

The making of new labour: Post Thatcherism**BOUSMINA Mounira*¹**¹University of Mentouri Constantine1, Algeria.

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Date of submission: 15/12/2020**Date of acceptance: 20/01/2021****Date of publication: 10/06/2021****Abstract :**

The British Labour Party was formed in the early twentieth century in 1900. The party was founded as a result of several labour unions in addition to the workers' organizations led by the trade union movement. The party held the banner of social democracy to represent workers, and the party called for equality in social rights and justice in the distribution of wealth. Six years later, the party managed to gain 26 seats in the British Parliament. In its quest for power, the party retracted many of its socialist ideas. Over time, the Party became part of the center-left. In 1940, the party managed to impose a deputy prime minister on the government, and its leader became a deputy prime minister despite losing the elections. From 1945, the party continued a journey of ups and downs, which Thatcher ended with the Conservative leadership in the 1979 Elections. In 1997, Tony Blair led the party in the elections and was able to keep the party's presence in power for the longest time in its history. However, several factors led to a decline in the popularity of the Labor Party, including England's participation in the second Gulf War in 2003 led by Tony Blair, which reduced the party's popularity, in addition to the spread of corruption scandals among parliamentarians and party ministers, and the failure of the Gordon Brown government (2007-2010) in facing economic crises. In 2010, the party ranked second in the elections. In the foreground, the conservatives' alliance with the Free Democrats, who formed a coalition government, appeared, which led to the return of the Labor Party to the ranks of the opposition.

Key words: British Labor Party, Thatcherism

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1. INTRODUCTION

The New Labour Party is a reference to a period in the history of the Britain Labor Party from the mid-nineties to the first years of the first decade of the twenty-first century, and each of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown led it. The new party emblem is derived from the conference slogan that was used in the party for the first time in 1994, which was later considered a draft statement released by the party in 1996. The slogan at that time was "New Labor, a new life for Britain." It was presented as the brand of a newly reformed party that supported the market economy¹. New Labor was influenced by the political thinking of Anthony Crosland and the leadership of Blair and Brown as well as Peter Mandelson and Alastair Campbell's media campaigning.

The political philosophy of New Labor was influenced by the party's development of Anthony Giddens' Third Way, which attempted to provide a synthesis between capitalism and socialism. Mark Bevir argues that another motivation for the creation of New Labor was as a response to the emergence of the 'New Right', which had emerged in the preceding decades. The party emphasized the importance of social justice, rather than equality, emphasizing the need for equality of opportunity and believed in the use of markets to deliver economic efficiency and social justice².

The brand was widely used while the party participated in the government between 1997 and 2010. In 2007, Tony Blair resigned as party leader, and Gordon Brown, "Chancellor of the Exchequer" succeeded him. The Labor Party did not win the UK elections of the year 2010, resulting in the creation of the British Conservative-Liberal Democrats United Kingdom Government Coalition (2010-present). Gordon Brown resigned as prime minister and as party leader. Work shortly thereafter and Ed Miliband succeeded him in the 2010 elections. Who abandoned the New Labour branding and moved the Labor Party's political stance further to the left. Miliband resigned in 2015 and was replaced by self-described democratic socialist Jeremy Corbyn, leading one MP to comment that New Labour is "dead and buried"³.

1 .The History and Birth of the British Labor Party

UK political parties have been developed historically with the rise of the Grand Council, which began in the Middle Ages as an advisory council to the king. This council was including in its membership the landowners, noble leaders, and the churchmen; and with the beginning of the 13th century, the greatest covenant of "Magna Charta" was issued in 1215, which undermined the authority of the king was the Britain Church, especially in unilaterally establishing laws. On the other hand, the king expanded the Great Council To include representatives from other classes, especially the cavalry and the young bourgeois, he invited them to participate in this council, and the previous and subsequent entities met separately and developed from that time to the House of Lords and the House of Commons; the Conservative and Liberal parties went out of the heart of this parliament⁴.

The British Labour Party did not basis form the parliamentary family, as it emerged from the great movement of the masses that drew its lines in industrial England in the nineteenth century for the sake of economic and social reform, and after several failed attempts by each of the following: Carey Hardy In 1889 and the Independent Labor Party led by Ramsay MacDonald in 1893, and at the London conference in 1900, the "Workers' Representation Committee" was created and then entered the elections, and the first leader of the party, CARE Hardy, won a victory with another deputy. In 1906, the committee transformed its name to the Labor Party led by CARE Hardy, Workers in Parliament⁵.

2– Rise and fall of the New Labor Party

In May 1994, John Smith unexpectedly died of a heart attack, A new leader had to be elected, however, Tony Blair was elected as a leader of the party (he defeated both John Prescott and Margaret Beckett), He became the youngest leader in the party's history, and to announce the inauguration of a new stage in the history of the party known as the "New Labor Party" (a period from the history of the British Labor Party from the mid-nineties to the first years of the 21st century) and was led by both Tony Blair and Gordon Brown; the term "new labour party" was created by Tony Blair in October 1994 in a speech at the British Labor Party conference, Blair announced the amendment of Paragraph IV of the Labor Party's constitution, in which he abandoned the idea of nationalization and

embraced the idea of a free-market economy. Once in the 1994 conference: "The New Labor Party, A New Life for Britain"⁶. New Labor's values gained wide popular support, in contrast with a self-destructing Conservative party, and up to election day at first of May, 1997, Labor party strategists were leaving nothing to the chance, fearful of a repeat of the 1992 election result, anyway, Labor party won by a landslide, the PT gained a total of 419 MPs, a record number, with a majority of 179 seats. Labor party achieved gains at all social sectors as well as closed the gender gap; the women became likely to vote for the Labor party as the men. Finally, the party reversed the long-term Conservative dominance in the south, gaining its greeted increase in vote share in Greater London and the south-east, Blair has been successful in retrieving voters lost in the M. Thatcher years. The party also won the elections of 2001 and 2005, which was the longest-serving period [Person (i.e. Tony Blair) as UK Prime Minister]⁷.

3-The Third Way as Centrism, New Labour and Public Opinion

There is a one way to explore the nature and scope of the third way is to examine ideological shifts within the parliamentary Labor party and to consider how these relate to patterns of party competition in the British electorate. In addition, we should see how far the Labor party has positioned itself between the traditional left and right positions on the political spectrum, and how far this development has permeated different levels of the party. The Labor party moved sharply center-right in its manifesto policies and towards the center in its membership. Many other analysis works have also demonstrated the emergence of a new cleavage in parliament revolving around issues of constitutional issues, where all the parties except the Conservatives are strongly in favour of the reform agenda. Building upon this foundation, we can map the ideological profile of each parliamentary party on some of the classic cleavages in British party politics, offer a plausible electoral explanation for the shift towards the center within the Labor ranks, and consider the implications for future patterns of British party competition⁸.

4 –The Third Way

The third way is an ideology that sought to reconcile the positives of some socialist tendencies, most notably the considerations of equitable distribution, the mobility of some capitalist tendencies, the most important of which is focusing on individual motivation as a basis for progress and growth, and it is the product of

joint work between a group of prominent political and social scholars, and an elite of politicians aspiring to positive interaction. With the facts of the times, the most important of which is the necessity of opening markets and applying the doctrine of economic freedom at the global level; at the same time, preserving political stability through a keen interest in the social dimension of development, in formulating networks for social safety, and overall care⁹. The first concept of the third way appeared in Czechoslovakia by the Czech economist called Ota Sik who laid the economic foundations for the reforms of Prague in 1968, Sik introduced the "third way" as a compromise between capitalism, the free market and the planned economy as in the Soviet method, this concept development by a famous English sociologist "Anthony Giddings" who produced a book in 1989 entitled "The Third Way Defining Socialist Democracy", and soon translated into dozens of languages and at the same time he helped some academics even Tony Blair himself to publish a short book entitled "The Third Way: new politics for the new century".

The new Labor Party developed and followed the "third-way" methodology, takes it as a platform to provide an alternative to the two capitalist entities and absolute socialism. This ideology development of the party and attract voters from all Political shapes. The party provided a middle line between neoliberalism and free-market economics for the new right, the party considered it more efficient economically and the moral reform of the post-1945 party. The third way has been involved with the New Labor Party in its interest of social rights. The New Labor Party left the traditional ideology with its beliefs in achieving social justice rather than through the working class through the blocs collective. Tony Blair was influenced by moral socialism and religious socialism and the use of these patterns of socialism to create a new style of socialism¹⁰. The New Labor Party tended to emphasize social justice and rights rather than equality, which was the focus of previous Labor governments and the challenge of the view that social justice and economic efficiency are mutually exclusive. The party's traditional attachment to equality was reduced as minimum standards and equality of opportunity were promoted over the equality of outcome. The party viewed social justice primarily as the requirement to give citizens equal political and economic liberty, also as the need for social citizenship. It encompasses the need for equal distribution of opportunity, with the caveat that things should not be taken from successful people to give to the unsuccessful¹¹. New Labor with the third way accepted the economic efficiency of markets and believed that they could be

detached from capitalism to achieve the aims of socialism while maintaining the efficiency of capitalism. Markets were also useful for giving power to consumers and allowing citizens to make their own decisions and act responsibly. New Labor embraced market economics because the believing they could be used for their social aims, as well as economic efficiency, Welfare reforms proposed by New Labor in their 2001 manifesto, included Working Families Tax Credit, the National Childcare Strategy and the National Minimum Wage. These policies were aimed at promoting work and this position dominated New Labor's position on welfare. On the Crime field, New Labor's political philosophy linked crime with social exclusion and pursued policies to encourage partnerships between social and police authorities to lower rates of crime, the Labor governments attempted to emphasize counter-terrorism measures, the governments followed policies aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour and introduced Anti-Social Behavior Orders¹². During the labour party power, the political talking about a secret government report called for mass immigration to change Britain's cultural make-up and that "mass immigration was the way that the government was going to make the UK truly multicultural", "the policy was intended—even if this wasn't its main purpose—to rub the right's nose in diversity and render their arguments out of date". But the others saw that the main goal was to allow in more migrant workers at a point when the booming economy was running up against skills shortages. Although In February 2011, the then Prime Minister David Cameron stated that the "doctrine of state multiculturalism" (promoted by the previous Labor government) had failed and will no longer be state policy, the official statistics showed that European mass immigration, together with asylum seeker applications, all increased substantially during Cameron's term in office¹³.

However, In 2007 Tony Blair announced his resignation as a prime minister and party leader in favor of Gordon Brown, who took over the leadership of the party and the government on June 2007, to confront Brown with a dual challenge, reorganizing the party ranks and restoring the grassroots base that the party had lost in recent years, facing the financial crisis facing Britain, despite his economic policies and his success in preventing the collapse of the British banking system, he failed to achieve the victory for Labor Party in the May 2010 elections that did not result in a parliamentary majority for any political party, where the Conservative Party won (306) the Labor Party (258) the Liberal Democrats (57). The conservative coalition formed a government with the Liberal Democrats, the Labor Party became out of government after 13 years of rule¹⁴.

It should be noted that the decline in the popularity of the British Labor Party is due to two factors, the external factor "criticism to the Labor Party following Britain's participation in the Iraq war," and the economic factor. Brown gave up the leadership of the party after this loss, Labor Party at the annual conference in Manchester, represented a new Labor leader Edward Samuel Miliband, the son of a Polish-born Marxist political theorist Ralph Miliband, who is considered one of the most important intellectuals of the left at British during the seventies and eighties of the last century, Ed views tend more to the left of the center and won the support of the main trade unions that helping funding the party¹⁵. choosing Ed Miliband as the leadership of the labour represented a final break with Tony Blair's legacy and his "New Labor Party" policies, as Ed declared himself shortly after his election that the "new labour" stage had ended, and that the party would be closer to the center-left, especially since he had broad support from unions country's major workers¹⁶.

Finally, many politicians make mistakes when looking at the "third way" as only an attempt to reconcile socialism and capitalism, but it is more important than that. It is a new attempt to understand the human society in the twenty-first century and to formulate new concepts and novel theories that redefine the relationship between the individual and society, and represent the outcome of the bitter experience of humanity with the socialist systems that sacrificed freedom in the interest of justice, and the capitalist systems that sacrificed justice in the interest of freedom, and "social accountability" is the most important characteristic of the applied programs of the owners of this theory. Clinton through his book, "A Vision for Changing America - Caring for People First", consider it the first who clearly explain this new, applied vision of the third way concept, such as health insurance and social welfare, arms control, the arts, child and elderly care, city development, and civil rights, Corporate responsibility, crime and drug response. These are the things that did not appear clearly in the experience of Tony Blair and the New Labor Party, The Labor Party is in a difficult situation since Brown took over the government and until now the party leader has not been able to head the government, since of Ed Miliband and during the reign of Jeremy Corbyn. Although they rejected the third-way theory, because of thinking that it was the reason for the decline in the party's popularity, but it seems that the deeper reason is due to they did not understand Tony Blair's thought and advanced opinions.

5 -The Influence of Thatcherism

It was not expected that the Labor party would be defeated by the Iron Lady "Margaret Thatcher" and what followed of that defeat when the right wing split and their formation of a new party called the Social Democratic Party headed by former Finance Minister Roy Jenkins. Michael Foot, a leftwing figure and former minister of labour, became the leader of the Labor party, and the divisions and schisms of the Party increased during the period of Michael Foot. Due to the harsh defeat in front of Mrs Thatcher, the number of workers 'seats has nearly halved. The new Labor Party created by Tony Blair partly evolved in reaction to the Thatcher experience and the fundamental way in which the British Conservative Party changed during the 1980s and 1990s. At the same time, the party preserved its members from the socialists and their ideas, which are the long-term, thought basic of the party and cannot be completely abandoned, and because of this, the new Labor Party managed to achieve success in the elections. The aim of the New Labor party's thought, under the slogan "Rights and Responsibilities", was to ensure that Britain would be one community, with everyone contributing its share, and that the goal was also to transcend class boundaries while promoting the idea of a "one country society". In addition, with the commitment of the New Labor Party to a society dominated by social justice and coexistence in a spirit of solidarity, tolerance and respect, that thought espoused by Tony Blair shows strongly his influence of Thatcherism. However, the important point that should be taken from the above is that the party preserved the elements of its socialist past during the modernization process and demonstrated this by implementing some of its policies, and avoided criticism directed at Mrs Thatcher, such as the industrial activity that was characterized during the period of the Thatcher government. Which led to an increase in unemployment, which tripled during its authority¹⁷. Tony Blair, as leader of the Labor Party, agreed to expand free trade, and in a speech in 1997, he said we should not leave the basic concepts of the 1980s in industrial and trade systems as they are. However, we must address a new plan for the twenty-first century, and based on this, we find that the new party of thought has tended toward liberalism as part of its economic and social policy, and thus some of the values and foundations of the Labor Party have changed. In addition to adopting a free market economy or relying on a mixed economy, the social policies of the Labor Party have sought to support capitalism rather than oppose it¹⁸.

All these indications are that the Labor Party had to adapt its policies in the aftermath of the Thatcher era, and to some extent continued to implement the Conservative agenda. However, I do not tend to consider the new Labor Party to be a restructuring of Thatcherism in another way, but it has tried to change its contemporary political style in light of the social and political consequences and electoral gains of Thatcherism, and that is the democratic experience found in a third way¹⁹.

The saying which states that "The new Labor Party coming from the ashes of Thatcherism, was really destroyed, when Jeremy Corbin in 2017 stated at the Annual Conference of Labor Party, to pledge to put power in the hands of the people, and Corbin announced that he was pledging to voters a "new model for living in Britain that would break the bitter legacy of " neo-liberalism of Thatcherism," which caused three difficult decades for the British working class, the effects of which were clearly reflected on the proportions of home ownership, poverty is widespread, social services are declining, and the number of displaced persons has doubled. The party's publications have described this proposed model as a system of "common sense", apparently avoiding mentioning any pure leftist designations that may cause concern to traditional voters. In addition, it will not allow the implementation of social cleansing policies in the country, such as those that have targeted over the decades of the disadvantaged groups of the British, and it will place restrictions on rents to curb the unacceptable escalation of the cost of housing, especially within the major cities²⁰.

For this point, Finally, I would like to say, Tony Blair, who assumed the government from 1997 to 2007, did not deviate from Margaret Thatcher, as he was classified as an heir of the Iron Women due to his followings of the major trends of Thatcher thoughts such as removing the regulatory framework for financial services and privatizing the public sector. Within the framework of the policy of renewing the Labor Party, Tony Blair moved this party to the center-right to become closer to the conservative ideology of Thatcher's thought until he was called Tony Blair in relation to the conservatives who are called the Tories, even if he deviated from the late Prime Minister's line by giving support again to some sectors such as health and education. I can say rightly, that Mrs Margaret Thatcher has changed the shape of the British economy forever and also changed how the British view money, capital and business. And that issue Mr Tony Blair inherited it. Despite the departure of the Iron Lady, British society still seemed

closer to Thatcherism more than it was when Margaret Thatcher was in power, we find that even the Media and some english press is currently critical of social assistance.

6 -New Labor and Ethical Socialism

Moral socialism is a form of liberal socialism and is characterized by its focus on criticizing the ethics of capitalism and not just on criticizing the material problems of capitalism. It emphasizes the need for the economy to include moral responsibility, is based on principles of service, cooperation, and social justice, and addresses the individualism of appropriation²¹. The term “moral socialism” arose at the hands of revolutionary Marxism, Rosa Luxemburg, that some number of politicians and ideologists appeared in Britain who presented themselves as ethical socialists such as Richard Henry Tawney "RH Tawney", the British religious socialist which who the ideals he advocated were associated with the ideals of religious socialism and socialism of workers from Lower classes. Moral socialism also formed an important thought within the British Labor Party, and it enjoyed general support from British Prime Ministers Ramsay MacDonald, Clement Attlee and Tony Blair²². British Prime Minister Tony Blair was one of the supporters and advocates of moral socialism as he was influenced by John McMurray, who in turn was influenced by the ethical socialist Thomas Hill Green. And Blair took from the ideas of the first ethical socialists such as affirming the public interest, rights and responsibilities, supporting society and cooperation between individuals are basic bases for his political approach, and also, Blair believed that the Labor Party had problems in the 1960s and 1970s when it abandoned moral socialism and For the party to recover, it requires a return to the ethical socialism values promoted by the Labor government under Clement Attlee²³.

7. Conclusion

Tony Blair's equality policy as head of the new Labor Party relied on exploiting the opportunities available in society without analyzing and anticipating the results, and under Blair's leadership, the party moved away from the obligations to redistribute wealth, focusing instead on "totalitarian" policies. However, it is clear that the Labor Party is currently no longer a committed socialist party even if

there are politicians and strategists in the new Labor Party who see that the new era of political life transcends both old social democracy and new liberalism.

In my opinion, the new Labor Party under the leadership of Mr Tony Blair was a mixture of left and right in an attempt to strike a balance between the seemingly conflicting values of liberalism and socialism in addition to embracing the idea of neo-Thatcherism liberalism. In addition, it is important to take into account from what I wrote above, the answer to the question that says, "Did the Labor Party or even the new Labor Party maintain the foundations of its socialist past during the modernization process?

In addition, did this appear through the implementation of his policies? This is something that needs further studies to monitor the period when workers 'governments take over matters in Britain and analyze their political performance.

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