five months before the invasion without the need for a second UN Security Council resolution, as revealed by a confidential document published later in the "*Iraq Inquiry*" (Chilcot report).

However, and in an attempt to win the support of the British people and the world public opinion in favour of the invasion of Iraq, Blair published an intelligence based dossier about the danger posed by Iraq, which became known as the "*Dodgy dossier*". He declared: "*Today

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[54] The resolution offered Iraq under Saddam Hussein a final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations that had been set out in several previous resolutions

we published a 50-page dossier detailing the history of Iraq's weapons mass destruction programme" (Blair's statement to MPs on Iraq).

Eventually, Blair's ambition to keep a special relationship led him to join the US in bypassing the UN and invading Iraq in 2003. The war cost him an overwhelming parliamentary opposition; 139 of his own MPs opposed the invasion additionally to the resignation of other important cabinet ministers (Dyson 108).

Critics argued that the danger was that Tony Blair was committing himself and Britain to limitless and indefinite conflict against any regimes that America regarded as threat. He was determined to be closest ally to G. Bush. In addition, his leadership style led him to marginalize the wide opposition within his cabinet and foreign offices in his crucial decisions. He therefore made a very personal decision to invade Iraq.

Soon, Saddam Hussein's regime fell and Blair's position became more difficult. There is no weapons of mass destruction, was it a lie? Recently, after his "*Iraq Inquiry*"[55], Sir John Chilcot answered that Blair "*was not straight with the nation over the war*" (Chilcot). Consequently, The Iraq war became a historical landmark in Blair's premiership, the turning point, and the decline of his leadership.

C The Collapse of Authority (2005-2007)

Despite Tony Blair's popularity decline according to the opinion polls, the election results were unexpected. It brought a reduced majority for Labour, but a historic third term for Tony Blair and his Labour government.

However, the most important issues that dominated Blair's last years in office and were the reasons of his leadership decline were: his relationship with his Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown, the aftermath of the war in Iraq, London bombings 2005, referendum on European constitution, cash for honours allegations, and his announcement of his resignation date a year before he intended to go (he was the first Prime Minister to do so).

C.1 Departure

The war in Iraq cost him soldiers, lives and the loss of respect from Britons. This is the reason that this mistake will be remembered as the greatest and the main reason of Blair's

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[55] Iraq Inquiry or the Chilcot inquiry (after its chairman John Chilcot) was set up in 2009 by PM Gordon Brown to examine the UK's involvement in the Iraq war. It was published in July 2016.

downfall. Some critics in addition saw the London bombings as direct consequences of the Iraq war, and that the military action had encouraged the spread of terror as the emergence of the ISIS (Lynch 217).

Concerning Europe, Blair announced that a referendum election for voting on the ratification of the European constitution became no longer necessary. The decision made the British people feel they had been ignored and cheated by their government over Europe (Hinman 109). Furthermore, and additionally to his last years problems, there were various accusations in 2006 and 2007 that the Blair's government took advantage of its power to give honours and peerages to wealthy donors in exchange of cash donations. Blair was the first serving PM has been questioned by police in a criminal investigation. In this "*cash for Honours*" scandal, a long police inquiry eventually concluded in 2007 that there was insufficient evidence to warrant prosecutions.

Within the cabinet, Brown and Blair's relationship has worsened in the last years of Blair's tenure. On the one hand Blair didn't believe that Brown would be able to carry out New Labour agenda: "*I didn't really believe Gordon would carry on the agenda… I now knew what would be coming after me. It would not exactly be Old Labour, but it wouldn't be authentic New Labour either*" (Blair 508). On the other hand, according to Mandelson, Brown refused to cooperate or work with Blair, and finally forced him out (Mandelson 427). Their differences were often due to their ideological beliefs. Brown was a left-wing modernizer who frequently opposed Blair's reforms in education, health and welfare. However, according to Seldon, power was the main reason that divided the two men and not policies or ideologies (Seldon 667).

After ten years in power and because of the plots to overthrow him, and ever decreasing support from his party, Tony Blair announced that he would resign within one year and actually he did, he announced his resignation as the Labour party leader firstly, then as Prime Minister on 27 June 2007.

C.2 Post-premiership

Tony Blair resigned from the House of Commons and refused the traditional seat in the House of Lords that was offered to former PMs. In the same day, he was confirmed as the Middle East Envoy and served in this role until his resignation in 27th may 2015 (BBC).

Chapter Two. Blairism: from Old to New Labour

In 2008-2009, he launched Faith and Globalisation programme at Yale University in the US, Durham University in the UK and the National University of Singapore (Durham University News). In the same year, he established Tony Blair Associates in order to provide strategic advice on political and economic direction and governmental reform. Later, he launched the Tony Blair Faith Foundation in order to encourage different faiths to join together in tackling poverty and conflict (Byrnes). He also created the Institute for Global Change that aims to "*arm politicians with strategies and policies to rebuild the centre, and combat populism*" (Wintour). In September 2010, Blair published his autobiography "*A Journey*".

In the context of Blair's wars, the Iraq Inquiry that was published in July 2016 criticised Blair for joining the US in the Iraq invasion of 2003. It stated that "there was no urgent threat from Saddam Hussein to British interests; the military intervention was not a last resort and the peaceful options for disarmament had not been exhausted, the intelligence reporting about Iraqi WMD was presented with unwarranted certainty, UK and USA had undermined the authority of the United Nations Security Council, the process of identifying the legal basis was far from satisfactory and a war in 2003 was unnecessary" (Bowcott).

The results of the Iraq Inquiry led to widespread protests in Britain, demanding a trial for Blair as a war criminal. One year later, an Iraqi former general launched a case in which he called for a prosecution of Tony Blair for "*the crime of aggression*". But the case was dismissed on the ground that the crime of aggression doesn't exist in the English law (Bowcott).

As a response, Blair said that he made the decision in a good faith and denied claims that war increased terrorism. He instead insisted that the world was and is better off without Saddam Hussein. He stated that he will take full responsibility for any mistakes but he cannot and will not say that he took the wrong decision (Independent Staff).

Despite criticism and public disillusionment after the Iraq war as well as the demands for his trial, Tony Blair was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by G. Bush for his support on the war of terror and the Liberty Medal by Bill Clinton for striving to secure liberty to people around the globe. He was also awarded the Order of Freedom by president of Kosovo for helping in ending conflict there (Wikipedia).

Conclusion

The 1st May 1997 was a glorious day for the Labour Party. After eighteen years of the conservative rule, it returned to power under a young and very ambitious leader who sought to make Britain greater again with new government led by a new party "the *New Labour*".

Tony Blair's premiership was a series of successes and failures that were controversial. Yet, with ten years in power and three consecutive general election victories, Tony Blair succeeded in establishing himself as a leader. He has been the most successful leader ever in the history of the Labour Party regardless of whether he has fulfilled the expectations awaited from him or not.

Chapter Three

Blair and the Thatcherite Legacy

Chapter Three. Blair and the Thatcherite Legacy

Introduction

The fall of Margaret Thatcher left a divisive legacy, the most important of which was the New Labour Party under Tony Blair, which returned after four general elections defeats and seemed to be adopting some of the main principles and beliefs of Thatcherism.

This chapter centres upon the legacies of the Thatcher years as well as those of Tony Blair, and how their policies affected the British society. It also presents similarities and differences between the two leaders and analyzes how much Thatcherism was in Blairism and to what extent was Tony Blair Thatcherite.

Chapter Three. Blair and the Thatcherite Legacy

A The Legacies of Thatcherism and its Impact on British Society

There were a few post-war politicians who had been able to apply their ideas with the same determination and remain loyal to their principles. Indeed Margaret Thatcher's achievements in peacetime stand in line with what Winston Churchill achieved during wartime. She changed the face of her country as well the world political map through the effective role she had played in ending the Cold War.

Thatcherism and what have been called the New Right ideas reacted against the crisis of welfare capitalism under the Labour government. Though these ideas were not new, they became operational during Thatcher's reign. In fact, the intellectual root of Thatcherism was broadly influenced by the philosophies of Friedrich Von Hayek[56] who believed that the function of society is to encourage individual activity and protect diversity (Pugh and Carl 13).

In addition, Keith Josef and Ralph Harris played an essential role in the Thatcherite Revolution, Thatcher herself commented that, *"who in the 1970s would have anticipated the degree of change? 'It started with Sir Keith and me, with the Centre for Policy Studies, and Lord Harris, at the Institute for Economic Affairs. Yes, it started with ideas, with beliefs"* (Blundell 190).

Britain's radical former Prime Minister was and still a very divisive person. Indeed, all aspects of thatcher's legacy were highly contested. Has she had an insight into the problems associated with the ERM? Has she created a new economic dynamic, or has she left the United Kingdom more divided and less cohesive than before?

Supporters claimed that she actually changed Britain forever and saved it from destruction. For them, the service sector and home ownership boomed during her tenure, London became an important financial sector due to the financial deregulation and Britain became no more *"the sick man of Europe"*. Her ideology succeeded in ending consensus, undermining the trade unions, calling for individual responsibility, strengthening relations with the United States, replacing Keynesianism with free market, ensuring a general consensus around free market ideals, rebuilt state institutions and rebalanced the British economy. While critics blamed her for the abolishment of free milk for school children, unemployment, manufacturing decline, increasing of wealth's inequality and the poll tax.

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[56] Thatcher described him as one of the great intellects of the twentieth century.

The Thatcherite legacy did not devoid of paradoxes. Instead of reducing taxes, the tax bill had arisen. She supported Britain's joining the EC in 1975 despite her hostility to the European integration. She aimed to cut government spending but the result was an increasing in expenditure to record levels (Lynch 162).

Either love her or hate her, no one can deny that Thatcher was patriotic stood up for Britain and changed it forever with her own philosophy. A part of Thatcher legacy is the clear impact on her successor, conservatives and Labours. "*She reshaped the politics of a whole generation*" said the Labour leader ED Miliband. While In a statement outside Downing Street, David Cameron said:

> Margaret Thatcher didn't just lead our country - she saved our country... Margaret Thatcher took a country that was on its knees and made Britain stand tall again; we can't deny that Lady Thatcher divided opinion. For many of us, she was and is an inspiration. For others she was a force to be defined against. But if there is one thing that cuts through all of this-one thing that runs through everything she did - it was her lion-hearted love for this country. She will be remembered for the big political battles she fought. Taking on the union barons, privatising industry, unleashing enterprise, rescuing the economy, letting people buy their council homes, winning the Falklands War, strengthening our defences, helping to win the Cold War (Chapman).

B The Net Blair Effect 1994-2007

Blair's first years in the leadership of the Labour Party were devoted to changing the party's old leftist policies. The modernisers used the Third Way theory as a new direction, somewhat further away from the traditional left and closer to the neoliberal right. Blair thus succeeded in bringing the party back to power after 18 years of conservative rule.

After the party's overwhelming victory in the 1997 general election, which is itself one of the most important achievements of Tony Blair and his team, they were optimistic about what they could change in the country and what could be achieved.

Tony Blair succeeded in establishing himself as a leader. There were many reasons for him to regard his first four years in government as a success. Indeed, Peace and relative political normality to Northern Ireland after the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 is one of his important legacies, additionally to the economy which is probably his government's most successful legacy thanks to Gordon Brown. Moreover, Blair's government introduced a set of reforming Acts such as the National Minimum Wage Act, Human Rights Act in 1998 and

Freedom of Information Act. They carried out a successful devolution of power to Scotland and Wales.

Blair's last terms were extremely different from the first one. His controversial foreign policy overshadowed the domestic agenda. In fact, many intellectuals and experts have differed about whether Blair's achievements and legacy were positive or negative, especially in regard to his unconditional support for the US and particularly the Iraq war. As well as the extent to which he adopted Thatcherism.

However, Blair was proud of his achievements despite widespread criticism: "*I did what I thought was right for our country…There is only one government since 1945 that can say all of the following: more jobs, fewer unemployed, better health and education results, lower crime and economic growth in every quarter. Only one government, this one*" (Blair's speech).

C Tony Blair VS Margaret Thatcher

As a comparison between the two leaders during their time in office, we find many similarities. They were both the most dominant twentieth century Prime Ministers, the greatest election winners in their party's history and the longest serving prime ministers; Thatcher for eleven years and 208 days while Blair for ten years and 56 days.

They were both "transformative" leaders; they changed the philosophies of their own parties in order to win back the votes of people who lost confidence in them. In addition, both of them worked to save Britain from decline after the stagnation caused by the previous systems and to make it great again, "*the greatest nation on earth*" as Blair called it (Romero 101).

They were more authoritative than presidents dominating colleagues and opponents. Their presidential style of leadership caused instability within their own parties and led to their resignation after several internal plots to overthrow them (Orchard).

Despite these similarities, there were telling differences between Blair and Thatcher. She enjoyed seeking out enemies while he presented himself as everyone's friend.She was unpopular and divisive figure throughout her years in power. By contrast, Blair gained early popularity but it was highly affected by the Iraq war and he then became a more divisive

figure. Another difference was that Blair speeches were an essential part of his political skills[57], unlike Thatcher who was not a natural communicator (Bennister and Ben 3-4).

Additionally, there is another difference in how both parties dealt with their leaders after their resignations. The Tories still glorify Thatcher and her legacy as we mentioned before in David Cameron's statement: "*she saved our country*". By contrast, as soon as he took over the leadership of the Labour Party in 2010, ED Miliband proclaimed: "*the era of New Labour is over*" (Philpot).

D Blatcherism: the Compound of Blairism and Thatcherism

Margaret Thatcher played a great role in the birth of the New Labour, just as she had a great influence on the Conservative Party before. When she was asked about her greatest achievement in government, she responded: "*Tony Blair and the New Labour. We forced our opponents to change their minds*" (Burns). Many commentators saw that the New Labour under Tony Blair adopted and consolidate the values and beliefs of Thatcherism. They referred to this continuation as "*Blatcherism*". According to the Oxford University Press, the term "*Blatcherism*" is a compound of Blairism and Thatcherism. It implies a criticism of Blair's adoption of Thatcherite values (Oxford reference).So, how much Thatcherism was in Blairism?

When dealing with the economic policies of Blair's government along his tenure, we will undoubtedly discover clear similarities and continuity with those of Margaret Thatcher. Blair himself declared that he decided to support changes Margaret Thatcher had made "*I knew the credibility of the whole New Labour project rested on accepting that much of what she wanted to do in the 1980s was inevitable, a consequence not of ideology but of social and economic change… Britain needed the industrial and economic reforms of the Thatcher period*" (Blair 96).

Blair believed in the free market as it was a successful economic policy that had its positive results during the Thatcher era, more than his belief in the state intervention, which was considered a basic principle of the Labour Party. He therefore abolished the constitution's Clause IV which committed the party to nationalization, and kept all the Thatcherite

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[57]As it was the case when he "shook" Britain with a speech on Princess Diana's death. His emotional speech on behalf of the people won nationwide admiration.

privatisations. In addition, he continued the policy of "Private Finance Initiative"[58]started by the Tories. The author Earl A. Retain stated that "*Blair was eager to continue the Thatcherite policy of privatization, but there was no much left to sell*" (230).Furthermore, The New Labour detached from the trade unions and Blair kept the Thatcherite reforms that undermined it and limited its power over the party, he declared: "*there is no going back on the Thatcherite union reforms*" (Metro).

In foreign policy, Blair and Thatcher had similar attitudes in their foreign policies, particularly in regard to the "*special relationship*" with America. The relationship between Blair and Bill Clinton was as friendly as Thatcher and Reagan's, both British leaders agreed with their American counterparts in policies and ideologies. However, Blair continued the special relationship with George W. Bush despite their different approaches. Indeed, as Thatcher and Reagan fought for neo-liberalism, Blair and George W. Bush stood "*shoulder to shoulder*" in the war on terror.

In social policies, Blair followed the conservative right-wing policies on crime. His slogan: "*tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime*" and the harsh punishments he imposed, were not priorities of the left, which protected civil liberties. Thus, his crime policies became aligned with Thatcherism.

However and despite the conservative direction took by the New Labour, Blair has maintained some of the core principles of the Labour Party. Hence, there were differences that cannot be denied between Blairism and Thatcherism especially in their social policies. Indeed, the concept of community is at the center of Blair's political beliefs. In contrast to Thatcherism that advocated individualism, which declared that there was "*no such thing as society*" (lynch 157).Moreover, Blair was more interested in unemployment issue and poverty. He introduced the National Minimum Wage Act of 1998 to make work better paid and motivate people to work especially in areas where industries were closed in the Thatcher era; particularly mining towns and villages in Yorkshire, Newcastle, Durham, Wales and Scotland (Honeyman).

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[58]The **PFI** is a way of creating 'public-private partnerships' (PPPs) by funding public infrastructure projects with private capital.

Chapter Three. Blair and the Thatcherite Legacy

In addition, with Blair's mass immigration policy, the UK population increased by around 3.2 million as a direct result of foreign migrants. Blair defended Labour's policy by claiming that: "*it's been a very positive thing and there is no way for a country like Britain to succeed in the future unless it is open to people of different colours, faiths and cultures*" (Walker). Such position was strongly opposed by Margaret Thatcher and her Tory government who wanted a white Christian nation: "*it is quite wrong for immigrants to get council houses ahead of white citizens*" said Thatcher (Swaine).

Another crucial difference between Blairism and Thatcherism was Europe. As previously explained Thatcher refused the European integration as well as joining the European Exchange Rate Mechanism. She claimed that it means giving up sovereignty. Whilst Blair, who has been the most pro-European Prime Minister since Edward Heath and who wanted Britain at the heart of Europe, withdrew the objections raised by the Major government which was related to the extension of European authority over: the environment, regional policies, criminal justice and the Social Chapter. In addition, Blair was eager to convince his cabinet and people with the benefits of joining the European single currency, yet the issue was opposed by Gordon Brown and the public at large.

In their 1997 general election manifesto, Tony Blair and the New Labour raised the slogan "*New Labour, New Britain*". But what commentators agreed after the end of Blair's premiership in 2007 was that his policies were to a certain extent a continuation of the Thatcher's legacy rather than new ideas for a New Britain. The author Simon Jenkins presented the same views in his book "*Thatcher and sons*"[59]: "*Their project after 1994 may have been sold as tactical, "to make Labour electable" but its consequence was to render Thatcherism irreversible*" (Jenkins 6). In addition, Nigel Lawson, Chancellor of the Exchequer in Thatcher's government, also said: "*I was always slightly surprised that he was in the Labour Party at all. He is quite definitely the least socialist leader the Labour Party has ever had*" (Hinman 43). Jonathan Powel, Blair's Chief of Staff confirmed that Blair was deeply influenced by Margaret Thatcher and her ideology: "*Thatcher is his model*" (Pugh and Carl 295).

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[59] According to Jenkins, Thatcher's sons are her heirs John Major, Tony Blair and Gordon Brown.

Chapter Three. Blair and the Thatcherite Legacy

One of the most prominent critics of the New Labour was Tony Benn[60]. He called it "*a Conservative idea*" returning to what Thatcher had said before that her greatest achievement was the New Labour. He claimed that free market policy was an "*anti-Labour idea*" and that Tony Blair wasn't "*truly a Labour man*" (Delaney).

Despite the harsh criticism, especially from the leftists, Blair has consistently affirmed his commitment to the Thatcherite reforms which was irreversible for him: "*I always thought my job was to build on some of the things she had done rather than reverse them*" *(BBC).*The same view was shared by other Labour members such as Peter Mandelson who defended the New Labour policies with a provocative declaration in one of his articles in 2002: "*We are all Thatcherites now*" (Tempset).

The authors Peter Pugh and Carl Flint in their book "*introducing Thatcherism*" claimed that almost all Thatcherite reforms were accepted, including the end of the closed shop, union elections, control on incomes, limitless state intervention and the sale of council houses (292). In addition, Blair was Thatcherite and presidential in the way he controlled his cabinet. "Y*ou don't come much more Thatcherite than that*" (295).

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[60]Anthony Neil Wedgwood Benn (1925-2014), Labour Cabinet Minister in 1960s and 1970s. A hard left politician, MP from 1950 to 2001 then president of the stop war coalition from 2001 to 2014.

Conclusion

It can be said that the period from 1979 to 1990 is the period of profound transformations that Thatcher carried out in politics, economy and society, and that Britain is still in one way or another under the effects of Thatcherism. She was constantly delivering national speeches about her determination to stop Britain's decline as a superpower by reviving virtues such as freedom, commercial adventure, individual opportunity and self-reliance.

Indeed, modernization of the Labour Party was a reflection of a new political consensus. They adopted Thatcherism's neo-liberalism and transformed themselves within party competition in order not to remain in the opposition for decades to come, and to keep pace with modern times and globalization.

General Conclusion

What is particular with British politics is that the ideological divisions between the main political parties are obvious. Until the end of the twentieth century, both Labour and Conservatives embody strong political affiliations to socialism and capitalism, respectively. However, after remaining eighteen years in the political wilderness, the Labour party had to review its strategy to become an electable political party. Thanks to Neil Kinnock, John Smith and Peter Mandelson, the architect of New Labour, the Labour party was modernized and produced Tony Blair to secure three consecutive general elections until his resignation in 2007.

Yet, New Labour was not created in a vacuum, but was rather the offspring of a whole series of economic and political changes initiated by the conservatives between 1979 and 1997. In many regards, Thatcherism was "democratized", as it was accepted by the majority of the British, particularly those who were shocked by the "Winter of Discontent". In fact, Thatcherism had entered the Conservative Party into a new political phase. The party's policies became "New Right" policies; it became based on conviction rather than the post-war political and economic consensus. The party also adopted monetary policy, which was of marginal importance before, in addition to the free market principle and privatization.

Then, it sought to restore the pride and vigor to a "nation in decline". It changed the British political climate under what Thatcher called: "rolling back of the state". Thatcher undermined the trade union power claiming that they were hindering the British economy. In addition, she sought to assert Britain's economic and political supremacy by opposing the European Economic Community that wanted to create, as she saw, a European super state. Indeed, Thatcherism continued to influence British politics even after Thatcher ceased to be Prime Minister and continued to influence successive governments in Britain. For these reasons and many others, Thatcherism was a real turning point in the British political arena.

In regard to the Labour Party, there were several causes and circumstances behind its rise. The main reasons were: the great role played by Tony Blair in the reorganization of the party and his character, and the role played by the architects of the New Labour. Moreover, the weaknesses in the Conservative Party and the widening party divisions, additionally to the adoption of the Thatcherite economic beliefs.

General Conclusion

As demonstrated through this dissertation, Thatcher forced the Labour Party to review their policies fundamentally to accommodate the political agenda of her government. They embraced the changes that Thatcher had introduced. They abolished the clause VI that committed them to nationalization and adopted neo-liberal principle and privatization policy. This sparked a wave of criticism among leftists who opposed the project of New Labour denounced Blair's growing conservatism and accused him for being Thatcherite.

Indeed, despite the differences between Blairism and Thatcherism, Blair's acceptance of many of Thatcher's policies, which differ from Labour's principles, shows how much he and his New Labour were Thatcherite.

In conclusion, despite differences and similarities between Thatcherism and Blairism; both ideologies still controversial and divisive. In addition, Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair's legacies remain a subject of discussion and divergence of views.

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