University of Algiers 2

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of English

NEW LABOUR DISCOURSE:

THE RHETORIC OF PERSUASION

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Magister in English (literature and civilisation)

Submitted by:

Ms. Sabrina KATEB

Supervised by:

Dr. Brahim MANSOURI

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خطاب حزب العمال الجديد: بلاغة الإقناع

الملخص

إن وتيرة التغيير السريعة قد أدخلت العالم المعاصر إلى عصر الاتصالات، حيث تتجلى العلاقة بين اللغة والثقافة والمجتمع في الجوانب الإيديولوجية للغة. وقد أثر هذا التحول الأساسي في الوظيفة الاجتماعية للغة على القوالب الخطابية للسياسة. في هذه الدراسة، التي تستفيد من عدة تخصصات، يتم تحليل خطاب حزب العمال الجديد من زوايا مختلفة من اجل فك رموز الرسائل الضمنية التي ينقلها أثناء عمليات الاتصال.

و من اجل إماطة اللثام عن المعنى المتعدد المستويات في خطاب حزب العمال الجديد، فان عددا من النصوص قد نوقشت من خلال استعمال تحليل الخطاب النقدي كأداة تحليلية مهمة تركز على أشياء متعددة. بهذه الطريقة فان هذا الحوار بين العديد من النظريات الاجتماعية و السياسية واللغوية قد أظهر الطابع المتعدد الأوجه لحزب العمال الجديد. كما إن تحليل المادة الرابعة الجديدة لدستور حزب العمال ، و البرنامج الانتخابي 1997 ، و سياسة الطريق الثالث، وبعض من خطب بلير، قد كشف الجدة والاتساق في مشروع حزب العمال الجديد.

وقد لعبت وسائل الإعلام دورا حاسما في نشر تلك الصورة مما ترك أصداء إيجابية في أوساط الجمهور. ولكن عندما اكتشف هذا الجمهور تفضيل حزب العمال الجديد المكثف للمداراةالاعلامية لتحقيق الأهداف السياسية استاء من هذا الأسلوب البلاغي مما أضر بسمعة الحزب. وهكذا ، كما اثر صعود بلير إلى السلطة في قدر حزب العمال الجديد فان سقوطه اثر سلبا كذلك.

ما هو مهم في هذه الأطروحة هوتلك العلاقة بين السياق والنص التي تحدد خصوصية الثقافة السياسية البريطانية. ومع ذلك ، فان سياق تفسير النص (جزائري) يختلف عن سياق انتاجه (بريطاني)، وهذا الاختلاف هو السبب الآخر الذي دفع نحو استعمال نظرية التمثيل التي توفر أدوات تحليلية إضافية لفهم اللغة في خطاب حزب العمال .

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the substance of this dissertation is entirely the result of my investigation and that due reference or acknowledgement is made, whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers.

2011

Sabrina KATEB

DEDICATION

To my family,

with love and gratitude.

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I am grateful to express my thanks and acknowledgements to all those people who have cleared up my way in the course of this research. At the top list, my thanks go to Dr. Brahim MANSOURI, my supervisor, for his constant help, assistance and academic guidance.

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More importantly, my special thanks go whole-heartedly to my dear Mother – my Best Teacher who taught me patience, courage and perseverance to fulfil my studies.

ABSTRACT

The rapid pace of change has transformed the contemporary world into the Communication Age where the relation between language, culture and society is manifested in the ideological workings of language. The fundamental shift in the social functioning of language has affected the discursive moulding of politics. In a transdisciplinary study, New Labour discourse is examined in this dissertation from different standpoints to decode the internal messages that are transmitted through communication. In order to unfold the multi-layered meaning in New Labour discourse, a number of texts are discussed through Critical Discourse Analysis. This approach is an important analytical tool for the diversity of its focus. Social, political and linguistic theories are brought into dialogue and the result has shown the multi-faceted character of New Labour.

The analysis of the New Clause IV, the 1997 manifesto, the Third Way politics, and some of Blair's speeches has revealed the novelty and consistency of New Labour project. The media's decisive role in propagating that image has evoked a positive reaction amongst the public. But when this public discovered New Labour intense preference for media spin to achieve political aims, discontent over the persuasive rhetorical style damaged the party's reputation. Blair's rise to and fall from power has affected tremendously the fortune of New Labour.

What is significant in this dissertation is the context-text-relationship which identifies the specificity of the British political culture. However, the context of interpretation (Algerian) is different from the context of production (British), and this difference is another reason that has driven the study towards a theory of representation which provides additional analytical tools for understanding the language (English) of New Labour discourse.

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Introduction

The importance of language has always been fundamental to politics. In trying to demonstrate the rightness of their vision, politicians usually employ a persuasive language to influence people's perceptions. The power of rhetoric which is primarily defined as the 'art of persuasion' is instrumental in constructing political discourse, rhetoric is often used as a political weapon to gain legitimacy for the proposed project. Though language has always been the essence of politics, the contemporary world has centred most of the political struggle on the skilful use of that means of communication. The success or failure of political ideologies becomes increasingly attributed to the language of their representation which is sometimes conveyed through a powerful effective discourse and other times the political discourse is very deceptive.

This dissertation is an attempt to analyse New Labour discourse during the premiership of Tony Blair (1997-2007). Though New Labour remained in power under the leadership of Gordon Brown till 2010, the Blair decade is a crucial moment in the history of the British Labour Party. The significance of Tony Blair resides in the proclaimed novelty which he widely propagated as a 'new' politics, shaped ostensibly by a 'new' leader who assumed to create 'New' Labour for 'New Britain'. Undoubtedly, his role in renovating Labour's institutional structure is broadly acknowledged. Yet New Labour political discourse is hardly the work of one single person; rather, it is the culmination of a long process of evolution which found in the character of Tony Blair the necessary credentials for a successful leader who was able to present the 'right image' of the party at the 'right time'.

Because the study of political discourse is multi-dimensional, the approach which fits this research is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This involves the analysis of text and context where language as a social practice will be connected with notions of power and domination. The approach draws heavily on Norman Fairclough's and Michael Foucault's discourse theory. Since language is 'simultaneously revealing and disguising reality' (Fairclough

2000:154), the relation between rhetoric and reality will be a major concern in this research. New Labour rhetoric will be examined through a number of selected texts (spoken and written), in order to see whether there is 'substance' in New Labour project or whether it is just a 'triumph of style', employed to attain power.

In fact, many rhetoricians have tackled the issue of what is said and what is meant in a text, and most of them have confirmed the presence of two opposing facades in a single discourse: one is revealed, and the other is hidden. Foucault's (1969) discourse theory has distinguished between the manifest and the incorporeal discourse. The Russian theorist Mikhail Bakhtin (1973) emphasises the existence of two interlocutors in what he calls a 'double-voiced discourse' which is characterised by a 'hidden dialogicality', i.e. there is a kind of dialogue between two people, the first interlocutor's words are determined by and reacting to a second invisible interlocutor whose words are silenced by the first authoritative voice. According to Bakhtin's theory, discourse will be shown as dialogic 'shaped and influenced by the discourse of others'.

Though many other language theorists have provided interesting ideas about CDA like Julia Kristiva's notion of intertextuality (A.Blackledge 2005); Michel Pecheaux's concept of interdiscourse (N.Fairclough 1992), the work of Norman Fairclough will be dominant in this research. His emphasis on the integration of linguistics and other areas of social science to trace the role of language in society informs the plurality and the eclectic approach of CDA. Fairclough's synthesis of socially and linguistically oriented views of discourse is adopted as an approach for the analysis of New Labour discourse. The study in this dissertation is transdisciplinary i.e. the analysis will shift from history to politics and then to sociolinguistics. The connection between the theories of these disciplines is an attempt to identify the 'reality' behind the wording in New Labour discourse.

Since the meaning of a text is not only found in the text itself, the notion of context is crucial in CDA. The historical, socio-political, and cultural context within which New Labour discourse is created will be discussed in parallel with the textual analysis, because a text-context-meaning relationship can provide a clear understanding about the discursive formation. Hence, it is important to examine New Labour's texts within the British context of the 1980s and the 1990s and how it dominated British politics till 2010. This does not mean that the study will be limited to that period only, because Labour's electoral success in 1997 was the culminating result of the party's gradual transformation which started long before the coming of Tony Blair.

Following this perspective and because there is an attempt to proceed from extrinsic to intrinsic study, the first chapter is concerned with the environmental setting, the historical context which determined Labour's new ideological orientation. It is divided into three sections: the first is intended to show Labour's urgent need for ideological change after four electoral failures in a row, 1979, 1983, 1987, and 1992. There was a general awareness amongst the Left that Britain was living 'new times' where the 'old' values seemed to be 'irrelevant' to the new context. Therefore, Labour's institutional reforms were a necessity to regain credibility for leadership. Consequently' 'New Labour' has been projected as a modernised party, the qualified party for 'New Britain'.

The second and third sections of the first chapter will tackle the influence of the Thatcher Experiment on Labour's development. The new project offered by Margaret Thatcher in 1979 to reverse the British decline had been a source of inspiration for Labour's progressive move towards 'New Labour'. The success of Thatcherism to break away from the failed post-war-consensus indicates the efficacy of the neo-liberal project to restore economic efficiency. Besides, the collapse of the post-war-consensus had shown that the social democratic credentials failed to meet the challenge of change. But the fall of Thatcherism at the beginning of the 1990s also revealed that something was

missing. After a hegemonic Thatcherite decade, the Conservatives lost the trust of the electorate. Conversely, the renewal of social democracy has increased Labour's chances to regain the political arena after 18 years.

The second chapter will examine key ideological texts which define the party as 'New Labour'; these are: the New Clause IV, the 1997 manifesto, and some texts about the Third Way. The analysis of these iconic texts reveals the powerful discourse which introduced 'New Labour'. Foucault's and Fairclough's discourse theories prevail in this chapter in which New Labour discourse is shown to have a two-faced character; a duality resulting from Labour reconciliation between the Old Left and the New Right. The idea of representing the two strands – the neo-liberal and the social democratic – is recurrent with all the selected texts, sometimes it is uncovered explicitly, but other times there is an implicit support for the neo-liberal strand.

In order to convince the public about New Labour's supposedly balanced representation of the two ideological doctrines of the Left and the Right, the media has been used as an instrument of manipulation and control. For instance, the third chapter will deal with New Labour mediatised discourse and how the media has become a strategic means to exert power. The first section of the chapter introduces broadly New Labour media management. The interaction between politics and the media becomes more indispensable in shaping and mobilising public opinion. In contemporary politics, policy formation and its communication are inextricably linked; communication for New Labour has been central to achieve power, and to govern by media spin is a prominent aspect of the new politics.

What is even more pervasive in New Labour mediatised communication is the dominance of the Blairite discourse. The second section of chapter three examines Blair's role in constructing what he calls 'the right image' of leadership. Blair's telegenic and persuasive skills are carefully employed by

Labour's spin doctors to the party's own advantage. Though Blair's discourse was reinforced by the media to attract voters and influence their perceptions at the beginning of his leadership, it is the media also which uncovered the reality behind Blair's rhetoric.

Consequently, the third section of chapter three is devoted to the critical relation between New Labour and the media. After the remarkable shift in newspapers partisanship in 1997, New Labour's support declined decisively in the 2005 election campaign. In addition to the government's inability to keep their promises, the Iraq issue has been fundamental to this disenchantment. It is Blair's 'wrong' decision to involve his country in the Iraq war (2003) which greatly damaged his reputation and inflicted Labour's prospects in general. Though New Labour was elected again for a third mandate under Tony Blair in 2005, the media's criticism of the Blair Government did not stop, which eventually led to his resignation in 2007. Gordon Brown's succession to the leadership of New Labour could not save the Government from media snipping. Ultimately, the 2010 General Election showed that the problem was not only Tony Blair but the whole New Labour project which failed to cope with the new circumstances of the recent context of the late 2010.

However, the study of political discourse should go beyond the historical context. The culture which has helped create New Labour discourse needs to be examined to trace the particularity of the British political tradition. This investigation is meant to set New Labour communication within the cultural context. For this reason, it is quite essential to end up this dissertation by making a link between language and culture and how meaning is framed within a British cultural paradigm. The notion of culture in this research work is understood as '*a framework of assumptions, ideas, and beliefs that are used to interpret other people's actions, words, and patterns of thinking*' (Eli Hinkel 1999: 197). In this respect, the first and the second sections of chapter four will present the idea of consensus politics as a British political tradition. Though

consensus politics involves notions of agreement, stability and continuity (Kavanagh 1987, Heffernan 2000), other notions like disagreement and change are also fundamental criteria of consensus theory (Heffernan 2000). This seemingly ambivalent character of consensus is part of the making of British politics which entail both continuity and change in constructing political ideologies.

This idea has manifested itself in the politics of the New Right and the New Left i.e. the Victorian values are embraced within the Thatcherite consensus which has simultaneously promoted the vitality of the American neo-liberal style. On the other hand, the values of classical social democracy have been reconciled with some Thatcherite principles within New Labour consensus, and thus the 'old' and the 'new' are compromised and the result has been a 'new' distinct politics. However, what is presented as 'new' in British politics is not radically 'New', because the British culture encourages the conjunction of the traditional and modern aspects of human societies (Raymond Williams 1958).

The shift from the post-war-consensus to the Thatcherite and then to New Labour consensus is interpreted according to the British culture of transition which is identified in Williams's theory of culture. The work of Raymond Williams in the field of language, culture and society – notably in *Culture and Society* (1958) and *The Long Revolution* (1961) – will be adopted in the last chapter. The relevance of Williams's theories for contemporary British studies is widely acknowledged in the academic field for the rightness of his predictions. For instance, the process of paradigm-shift which moves from the social democratic discourse to the neo-liberal and then towards a Third Way discourse is a reflection of Williams's conception of 'the long revolution', an expression he coined to define the long progressive process of change which has underpinned Britain's evolution since the Industrial Revolution. So New Labour 'velvet revolution' (David P. Christopher 2006) resonates with the British soft and consistent reform which is characterised by a 'gradual

disengagement' from the past and a progressive move towards a newly transmuted framework.

Following this perception, the third section of chapter four is devoted to New Labour progressive politics which is quite related to the British transitional culture, for both ideas share a common aim: gradual reform. The work of Anthony Giddens is pivotal in providing '*a new meaning of what it meant to be on the Left*'. The content of the Left values is reformulated partially to fit the 'new times' of the 1990s. The major themes of progressivism are given new definition within New Labour consensus, concepts like equality of opportunity, mutual responsibility between the government and citizens, self-realisation, solidarity, and a sense of community are all emphasised within New Labour discourse. In each of these issues, there is an attempt to project a new progressive politics which promote individual freedom, social cohesion, and economic efficiency.

What gives more substance to New Labour discourse is communitarianism. The focus on community may distinguish New Labour project from the Thatcherite. Based on John Macmurray communitarian philosophy, New Labour encourages a sense of responsibility for individual fulfilment where his right is conditioned by his duty towards the community in which he lives. New Labour communitarian discourse involves a strong Christian communal belief and a criticism of the neo-liberal vision of absolute freedom. The influence of communitarianism on Tony Blair in particular is markedly shown in the moral discourse of the Third Way presentation.

Taken together, progressivism and communitarianism help New Labour to create a new political discourse which is neither Thatcherite, nor social democratic. It is more consensual, non-adversarial which aims to steer a path between the moral claims of society and the pragmatic concern of economy. This double concern generated New Labour double-voiced discourse i.e. there

is an expressive intent to represent the two previous discourses though different from both neo-liberalism and social democracy. This distinct position enables New Labour to be the representative of different social strata in the British society.

However, many critics have argued that the whole New Labour project is but a reflection of the '*triumph of style over substance*' (Leggett in MacNally & Scharzmantel 2009:138). Hence, the last part of chapter four is concerned with New Labour communicative style. Because communication involves the use of language, and the latter is integral to CDA, it is more appropriate to examine New Labour discourse according to Williams' communication theory. Williams' conception of culture has provided a useful connection between the socio-cultural environment and the way people make use of language. Understanding a theory of culture, therefore, would help the discourse analyst to identify the internal messages encoded within language, for language is deeply embedded within culture. So any attempt to interpret the linguistic particularities of a (political) text should be accompanied with a deep understanding of the social and cultural processes of that text.

According to Williams' account, communication is a 'science of penetrating the mass mind and of registering an impact there' (1958: 333). This process is achieved through a 'minority exploiting a majority' by trying to 'implant the right ideas in the minds of people'. This theory of communication has been adopted in the analysis of New Labour discourse. Ultimately, the result will show that New Labour dominance of British politics (1997 - 2010) is achieved – to a great extent – through a 'revolutionary rhetoric' which can be explained according to Antonio Gramsci's concept of 'passive revolution' i.e. the use of 'revolutionary rhetoric to maintain the existing order in its essential features' (J.Schwarzmantel 2009: 14). Nevertheless, the dominance of what is called the 'Blair Revolution' or what is described as the hegemony of Blairism may suggest also that New Labour discourse is meant to be

hegemonic. To present Tony Blair as an active politician, charismatic, and persuasive leader demonstrates that New Labour politics has been based on persuasion and preference-shaping which aims to disorganise the opposition and maintain the 'right image' of leadership through the power of words.

Though language has always been central to politics, the intensity of this relation has become fascinating. The contemporary assumption that modern politics is essentially about 'spin' and presentation instead of substance is reinforced by New Labour discourse. Broadly speaking, this dissertation is intended to examine New Labour discourse from different perspectives, applying the linguistic and socio-cultural theories that are overlapping in CDA. The purpose of the study is to uncover the reality behind the rhetoric. To achieve this aim the chapters of this dissertation are organised as follows: the first and the last chapters provide the context of New Labour discourse – the historical and the socio-cultural contexts. Between the two chapters (two contexts) New Labour's texts are analysed in the second and the third chapters. The former includes an examination of New Clause IV, the 1997 election manifesto, and Third Way politics; the latter, though it is about New Labour mediatised communication, it is particularly about Blairite discourse in the media (extracts of his speeches are discussed). In so doing, the idea of putting text in context will be applied in the study of New Labour discourse and thus, the form of the dissertation i.e. text within context, is meant to fit the content and the approach adopted in the work.

Chapter One

The Historical Context of New Labour Discourse

In his book, *Discourse and Social Change* (1992), Norman Fairclough provides a three-dimensional conception of discourse under the headings: textual analysis, discursive practice, and social practice. Fairclough believes that textual analysis is concerned with a close linguistic interpretation of texts; discursive practice '*involves processes of text production, distribution, and consumption'*; and social practice is directed to the economic, political, cultural, and ideological implications of discourse. This division, however, should not be demarcated sharply because the issues analysed in each of the three sections are overlapping. The findings in the three domains would clarify the nature of discourse.

Fairclough's three dimensions could be reproduced under a two-part study which involves text and context. To interpret the nature of New Labour discourse, it is important to establish the context that gave shape to the party's new ideological making. The examination of the setting will help to contextualise New Labour discourse within the parameters of change and thereby, draw its distinctiveness. To begin with the exploration of context will not undermine the textual analysis of New Labour discourse, it is rather meant to organise the process from extrinsic to intrinsic study, i.e. from the external conditioning circumstances to the internal textual structure; in so doing, the context-text relationship will explain the multi-dimensional conception of discourse.

I.1. Ideological Change: towards a 'New' Labour

Despite the various definitions that are given to ideology, its essence is commonly retained as a set of ideas that function as a guide for political conduct. Bill Coxall and Lynton Robins (1989), for example, define ideology as '*a belief-system which serves as a guide to action and the importance of ideologies in politics is that they shape political behaviour'* (1989: 39).This

political behaviour is itself framed within the context of its making in order to cope with the interests of the people who are represented in the political party, because political parties are indeed '*representative institutions*' (Eric Shaw 2007: 04).

British political parties are constructed upon the 'theory of functional representation' which is defined as 'any theory that finds the community divided into various strata, regards each of these strata as having a certain corporate unity and holds that they ought to be represented in government'(Beer in E. Shaw 2007: 04). This role of representing the different social groups with their different institutions in government is a vital function of parties. The objective of this representative functioning is not only a reflection of those 'various strata', but a creation of an incorporated system of thought which can better serve the social interests and simultaneously direct that political behaviour which is mentioned above.

It is important also to invoke Gramsci's (1) conception of 'organic ideology' which is produced by 'organic intellectuals' who are defined by Gramsci as '*a group of thinkers and practitioners who can theorise on the nature of (global) change, and generate concepts which can chart the path towards a reconstructed order'* (2). This kind of thinkers is different from what Gramsci calls 'traditional intellectuals' who are neither creative, nor innovative. The relevance of referring to 'organic ideology' in the examination of New Labour ideological provenance resides in the nature of its function

> *The whole purpose of what Gramsci called an organic (i.e. historically effective) ideology is that it articulates into a configuration different subjects, different identities, different projects, different aspirations. It does not reflect, it constructs a unity out of difference.* (3)

This construction of 'unity out of difference' is at the heart of New Labour ideological making. The political malaise of the 1980s and the early 1990s obliged Labour's theorists including figures like Alastair Campbell, Jonathan

Powell, and David Miliband, to revise their political agenda. The necessity to modify the socialist tradition of the party has been instrumental to recover the political arena. The inclusion of the neo-liberal spirit within New Labour has also been strategic to survive in an increasingly changing world. To provide a 'historically effective' ideology, New Labour then, reformulated the former configurations of 'old' Labour to offer a new set of ideas that could help the party to regain a *credibility for leadership*.

The co-existence of both, the social democratic and liberal tradition within a British Labour Party has been remarkable. New Labour has developed what Michael Freeden calls '*an amalgam of liberal, conservative and…socialist components'* (Michael Freeden in Mark Bevir 2000: 280). This amalgamation forms the new ideological set up for New Labour. The different components '*exist in complex, dynamic relations with one another*', and to explain it, Freeden suggests to '*explore the diverse ways in which the relevant concepts are combined at different times*'.

To synthesise between two opposed political theories is not an easy task; it has always been difficult to decide whether New Labour is social democratic or neo-liberal; whether the party belongs to the Left or the Right. In order to understand the proclaimed synthesis between the Old Left and the New Right, it is necessary to distinguish between the two doctrines. The following two boxes can provide a general idea about their differences and from this distinction one can make sense of the particularity of each of them:

Classical social democracy (the old left)	Thatcherism or neoliberalism (the new right)
Pervasive state involvement in social and economic life State dominate over civil society Collectivism Keynesian demand management, plus corporatism Confined role for markets: the mixed or social economy Full employment Strong egalitarianism Comprehensive welfare state, protecting citizens 'from cradle to grave' Linear modernisation Low ecological consciousness Internationalism Belongs to bipolar world	Minimal government Autonomous civil society Market fundamentalism Moral authoritarianism, plus strong economic individualism Labour market clears like any other Acceptance of inequality Traditional nationalism Welfare state as safety net Linear modernisation Low ecological consciousness Realist theory of international order Belongs to bipolar world

Source: Anthony Giddens (1998), *The Third Way. The Renewal of Social Democracy*, pp.7-8.

The difficulty of defining the alternative which comprised the above principles in apparent equal pairs could be solved if the conceptual relation within New Labour 'amalgamation' is clarified according to the 'different times', i.e. the different contexts, and the distinct institutional setting of the late 1980s which dictated the reconstruction of the party so that Labour could be electorally relevant to contemporary British politics.

The British sociologist Stuart Hall (4) believes that '*ideological transformations and political restructuring … work on the ground of already constituted social practices'* (S.Hall in R.C.Blank 2003: 42). Eventually, the party's ideological reform does not only spring from Labour's revisionist tradition, its modernised project has evolved from the environmental context, the socio-political, economic, and even the cultural context of the 1980s and the 1990s. The significance of the Thatcherite consensus for restructuring Labour's agenda has always been admitted as a major influence which had disrupted Old Labour and driven the party towards New Labour.

Richard Heffernan, author of *New Labour and Thatcherism. Political Change in Britain* (among others), confirms Hall's idea of political restructuring and links the present political change to past events. That situation is explained in terms of reaction and response; 'as *a chronological account of provocations and counter-provocations, reactions and structured responses to previous happenings, political change is almost a chain reaction*' (2000: 27). Accordingly, New Labour constitutional transformation is associated with the 'previous happenings', i.e. the 'provocations' of its Labour's predecessors caused Thatcher's 'counter-provocations' concerning the adopted mode of governance. In other words, from the state welfarist post-war consensus to the Thatcherite consensus (5), and from the constraints of both settlements, New Labour has developed a 'new' project because the party '*requires not a delicate shift in tactics or strategy, but a project, a project of renewal'*(Tony Blair in Robert Carl Blank 2003: 53).

In fact, New Labour political project did not appear suddenly in 1997, the historic electoral landslide, nor in 1994, Blair's leadership election. Despite the significance of these two important points of departure, Labour's process of change has always been described as gradual. Richard Heffernan has chosen the period between 1983 and 1997 to explain Labour's process of modernisation. This period is '*one in which explanations of the changing Labour Party are to be found and understood*' (R. Heffernan 2000: 66). In *New Labour: Politics after Thatcherism* (1998), Stephen Driver and Luke Martell turned back to the mid-70s, when Labour's leader James Callaghan (1976-1980) decided to put an end to the era of tax-and-spend Keynesianism and thus Labour started to transform. Tracing New Labour points of origin can even go back to the mid-50s when Hugh Gaitskell (1955-1963) attempted to change Clause IV, section four of Labour constitution.

Though all these stages had contributed in taking the party away from 'Old' to 'New' Labour, the focus of this study is not simply concerned with

historicising New Labour i.e. it is not only a narrative history of the shift from 'Old' to 'New' Labour, this does not mean either that the party's history will be undermined . In fact, there can be no interpretation of the present, if there is no understanding of the past. History will be revived when it is compared to New Labour issues such as Clause IV, welfare state, and classical social democracy. It is important to bear in mind that New Labour is the culmination of Labour's evolution, a gradual process of change which accompanied the party's progress ever since its inception in 1906. To deny the past then, is to deny the very concept of progress which the present 'New Labour' has accomplished.

Moreover, this is a transdisciplinary study of New Labour discourse where the environmental political context of the 1980s and the 1990s will intersect with the socio-linguistic dimension to constitute New Labour discursive practice i.e. the '*production, distribution, and consumption'* of Labour's texts – spoken and written. Recent political debate has become inextricably linked with language. For this reason, the examination of New Labour discourse will reveal the extent of their credibility and the viability of the 'new' language to represent the 'new' conceptual structure of the party. In so doing, many disciplines including politics and socio-linguistics will collaborate in the examination of the concept of novelty which New Labour has widely publicised.

I.2. The Thatcher Decade: a Turning Point in Labour's Development

Thatcher's ascendancy of the Conservatives started in 1975 when she was first elected as a leader for the party. This event signalled a serious beginning to break away from the post-war-consensus, the British political agreement that was fashioned by the Labour government of Clement Attlee in 1945 and accepted by its successors, Conservatives and Labour. Their programme was

based on Keynesianism (6), the welfare state and Trade Unions reconciliation. Yet by the late 1960s and the mid-1970s Britain was undergoing a period of decline which deteriorated the economy and brought a devastation that Britain had never experienced before. There are many reasons, but the economic and social policies implemented by the post-war- consensus are said to be the main causes for the British decline.

Thus, Callaghan's abandonment of Keynesianism in 1976 was considered as an early attempt to end the post-war-consensus. His cut of public expenditure was regarded as a 'betrayal' of the welfare state (7), the main pillar upon which the post-war-consensus was built. Further internal division between the left and the right wing of Labour resulted in the creation of the Social Democratic Party in 1981. These events are but few indications that show the moribund state of Labour in the 1970s and the early 1980s. For instance, the move towards the right wing of Labour became more than necessary to rescue the country from the economic debacle caused mainly - as many political analysts acknowledged- by the post-war-consensus.

In the Opposition, Thatcher's leadership of the Conservatives had been decisive to supersede what was viewed as an 'old-fashioned' political system. Furthermore, the Winter of Discontent (1978-79), for example, was regarded by Eric Shaw as '*the real denouement of the 'old Labour' government'* (2007: 151). To reverse the system that led Britain to decline and 'discontent', Margaret Thatcher phrased her new policy in her famous 1979 premiership election slogan: "*I am a reformer and I am offering a change*". The two keywords 'reformer' and 'change' are revealing. The lexicon is suggestive of a new era in contemporary British politics. The newness of the period is encapsulated in the nature of the 'leaderene' and the political 'philosophy' she offered to challenge not only the Left, but also her fellow Conservatives. Her rightward expansion led her to the extreme Right, ignoring in her move any

attempt to compromise with the 'old' Left. She refused even to listen to her cabinet members when they criticised her strict monetarist regime (8).

Her famous statement "*U-turn if you want to, the Lady is not for turning*" was another sign of her forward march towards a new political settlement which became known as the Thatcherite consensus. Mrs Thatcher reversed all the mechanisms upon which the post-war-consensus had been built. Keynesianism, the welfare state, collectivism, and state intervention were Leftist concepts Mrs. Thatcher fought and strove to destroy. Conversely, the Thatcherite consensus was promoting statecraft, enterprise culture, individualism, and rolling back the frontier of the state i.e. limiting state intervention (9). These issues found their expression in the 'philosophy' of Thatcherism which had been fashioned out of the dictates of the economic and political disarray of the late 1970s. Hence, Thatcherism is explained as a political project that was shaped to react against a declining Britain to contribute in bringing back the '*good-old-days*' of the Victorian Age when Britain was a leading power.

Thatcherism is also regarded as a successful economic doctrine despite the frightening figures of inflation which reached 21.9 per cent in May 1980, unemployment raised to 2.13 million, and statistics showed that 'Thatcher was also briefly the most unpopular Prime Minister since the war' (Andrew Gamble 1988: 101, 108). The difficulties that Margaret Thatcher faced between 1979 and 1982 did not stop her from pursuing a tight monetarist policy which started to prove its effectiveness from 1982 onwards. In fact,

> *Unemployment ceased to rise rapidly, inflation fell sharply and slow recovery in industrial output began. The devastation of large part of the economy, particularly the areas of old traditional industry, still loomed large. But the decline had stopped. From 1982 onwards the dominant feature of economic policy and debate was not the recession but the recovery.* (Andrew Gamble 1988: 113)

Mrs. Thatcher, therefore, succeeded in her ‘revolution’ to change the British political spectrum which had relied on the Keynesian-welfarist-post-war consensus since 1945.

The triumph of the Thatcherite regime to reverse the post-war consensus was the result – to a great extent – of Thatcher’s determination to change the British mentality towards the individual’s role in society. In fact, “*there is no such a thing as society*” Thatcher said, “*there are individual men and women*”. Those individuals are the only ones responsible for wealth creation. Thatcher believed that the experience of collectivism brought ruin to Britain that is why the Thatcherite consensus rejected any socialist sense in order not to repeat the mistakes of the past.

However, the fall of Margaret Thatcher at the beginning of the 1990s reduced the efficiency of Thatcherism. Though the Thatcherite consensus is said to be a reaction against the inadequacy of the former political settlement, its viability to rule Britain in the 1990s had weakened. What was wrong then, with this supposedly ingenious alternative? What was missing in this ideological doctrine? Was there a stronger rival fighting against the Lady and her doctrine?

Obviously, there was no stronger rival to Thatcherism at that time, though it became less hegemonic than the early 1980s. Despite the great effort by the Opposition to reconstruct a vulnerable party, Labour could hardly win the 1992 General Election, even after Thatcher’s departure. The Conservatives were still in power, but John Major, the successor of Margaret Thatcher, was not as strong as the Lady. After only one term in power, the Conservatives were swept away in the historic 1997 General Election that brought New Labour to power after eighteen years of absence from government.

I.3. Post-Thatcherite Era: 'New Labour, New Life for Britain'

By the beginning of the 1990s, the British people started to lose trust in the Thatcherite consensus despite the successful economic programme that saved Britain from its economic depression. Voters flocked to the centre of the political landscape because the age of extremism was over. The end of the Thatcher decade coincided with the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe. These two events are important evidence of the inadequacy of both neo-liberalism and classical social democracy. The new raised power was the Left of centre ground. After the dominance of the New Right in the 1980s, a modernised Left emerged as a 'new' leading power in Britain and other European countries like France and Germany.

Within such a context of transformation, the British Labour Party proposed a new political project that was defined by Robert Carl Blank as:

> *neither obviously individualist nor collectivist. It combines liberalism's emphasis on individual autonomy … and communitarianism's requirement for responsibilities … without being either one or the other alone*. (Robert Carl Blank 2003: 85)

This combination of concepts had never been suggested before within Labour's political programme. The experience of Thatcherism became a reference for political renewal, a source from which Labour's modernisers could learn how to change their party to be effective in the new context of the 1990s. Perhaps, the most important quality New Labour learnt from the past is pragmatism. Margaret Thatcher succeeded because she was pragmatic, but failed when she refused to reconsider her 'absolutist style' – absolutely for this idea, and

absolutely against the other – a fact related to her obstinate character and bold determination to carry on her plan despite criticism from the Left and the Right.

On the other hand, the failure of 'old' Labour is mostly associated with a lack of pragmatism. The ideals of socialism that were fostered in their constitution prevented the party from realising progress especially in the economic field. Thatcherism, on the contrary, is mainly praised for its economic success (10). But economic prosperity had been achieved at the expense of social unrest. David P. Christopher (1999) said that:

> *Implementing Thatcherism came at a high social cost. During 1985-86 there were more riots in cities around Britain. Burglary, car theft, violent crime and vandalism all increased. Football violence and hooliganism became a serious social problem, and relations between the police and public were tense. Commentators on the political left blamed high unemployment (almost 4 million), homelessness (around 1 million), and the loss of community, which an ethos of economic individualism had promoted.* (1999: 12)

The freedom of the market had been a useful access for wealth creation, but its impact on society was disastrous. If socialism is said to bring economic decline, and the excess of pragmatism created social inequality, what could be the alternative then?

The politics of the post-Thatcherite era is illustrated in the new project that New Labour had developed out of the consequences of the previous political regulations. Stephen Driver and Luke Martell say that New Labour

> *has broken with old social democracy and accepted many of the Thatcherite reforms … It mixes acceptance of Thatcherism with a reaction to it through communitarian sentiments … It is defined by, but departs from, Thatcherism – moved to the Right but with anti-Thatcherite emphases.*(Stephen Driver and Luke Martell 1998: 184)

This kind of resolution is the culminating result of an intensive work of Labour's modernisers who have shifted the party's conduct towards a more

'pragmatic' stance i.e. less idealist and more practical than 'old' Labour. It seems that New Labour has made a compromise between principle and pragmatism. The '*communitarian sentiments*' give importance to what has been dismissed from Thatcherism; the notion of community was missing. The social bond between individuals, for example, is stressed in New Labour politics despite giving each of these individuals the freedom to work and prosper independently (these ideas will be developed in chapter four).

However, once New Labour was in power, the difficulty to implement their reforms emerged and the difference between what was said and what was applied started to become the most remarkable issue in New Labour political debate. Some commentators denied the fact that New Labour had an ideology at all. David Marquand, for example, is cited in Robert Carl Blank (2003), *From Thatcher to the Third Way*, saying that:

> *New Labour has not yet constructed a cementing ideology or myth, while its statecraft is enmeshed in paradox. In place of an ideology or a myth it has a rhetoric – an ahistorical (not to say anti-historical) a rhetoric of youth, novelty and a curiously abstract future. The very label 'New Labour' is part of that rhetoric, along with the 'Young Country' and the 'Third Way*. (David Marquand in R. C. Blank 2003: 201-202)

According to David Marquand, the supposedly new concepts of 'New Labour' are part of its rhetoric; they are but selected words to persuade voters to accept the claimed novelty. David Marquand believed that there is no substance, New Labour political discourse is all new branding.

On the other hand, it has been acknowledged that 'rhetoric and semantics are not the froth of politics, but its most important ingredients. There can be no politics without words' (11). The importance of language has become fundamental in framing political conceptions that could influence people's perceptions to make them react effectively and interact with political agents. Accordingly, New Labour has developed a new communicative style to

compensate for the weakness of the past notably that of Neil Kinnock, Labour leader (1983-1992) whose role in modernising the party is undeniable, but his inability to convince the British electorate that Labour had transformed was one of the main reasons for the 1992 election failure.

In order not to repeat the mistakes of the past, the party introduced itself as 'New Labour' at the party conference of 1994 following Blair's election as a leader after the sudden death of John Smith, the party's previous leader (1992-1994). The slogan at that conference was *'New Labour, New Britain'*. From that moment onwards, the party had acquired a new label, but observers are still hesitant to use 'New Labour' especially when compared with 'Old Labour'. According to Paul Allender (2001: 56-62), continuities between 'old' and 'new' Labour are more important than differences. The Labour Party has been undergoing a process of modernisation to cope with the 'new' economic, political and social circumstances of the 'new' context. In this case, Labour could not be called 'New Labour' because its renewal is an obvious response to the external and internal pressures that affected the party and obliged its policy makers to add 'new' principles to the 'old' structure. On this account, the modernisation of the party is an element of Labour's development to catch-up with the 'new times' i.e. a new era which requires new politics.

However, Blair's election to the party has given more dynamics to Labour; he constantly insisted that the party should be represented as 'New Labour'. The invention of this label is central to Labour's new strategy. As mentioned above, the term was first used in 1994, to show that Blair's election is a 'new' beginning in the history of the party. It is also directed to address the electorate about the novelty of Labour so as to regain the lost confidence and win their trust. The new label is also meant to distance the party from 'Old Labour', the one which had failed to bring effective measures to solve the British crises of the 1970s, 1980s, and the early 90s. In addition, the new name is indicative of Blair's power as a leader to introduce transformation and change. His

leadership speech at the Labour Party conference in October 1994 demonstrated that his rhetoric lies at the heart of his political power. He said:

> *stop saying what we don't mean and start saying what we do mean, what we stand by, what we stand for. Caution will not win us the next election; courage will. It is time we had a clear, up-to-date statement of the objects and objectives of our party … This is a modern party living in an age of change. It requires a modern constitution that says what we are in terms the public cannot misunderstand and the Tories cannot misrepresent.* (T. Blair speech, October 1994)

This is an example of many other similar speeches in which Tony Blair represents a modernised party that is operating in '*an age of change*' (12). The symptoms of change are manifested in the 'new' words that 'New Labour' has created to introduce the 'new' conceptual structure. Blair's reference to a 'modern constitution' in the above quotation is implicitly alluding to New Clause IV (13); section four of the party's constitution that has been revised to provide '*a clear, up-to-date statement of the objects and objectives'* of New Labour. However, many political commentators have criticised the 'actions' that are taken by New Labour. Norman Fairclough, for example, has written about a view which states that New Labour is trying '*to achieve rhetorically what they cannot achieve (given their neo-liberal commitments) in reality … language on this account is crucial in the case of New Labour.*' (Norman Fairclough 2000: 16)

In order to trace New Labour change at the level of language and the implied meaning that is framed in their texts, critical discourse analysis is chosen as an approach for this study. Because discursive change is related to social, political, and cultural change, the examination of some key texts of New Labour in the second chapter would help clarify the extent of that change. The approach will adopt Fairclough's '*synthesis of socially - and linguistically - oriented views of discourse*' (1992:05), so as to uncover the different layers of meanings that are embedded within the apparent rhetoric.

Endnotes:

01- Antonio Gramsci ((1891-1937) is an Italian thinker who is known as a leading representative of Western Marxism. He was arrested by Mussolini's authorities in 1928 because he was against the regime. While in prison, Gramsci produced the famous *Prison Notebooks*, which established him as a special intellectual for the immense range of topics that are covered in the book. The relevance of Gramsci's ideas in contemporary intellectual debates shows the viability of his theories in his time and the modern age. Some of his ideas will be discussed with reference to New Labour in chapter four of this study.

02- Cited in Robert Carl Blank (2003), *From Thatcher to the Third Way. Think-Tanks, Intellectuals, and the Blair Project*, p.28.

03-Ibid. p.24.

04- Stuart Hall is a British Jamaican-born cultural critic. As director of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (1967-79); founding editor of *New Left Review*; one of the cofounders of *Sounding* (a journal of culture and politics) and professor of sociology at Open University, Stuart Hall became a leading intellectual in Britain. The media, politics, power, culture, and representation are his overriding concerns. His analysis of the impact of Thatcherism on the Left and how New Labour has developed what he called 'a hybrid regime' is remarkable; he argued that Britain by the late 1980s was living in 'New Times' and the Left should learn from the Thatcher Experience so as to adjust the 'old' policies and respond effectively to the 'new' realities.

05- The meaning of consensus and the shift from the post-war to the Thatcherite, and then to New Labour consensus is explained at length in chapter four.

06- Keynesianism is a set of policies that refer to John Maynard Keynes, a British Liberal who offered new measures to 'save' capitalism from its own regulations like the absolute freedom of the market (Giddens 1998: 9, Fielding 2003: 11). Keynes has furnished his notion of demand management which provides ideas on how the market can be manipulated by the government through a mixed economy; '*one feature of the mixed economy in Britain was nationalisation. Some economic sectors should be taken out of the market, not only because of the deficiencies of markets, but because industries central to the national interest shouldn't be in private hands.*' (Giddens 1998: 10). Keynesian economic policies were adopted by the social democrats and proved advantageous in the 1950s and the 1960s: economy flourished, poverty and unemployment reduced, profit increased and '*social democrats found themselves championing policies many capitalists had come to see as a rational alternative to the purely free market*.' (Steven Fielding 2003: 12)

07- In order to maintain the efficacy of the welfare state, the government should adopt a tax-and-spend policy to get the necessary money to supply the needy people. This is one of the methods through which the old welfare state proceeds. Following this

process, a culture of dependency had been developed and the government could not meet the increasing demand. This kind of welfare had been toppled by New Labour because it became a heavy cost for the state.

08- The doctrine of monetarism that was adopted by the Thatcher Government is based on the theory of the American economist Milton Friedman who believes firmly in the reduction of government spending to control inflation. Monetarism was advanced in the 1960s and achieved a practical importance in the 1970s after the deterioration of Keynesian economic methods.

09- These Thatcherite principles will be explained when they are associated with New Labour project.

10- The meaning of Thatcherism and its principles are discussed in chapter four in this study.

11- Richard Reeves in New *Statesmen*, 24 January 2005, p.29.

12- There will be a particular analysis for Blairite discourse in chapter three, section two in this study. A reference to Blair's personal impact on New Labour is prevailing throughout the whole research.

13- Clause IV will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter Two

New Labour Ideological Texts:

From Clause IV to Third Way

Politics is mostly defined in terms of its persuasive language. The centrality of words is acknowledged by many linguists and political analysts to have a tremendous role in shaping the communicative style of leaders and their political parties. But the difference between the real intention and the declared aim remains controversial within political debates. It seems that a politician is acting '*as a figure behind the veil, a suspected rather than a seen presence, a movement and a voice behind the draperies of [politics]*' (Joseph Conrad 1912: 12) (1). For instance, critical discourse analysis can be the appropriate approach to open the 'draperies' behind which substance is covered (if it is found). This approach will examine the nature and purpose behind the texture of political texts.

The influence of the French social theorist Michel Foucault on the development of discourse analysis will help in part to interpret New Labour political discourse. His view on the manifest and the incorporeal discourse will explain the politics of gap between rhetoric and reality within New Labour texts, starting from the New Clause IV to the 1997 election manifesto, and then to Third Way politics. The relation between discourse and power is another important emphasis in Foucault's theory that can illustrate New Labour's determination to 'dominate' British politics from 1997 to the end of 2010.

However, the British linguist and political analyst Norman Fairclough (2) has found that Foucaultian theories need to be developed, because '*Foucault's analysis of discourse does not include discursive and linguistic analysis of real texts*' (Fairclough 1992: 56). Eventually, Fairclough suggests his Textually-Oriented Discourse Analysis (TODA) which includes three dimensions: '*analysis of the text, analysis of discourse processes of text production and interpretation …, and social analysis of the discursive 'event' in terms of its social conditions and effects at various levels.*'(Fairclough 1992: 56)

Fairclough's theory, therefore, can be very useful to interpret and explain New Labour discourse, especially the textual analysis. His approach for studying discursive dimensions for social and cultural change is based on the integration of Foucault's and Bakhtin's theories (3). To clarify his approach, Fairclough said:

> *I have tried to combine aspects of a Foucaultian view of discourse and a Bakhtinian emphasis on intertextuality: the former includes the vital emphasis upon the socially constructive properties of discourse, the latter emphasizes the 'texture' … of texts and their composition from snatches of other texts, and both points to the way in which orders of discourse structure and are restructured by discourse practice.* (1992: 99-100)

Following this process, New Labour discourse in this chapter, particularly the written texts, will be examined according to Foucault's and Fairclough's theories mentioned above. The chosen texts are: the New Clause IV, the 1997 election manifesto and some writings about the Third Way politics. Although New Labour has suggested many other official documents in which the party states the 'new' politics, the selected texts are rated as significant classics for studies about New Labour, they have offered a distinct institutional set up which is characterised by a powerful discourse that secures for 'New Labour' a landslide victory in three successive elections since 1997. This triumph has mainly been attributed to New Labour political communication. The study of those texts therefore, will reveal the extent of New Labour's discursive change in relation to the contextual transformations presented in the first chapter of this study, and how the new discourse has taken the party to power.

II.01. Clause IV: an Overview

For many years, Clause IV has been '*an article of faith*' within Labour's constitution. The core values and objectives of the party are expressed in the famous text which was preliminarily drafted by Arthur Henderson and then

amended by Sidney Webb in 1917 (4). It was adopted at the Labour party conference in 1918. The statement of the clause reads as follows:

> *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 upon 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.*(5)

This is section four of the Labour's constitution which is argued to be an official declaration of the party's commitment to nationalisation. Though it is not clearly stated, nationalisation came to be linked with '*common ownership'*, a concept strongly associated with socialist attitudes. The context during which Clause IV was written may justify Labour's adoption of common ownership as a political idea and an issue for economic policy. The Fabian (6) Sidney Webb '*was drawing on the experience of trade unionism during the First World War and the growth of collectivist response*' (Ken Coates 1995: 19). Labour's commitment to nationalisation, therefore, reinforced the link with socialism, a triumphant ideology in 1917, the year of the Bolshevik Revolution. In fact, the first draft of the clause appeared in the very month of the revolution, October 1917 (Ken Coates 1995:13).

However, the changing circumstances are always dictating a change in the political agenda. Since politics is not static, political parties need to alter their programmatic stance to provide a new project that could be relevant to the social and economic transformations. This is the politics of revisionism, or modernisation, or even progressivism (7). Whatever the discrepancy that could be drawn between the three conceptions, they mostly share a common objective: to reformulate the ideological principles upon which the party is raised.

Accordingly, the socialist values that were central to Labour's formation since its endorsement of the constitution became ineffective in a country

growing increasingly different. Following Labour's defeat at the 1959 General Election, the fourth electoral failure in a row, Douglas Jay (8) argued that:

> *Labour's future electoral success would hinge on the removal of two 'fatal handicaps' – namely, the Party unmistakably working-class image and what we called 'the myth of nationalisation.* (A. Jay in Tudor Jones 1996: 42)

In addition to other '*controversial suggestions*', Douglas Jay proposed even to change the very name of the party (Tudor Jones 1996: 41). Those proposals are 'unmistakably' referring to the original Clause IV which became a dividing issue between the revisionists who promoted its amendment, and the fundamentalists who opposed any alteration in the late 1950s (9).

In his book, *The Future of Socialism* (1956), Anthony Crosland provided a comprehensive expression of Labour's revisionism. He referred to Clause IV stating that '*the traditional association of socialism with the public ownership of the means of production embodied in Clause IV of Labour's constitution was both obsolete and inadequate.*' (Crosland in Tudor Jones 1996: 31). The inadequacy of the clause to meet the economic and social transformations of post-1945 Britain raised the debate of revisionism within the Labour Party. Crosland and Jay were but few examples of many other political commentators who pointed an accusing finger at the clause. Hugh Gaitskell, Labour's leader from 1955 to 1963, is mainly known for his attempt to amend Clause IV in 1959-60. In a speech at the Blackpool conference on 28th November 1959, Gaitskell recommended openly the amendment of Clause IV. In a tone of reproach, Gaitskell said:

> *I am sure that the Webbs and Arthur Henderson who largely drafted the constitution would have been amazed and horrified had they thought that their words were to be treated as sacrosanct 40 years later in utterly changed conditions.* (Gaitskell in Tudor Jones 1996: 48)

The response, however, to the leader's expressed view was very turbulent. The fundamentalists in particular, rejected any attempt to recast Clause IV which became a sacred embodiment of public ownership. The opposition to Gaitskell's proposal obliged him to make another speech in February 1960 at Nottingham, but this time, Gaitskell was calling for more retention of public ownership. He said:

> *to me it is absurd to think, in the face of the huge capital gains now being made in the private sector, that we can achieve in the degree of equality we want without the extension of public ownership….It's absurd to think that we can overcome the present crisis in town and country planning without more public enterprise…. If we are to plan successfully for full employment, more investment, and higher productivity, we shall need to extend the public sector, including more public ownership.* (10)

This was a '*remarkable change'*, indeed. How could he have changed his mind between November 1959 and February 1960? The former date revealed the intention of removing Clause IV, whereas the latter displayed a clear address of retaining it through 'an extension of public ownership'. How could this retreat be explained? Was it Gaitskell's inability to convince the audience that led to his failed revisionist project? Strategically speaking, Gaitskell's attempt was described as '*one of the most maladroit operations in the modern history'* (R.T.McKenzie in Tudor Jones 1996: 58). The concept of failure became most of the time associated with Gaitskell. Nevertheless, his initiative to reformulate Labour's principles is regarded as an important experience from which Labour's modernisers will learn in the future i.e. they will learn mainly from the mistakes of that experience for it mounted a huge movement against him especially from Trade Unions.

The concept of revisionism had been revived in the 1980s, particularly under the leadership of Neil Kinnock (1983-1992). Following Labour's election defeat in 1987, Kinnock decided to launch a Policy Review to offer an alternative to the social and economic changes. The era was notably dominated

by Thatcherism, a fact that inspired Labour's '*shift in attitudes and presentation'* to survive in the '*new times'*. By 1989, the dead-line for the Policy Review, the party accomplished major changes including Kinnock's success to lead Labour towards social democracy that promotes a market-oriented mixed economy. For David Marquand, '*Kinnock was now a better - or, at any rate a more successful – revisionist than Gaitskell had ever been'*. (11)

However, Kinnock's reformulated style of social democracy was criticised for its inconsistency. In addition, his inability to convince the electorate that Labour had changed was reflected in the 1992 election defeat. Later in 1994, he admitted that they (Kinnock and his government) '*were not sufficiently audacious and there was no central theme to the exercise*' (12). John Smith, his successor to the leadership was known for his significant step in modernising the party. In October 1993, John Smith established the principle of 'One Member One Vote' (OMOV) for the election of parliamentary candidates and thus, trade unions power was restricted. He was planning to introduce his own statement which would replace Clause IV at the 1994 Labour conference, but he died unexpectedly before realising his aim.

The debate over rewriting Clause IV became a great priority at the beginning of the 1990s. In a pamphlet entitled 'Policy and Ideology', Jack Straw, Home Secretary (1997-2001) and then Foreign Secretary (2001-2003), advocated the adoption of a new constitution through a 'complete' revision of the clause. After his inability as a leader to break with the status of Clause IV, Kinnock had also promoted the revision of the article in 1994. Will Hutton, a progressive thinker, wrote in 1993 that *"Labour will be ready to contest the Conservatives legacy if it can amend Clause IV to express the aims and values of a modern socialist party"* (13). The amendment of the clause then, started to be associated with the concept of modernising the party. A justifiable reason could be that of contextual change i.e. Clause IV was originally adopted in

1918 to reflect Labour's principles and serve the objectives of the time, a time characterised by a spirit of collectivism amongst Labour, but the 1990s had witnessed a dramatic political and socio-economic change. The need for redrafting the constitutional text, particularly, Section Four, became a necessity to 'survive' within the pressures of the new world order where the struggle between the main political forces – socialism and capitalism – had become obsolete.

II.02. Blair's Proposal for a New Clause IV

Under the leadership of Tony Blair, the Clause IV issue was drawn to the foreground. Starting from his leadership speech on 04th October 1994, Blair made a clear expression that '*parties that do not change die and this party is a living movement not an historical monument. If the world changes and we don't, then we become of no use to the world*'. Unlike Gaitskell's direct appeal to change Clause IV in November 1959, Blair's implicit reference to the clause saved him from the vehement hostility that Gaitskell had experienced after his announcement of constitutional revision. In order not to face the same confrontation of 1959, Blair prepared the ground by stressing the need for modernisation and this can only be achieved through an 'up-to-date statement of the objects and objectives' of the party.

After the 'truly audacious' speech – as described by *The Times* - and the movement against Clause IV amendment, the party's National Executive decided in December 1994 to hold a special party conference in April 1995 to vote on Blair's proposal for constitutional change. To secure parliamentary and public support to change the party's policy, Blair launched a nationwide campaign in January 1995. His debating skills were honed in the frequent face to face meetings he had organised across the nation to persuade party members and the British people to accept modernisation and change. In a speech to the Labour MPs in Brussels in January 1995, Blair said that rewriting Clause IV

was '*an essential, vital part of our crusade for change*'. The language he used in this example reveals the enormity of the project, the term 'crusade' added more essence and determination to a likely sacred 'religious' mission.

The importance of language (and power) then, to influence people's perception and control their action is recognised as a major element in modern politics. The success or failure of political projects in contemporary politics is mainly attributed to the 'communicative style of leaders'. This 'communicative style', Fairclough suggests,

> *is a matter of language in the broadest sense – certainly verbal language (words), but also all other aspects of the complex bodily performance that constitutes political style (gestures, facial expressions, how people hold themselves and move, dress and hairstyle, and so forth).* (2000: 04)

According to this perspective, Blair's team concentrated their efforts to present a 'new' version of the party which would be reflected in the image of the 'new' leader who, in his own part, would make people believe in Labour's 'crusade for change' through his persuasive rhetoric.

However, it is important to mention that redrafting the clause was not only Blair's task. Many prominent figures were consulted for the composition of the new text, including David Miliband, Philip Gould, Lord Irvine, and Gordon Brown, who are known as New Labour's think-tanks. The new text moved to the Shadow Cabinet, union leaders, and then to Blair's office before the final approval. Despite the collective contribution of party members, the final text was compiled by Blair

> *on board a plane coming down from Glasgow, and finalised in his bedroom in Islington on a Sunday afternoon in early March with Campbell, Miliband and Powell. The final text was substantially Blair's own. (Anthony Seldon 2004: 226)*

Consequently, at the special party conference on 29 April 1995, the majority voted in favour of the new clause, a success of 65 per cent of the votes, '*support included 90 per cent of the constituency vote and 54.6 per cent of the union vote, in spite of the opposition of two of the biggest trade unions, The Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) and Unison*' (T. Jones 1996: 146). Following the announcement of the result, Blair delivered a famous speech at the Westminster Methodist Central Hall, the very place where the party convened in 1918 to adopt the original Clause IV. The speech was intended to show the leader's ability to change the history of Labour and his power to introduce a 'new statement of aims' and thus divert the party towards a new direction.

II.03. The New Text of the Clause

Victory over Clause IV in 1995 was interpreted differently by the British newspapers: *The Times*, for example, described the event as '*a sharp move away from old-style socialism towards the language of social democracy*'. For *The Independent*, Blair's revision was '*the boldest attempt undertaken by the Post- war Labour Party to embrace a dynamic market economy.*' (T.Jones 1996: 145). *The Sunday Telegraph* announced the historic event on 30 April 1995 under the famous headline: '*Blair buried socialism'*. Though different in style, the core idea in the press at that time was the success of the new leader to break symbolically with 'old' Labour. He confirmed that the slogan for his leadership conference in 1994 'New Labour, New Britain' was not only words. The New Clause became a real manifestation of constitutional reform. The new statement was heralding a new era for the party. If the original clause was repeatedly described as '*the formal expression of Labour's socialist myth'*, what does its removal mean? The symbolic function of the first clause was mainly perceived as a rejection of capitalism, does its abandonment signify an end of that hostility?

In fact, the new clause was written in a language that might answer those questions. However, the textual analysis may reveal ambivalent meanings, because the social function of language has also been shifted according to the socio-economic, political transformations. For instance, the seemingly simple structure of New Clause IV is full of conflicting ideas. But it should not be understood as a drawback, because, as Fairclough says:

> *The meaning potential of a form of a text is generally heterogeneous, a complex of diverse, overlapping and sometimes contradictory meanings … so that texts are usually highly ambivalent and open to multiple interpretations.* (1992: 75)

Accordingly, the first part of the New Clause reads as follows:

> *The Labour Party is a democratic socialist party. It believes that by the strength of our common endeavour, we will achieve more than we achieve alone; so as to create: for each of us the means to realise our true potential and for all of us a community in which power, wealth and opportunity are in the hands of the many not the few, where the rights we enjoy reflect the duties we owe, and where we live together, freely, in a spirit of solidarity tolerance and respect.* (14)

The most apparent difference between the old and the new clause is the use of the word '*we*' which is considered as a keyword in the political discourse of New Labour. The pronoun '*we*' is repeated five times in the above quote, but who is meant by '*we*' is not the same altogether. Norman Fairclough maintained that '*there is a standard distinction between 'exclusive' and 'inclusive' uses of 'we' – the former excludes those addressed, the latter includes them*' (2000: 164). In the case of the above quote, it seems that 'we' is 'inclusive'; it refers to government and the British people. This interpretation can be sustained if the language of the old clause is set against it, i.e. the addressee in the original clause is identified as '*the workers*' and they are distanced from government by the term '*their*'. However, New Labour discourse prefers the use of '*our*' referring apparently not only to workers, but also to the whole British people and government as well.

But the seemingly general inclusiveness may raise suspicion as to who are exactly included in 'we'. In addition, there is no clear reference that this 'we' is 'exclusive' to government and the other is 'inclusive' of *all* people; it slides between the two meanings. This kind of '*we'* is intended to be ambivalent. About 'this ambivalence' Fairclough's suggests that:

> *It is politically advantageous for a government that wants to represent itself as speaking for the whole nation (though not only for New Labour – playing on the ambivalence of 'we' is commonplace politics, and is another point of continuity with the discourse of Thatcherism).* (2000: 35-36)

The producer(s) of the new text then have anticipated the reaction of a wider audience, i.e. the non-identification of the addressee can be taken as a sign of attracting different political inspirations of different social classes.

One of the main criticisms about the old clause is the working class image that was predominant in the politics of the party. The omission of the word 'workers' from the text of New Clause IV is indirectly opening New Labour for the 'whole nation' since no social class is specifically mentioned in the new article. The traditional association between the working class and Labour becomes outdated within New Labour political discourse. This dissociation is further widened by the removal of another significant word – '*common ownership'*. The latter was a keyword in the language of old Labour commitment to nationalisation and by extension to socialist attitudes. However, the New Clause IV has shifted the focus from '*common ownership*' to '*common endeavour*' and the centrality of a new social democracy is proclaimed in the collective '*we*' – *state and/or community* – to ensure individuals' rights and preserve their freedom. The new clause goes further stressing,

> *a dynamic economy, serving the public interest, in which the enterprise of the market and the rigour of competition are joined with the forces of partnership and co-operation to produce the wealth the nation needs and*

> *the opportunity for all to work and prosper, with a thriving private sector and high quality public services.*

In an economic sense, the wording of New Clause IV suggests a new economic policy which is said to adopt '*wholesale modernisation and nothing but modernisation*'. This modernised economic tactic is meant '*to pursue a pro-competition agenda that involves opening up competition in financial services, telecommunications, energy, removing barriers that still thwart open trade*' (Gordon Brown in A. Chadwick and R. Heffernan 2003: 103). Competition in knowledge - based - economy requires a culture of enterprise to encourage risk-taking, open free trade, and increase the rate of business. To achieve effective results, New Clause IV has referred to a 'partnership' between the private and the public sectors; though it is not clearly defined how this relationship will be advanced, the old battle between the two sectors is over. The new economic policy has given importance for both to work together, '*a thriving private sector and high quality public services'*. The term 'partnership' asserts the 'co-operation' between the private and the public sectors to produce the wealth of the nation. (15)

It seems that the language of the new clause is reconciling two different political discourses. 'Enterprise' and 'competition' are Thatcherite principles, whereas 'co-operation' and the spirit of collectivism are promoted by the social democratic discourse. To ensure better integration of the two opposed political systems, New Clause IV has taken steps towards the social environment where the political economy will be implemented. The new text insists on:

> *a just society, which judges its strength by the condition of the weak as much as the strong, provides security against fear, and justice at work; which nurtures family life, promotes equality of opportunity and delivers people from the tyranny of poverty, prejudice and the abuse of power.*

The idea of social justice, therefore, evolves out of an urgent need for a society that grew richer but inequality became the prevailing feature in the 1980s and the 1990s. Despite the economic growth, 22 per cent of the British

population were living in poverty. By 1997, '*4.5 million of those of working age lived in households where no one worked; of these about 1 million had never been in paid employment*' (Steven Fielding 2003: 07). To reduce these figures, New Labour introduced new measures to tackle poverty and maintain equality in society. But the concept of 'equality' has also been transformed into an '*equality of opportunity'*, i.e. it is the task of the government to promote equal opportunity for *all* people to be educated and employed in a 'meritocratic' society, where '*people should be able to rise by their talents, not by their birth or the advantageous of privilege*' (16).

Hence, the text of New Clause IV confirms Foucault's view about discourse, '*that it was made up not of available elements, but of real, successive events, that it cannot be analysed outside the time in which it occurred.*' (Michel Foucault 1969: 220). For this reason, the analysis of the new constitutional text is linked with the analysis of the conditioning circumstances of the 1980s and the 1990s, a period known for transformation and change in the economic, political, and social environment. Understanding the succession and coexistence of the events that constituted New Labour discourse will help identify the 'laws' that formed the 'unities of discourse' and set the background against which this discourse stands out. Discourse in this case – as Foucault maintained, is 'essentially historical'.

Theoretically speaking, the analysis of discourse requires a consistent 'order' because 'things' are not as simple as when they are spoken or written about. According to Foucault again:

> *'discourses' in the form in which they can be heard or read, are not, as one might expect, a mere intersection of things and words: an obscure web of things, and a manifest, visible, coloured chain of words; … discourse is not a slender surface of contact, or confrontation, between a reality and a language (langue), the intrication of a lexicon and an experience … discourses are composed of signs; but what they do is more than use these signs to designate things. It is this more that renders*

> *them irreducible to the language (langue) and to speech. It is this 'more' that we must reveal and describe.* (1969: 54)

It is important, therefore, to go beyond the written word to decode the implied meaning in the manifest discourse. The new text of New Clause IV is composed of 'signs' that are embedded in the seemingly simple wording of the text. But what these 'signs' are able to 'do' can only be revealed in New Labour's actions in government. Those very 'signs' are also repeated in the Third Way – another new label within New Labour discourse. For this reason, and before any attempt at comparing New Labour words with actions, it is quite necessary to provide a comprehensive discussion about Third Way politics.

II.04. The Third Way: a New Politics for New Labour

The idea for a new politics emerged during the party's branding process as a 'New' Labour. The post-war British politics was dominated by two distinct political 'ways': traditional social democracy and neo-liberalism, or what is sometimes called, the Old Left and the New Right. The former gave primacy to society and the latter was known for preference to economy. However, the two 'ways' could not meet the irreversible change in the 1990s. Consequently, a third way was adopted by the social democrats and New Labour started to be associated with a new politics which was neither Left nor Right. In fact, the expression Third Way did not originate with New Labour; it had already been used in the past by different political groups, it disappeared and then was resurrected by Bill Clinton and the New Democrats in the US and then moved to New Labour in the UK and other parts of the world.

Such a new politics emerged at the beginning of the 1990s, a period known by a wide failure of traditional socialist ideas to manage the economy effectively. On the other hand, neo-liberalism had also been discarded because – as Giddens suggests, '*it neglects the social basis of markets themselves,*

which depend upon the very communal forms that market fundamentalism indifferently casts to the winds' (Anthony Giddens 1998: 15). The alternative offered by New Labour is framed within the Third Way discourse which claims to end up the long lived animosity between the Old Left and the New Right. The embrace of the Third Way by Labour's modernisers in the 1990s was sustained by Tony Blair's frequent speeches and writings which promoted the need for a new politics. In 'The Third Way: New politics for the New Century', Blair wrote:

> *The Third Way stands for a modernised social democracy, passionate in its commitment to social justice and the goals of the centre-left, but flexible, innovative and forward-looking in the means to achieve them … it is a third way because it moves decisively beyond an Old Left preoccupied by state control, high taxations and producers interests; and a New Right treating public investment, and often the very notions of 'society' and collective endeavour, as evils to be undone.* (Tony Blair in A. Chadwick and R. Heffernan 2003: 28)

This is an example of many other pamphlets and articles in which the Third Way is often represented by New Labour politicians as a distinct political project. Its distinctiveness is interpreted in terms of the innovative 'way' to achieve the objectives of centre-Left governments (discussed below). As mentioned above, the Third Way is about a 'modernised social democracy' that goes 'beyond' the Old Left and the New Right. In their article *'Left, Right and the Third Way'*, Stephen Driver and Luck Martell have questioned the meaning of that kind of politics that is 'beyond' Left and Right and conclude that the Third Way cannot be a transcendence of the two doctrines because their principles are not left behind, rather, it is a combination or a 'mixture' that aims to provide a '*more pragmatic political project which is willing to break free from what it sees as the straightjacket of left/right politics'*(Stephen Driver and Luck Martell in A. Giddens 2001: 42).

In fact, the Third Way moves beyond the old ideological division and claims to reconcile political polarities, i.e. neo-liberal values are incorporated

with classical social democratic principles. Combinations like 'fairness and enterprise', 'social justice and economic dynamism', 'rights and duties' are constantly stressed in the Third Way discourse. The impact of the British sociologist Anthony Giddens to provide a theoretical basis for the Third Way debate is widely recognised in the international academic circle. His influential studies on the Third Way in key texts like *The Third Way: the Renewal of Social Democracy (1998), The Third Way and its Critics (2000), The Progressive Manifesto (2003)* have contributed in the development of an integrated political project for centre-left governments across the world and the UK in particular. Giddens political theory is based on his expertise in sociology. This relationship between politics and sociology would help constitute a political thinking based on a practical analysis of contemporary society, because the success of political projects is measured by its consequences on society. Giddens believes that

> *Political life is nothing without ideals, but ideals are empty if they don't relate to real possibilities. We need to know both what sort of society we would like to create and the* ***concrete means*** *of moving towards it*. (1998:02). (emphasis mine)

Giddens view of politics seems to be pragmatic like most proponents of the Third Way. His reference to the 'concrete means' to create the kind of society one needs is a reminder of Blair's 'what counts is what works'. It is not surprising to find such an interplay between Giddens and Blair, for Giddens has frequently been described as Blair's Third Way guru. Giddens notes that '*in a world experiencing such profound changes a certain pragmatism and readiness to experiment are necessary*' (2001: 05). The traditional Left/Right division had created an age characterised by dogmatic ideological beliefs, but contemporary politics has moved beyond that old adversarial politics towards a more pragmatic era which is regulated by consensual politics. Hence, the Third Way approach has offered, in Chantal Mouffe's words, 'a politics without adversaries'. (17)

This political thinking is manifested in New Labour's texts and Blair's writings and speeches (examples are given below). Moreover, in the 1997 election manifesto, New Labour stated that it '*is a party of ideas and ideals but not of outdated ideology. What counts is what works. The objectives are radical. The means will be modern*'. This is an official declaration that introduces the party as 'New' Labour. As expressed in the manifesto, the party is no longer committed to an 'outdated ideology', its governing motto has become '*what counts is what works*'. Radicalism for New Labour is defined in terms of achievement, not doctrine i.e. it is not important whether New Labour adopt leftist or rightist values, what is even more important is the practical means to reach effective ends (the end justifies the means).

In this sense, New Labour had admitted in the 1997 manifesto that the new politics will be open to accept and keep the good 'things' that resulted from the eighteen years of Conservative rule. It is stated as follows:

> *Some things the Conservatives got right. We will not change them. It is where they get things wrong that we will make change. We have no intention or desire to replace one set of dogmas by another* (manifesto 97: 1-2)

It is widely acknowledged that the Conservatives did well in the economy especially during the Thatcher Government after 1982. Despite the difficulties Margaret Thatcher faced, such as the increasing rate of inflation that reached 21.9 per cent by the end of 1980 and the great number of the unemployed people, 2.13 million at the same period, the overall economic situation during the Thatcher administration (1979-1992) was known for 'success'(more about this kind of success in chapter four). It is at the level of economy that 'Old' Labour failed. Thus, New Labour has been engaged in a process of renewal to revitalise the party and reformulate its institutions to set a new policy for a strong economy.

New Labour accommodation with Thatcherite consensus is displayed in the 1997 manifesto which has included key principles that belong to neo-liberalism. Terms like 'enterprise', 'competition', and 'responsibility' are Thatcherite concepts. They have been given a special resonance in a document framed by social democrats. But New Labour cannot be called 'Thatcherism Mark II', as it has been suggested by some critics, because the new programme of the party is not entirely Thatcherite, nor wholly antagonistic of the Left. This perspective remains valid if one considers what New Labour reveals in the text:

> *In each area of policy a new and distinctive approach has been tapped out, one that differs both from the solutions of the old left and those of the Conservative right. This is why new Labour is new. We believe in the strength of our values, but we recognise also that the policies of 1997 cannot be those of 1947 or 1967.* (Labour Manifesto 97:04*)*

New Labour distinctiveness resides in the eclectic approach of the Third Way in areas like industrial relation, education, health, economic management and social welfare (the last two areas are explained below). Its broad policy objectives are expressed by Tony Blair in the following order:

01-A dynamic knowledge-based economy founded on individual empowerment and opportunity, where governments enable, not command, and the power of the market is harnessed to serve the public interest.
02-A strong civil society, enshrining rights and responsibilities, where the government is a partner to strong communities.
03-A modern government based on partnership and decentralisation, where democracy is deepened to suit the modern age.
04-*And a foreign policy based on international cooperation*.(Tony Blair in A. Chadwick and R. Heffernan 2003: 33)

These four objectives could be taken as a well constructed creed for the Third Way politics which resonates with the 1997 manifesto and the New Clause IV. New Labour recurrent concepts since 1994 are traced very often in relation to the above objectives. For instance, and according to the four goals again, it appears that New Labour has constituted a new political discourse which is

based on the coexistence of economy and society. The reconciliation of the two disciplines is viewed as a basic precept for the new politics.

The interplay between society and economy has not been created by Third Way think-tanks. The origin of this relation, as Mark Latham suggests in his article: '*The Third Way: an Outline*', goes back to the early political economists like Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson who argued for the close interdependence between a strong economy and a strong society. The split that happened between the two disciplines emerged with the conflict which had been raised between the 'economic rationalists', a group who display a keen interest for economic growth and are said to neglect the social concern, and another group known as the 'social elites' who advocate social prosperity against economic efficiency. The two groups belong respectively to the opposing traditions of Right and Left, and these two doctrines were also in conflict till the emergence of the Third Way project which has resolved the ideological struggle and offered a 'politics without adversaries'.

As mentioned earlier, the 1997 manifesto revealed that New Labour would not repeat the mistakes made by the Conservatives; rather, they would make a change. The neo-liberal anti-society outlook is one of the controversial issues that intensified the conflict between Left and Right. In fact, some of the charges made by the neo-liberals concerning social policy are acceptable in part. The welfare programme, for example, which is designed to support the unemployed people, will create a culture of dependency for those who benefit from state provision and the problem will become even worse. As Giddens says, '*benefits meant to counter unemployment, for instance, can actually produce unemployment if they are actively used as a shelter from the labour market'*. (1998: 115)

Though New Labour recognises the drawbacks of the old welfare state, the new politics of the party does not give primacy to the market like

Thatcherism did. As expressed in the 1997 manifesto again, New Labour would provide a reformed welfare, it is read as follows:

> *We will be the party of welfare reform. In consultation and partnership with the people, we will design a modern welfare state based on rights and duties going together fit for the modern world.* (Labour Manifesto 97:04)

A 'modern welfare state' is one of many other expressions New Labour has used to represent the new discourse on social policy. Emphasis on a modernised welfare is stressed throughout the manifesto by referring to the reformed social programme and particularly a renewed welfare state that aims to move people into work. It is clearly expressed in the text: '*we will get the unemployed* ***from welfare to work'*** (manifesto 97:18), (emphasis mine).

It is further maintained that '*the best way to tackle poverty is to* ***help people into jobs*** *– real jobs*'. The proliferation of the word '*work*' and several other expressions that are related to the field of employment like '*workfare*', 'employers', 'employees', 'business', 'benefits', and 'welfare-to-work' indicate that New Labour is using a new political discourse that encourage work and discourage dependency. The classic welfare state is said to be 'passive', the unemployed used to be given a help for their 'passivity' i.e. get benefits from joblessness. However, New Labour workfare '*will attack unemployment and break the spiral of escalating spending on social security*' (manifesto 1997: 18). The words 'attack' and 'break' are examples of New Labour tough language to break with the past and persuade the unemployed to act positively in a society where rights are conditioned to duties.

The reforms in social policy are grounded upon the new principle of 'welfare-to-work'. The latter is intended essentially to strengthen the link between social and economic policies through what Giddens calls 'social investment strategies' in areas like employment and concludes that the end result is to replace passive by 'positive welfare'. He writes broadly:

> *Positive welfare would replace each of Beveridge's negatives with a positive: in place of Want, autonomy; not disease but active health; instead of Ignorance, education, as a continuing part of life; rather than Squalor, well-being; and in place of Idleness, Initiative.* (Giddens 1998: 128)

The belief that the welfare programme is designed to spend on the needy people through redistribution of income has lost practicality in a context regulated by the ethic of working and active participation in wealth creation. The shift from consumption to production is emphasised by the new ideas that seek to enhance economic improvement through a social investment approach. This development strategy, as James Midgley suggests, '*offers a new rational for redistribution by advocating the allocation of collective resources for social investments that return resources back to the economy*' (James Midgley in A.Giddens 2001: 158). The efficiency of welfare reforms is shown in the reduction of joblessness and a slow improvement in the rate of employment during New Labour first term. As statistics show:

> *Between 1996 and 1999 employment in Great Britain grew at a slower rate (1.03%) than in the EMU area (1.87%). However, this base level employment growth resulted in a considerably higher rate of participation (1997:76%) than within the EMU area (1997:65.1%) and the unemployment rate (declining from 8.7% in 1996 to 6.3% in 1998) dropped more quickly than in the EMU countries (1996:11.6%; 1998:10.9%).* (Wolfgang Merkel in A. Giddens 2001: 59)

More generally, the National Institute for Economic Research produced a report in 2005 which stated that '*Labour's economic record has been very satisfactory. Nothing has gone badly wrong with the economy over the period since 1997.'*(Eric Shaw 2007: 166).

The economic and social stability which characterised New Labour first term is widely achieved through a consistent political discourse. The consistency of New Labour vision is constructed in the 1997 manifesto that has incorporated elements from Thatcherite discourse like the enterprise culture to

promote the welfare-to-work programme which is essentially aimed to raise employment and develop business strategies for economic growth. But, New Labour politics is not only a continuation of Thatcherism as mentioned before, rather, it is built upon Third Way principles that give preference to economy and society as well. It is the 'new social contract' that links rights with responsibilities, and this connection between social and economic policies has given New Labour a sense of novelty and difference from both the New Right and the Old Left. In other words, it is the new political discourse which has constructed that unified and 'convincing' representation of New Labour so that people could trust a coherent set of values.

Instead of dogma, the new politics is based on conviction and the latter is achieved through persuasion. Is it a matter of language, then? Is it New Labour rhetoric that has led the party to power? New Labour has recognised the importance of language in contemporary politics, but whether there is any substance within the new discourse is an issue that has polarised critics and political analysts.

II.05. New Labour Discursive Language

The increasing role of language to achieve political aims is recognised within New Labour discourse. Rhetoric becomes a weapon to fight for dominance by consent. It is a means to persuade the public to accept the reality of the government actions. But the true intention behind those actions is never revealed in the manifest discourse. The hidden power that manipulates the wording is part of the incorporeal discourse i.e. the silent discourse that directs and shapes the structure of representation for the audience. Foucault's lucid interpretation of discourse in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* has maintained that:

> *Everything that is formulated in discourse was already articulated in that semi-silence that precedes it, which continues to run obstinately*

> *beneath it, but which it covers and silences. The manifest discourse, therefore, is really no more than the repressive presence of what it does not say; and this 'not-said' is a hollow that undermines from within all that is said* (1969: 28).

The distinction between the manifest and the incorporeal discourse is not meant to divide two different processes. Both kinds of discourse are connected. The division between aspects of relations within discourse analysis, in Foucault's words, is just 'provisional', it is 'an initial approximation' that could help the study to outline its procedure to discover the real intention within the 'invisible text'. But the investigation that runs beneath what is displayed in the manifest discourse is not an end in itself. Foucault believes that:

> *We do not seek below what is manifest the half silent murmur of another discourse; we must show why it could not be other than it was, in what respect it is exclusive of any other, how it assumes, in the midst of others and in relation to them, a place that no other could occupy* (1969: 31).

By implementation, New Labour has constituted a political discourse notably that of the Third Way in relation to the preceding political discourses so as to construct a sense of unity which appears in the proclaimed connection between the economic and social policies that New Labour has offered to synthesise between neo-liberalism and collectivism. Though New Labour retained some basic values like individualism and equality which belong respectively to Thatcherism and social democracy, the Third Way represents a different interpretation of these principles i.e. it departs from the socialist egalitarian sense of the past towards an equality of opportunity, and readjusted the individual status in society where personal rights are matched with responsibilities.

The specificity of New Labour discourse, therefore, resides in what Norman Fairclough calls a 'hybridisation' of the old and the new. He explains the concept from a linguistic point of view:

> *Seen in language terms, the 'Third Way' is a closure of political discourse: it is a new political discourse which is produced through a hybridization of 'old' political discourses of the left and the right, and which thus narrows the range of mainstream political discourses.* (1989: 210)

This kind of 'hybridisation' appears in the language of New Labour texts especially those concerned with Third Way representation. Different values are incorporated in a seemingly equal and balanced pairs. For example, the Third Way is said to be:

> *a belief in social justice and economic dynamism, ambition and compassion, fairness and enterprise going together. The Third Way is a new politics that help people cope with a more insecure world because it rejects the destructive excesses of the market and the intrusive hand of state intervention* (18).

But this construction has raised suspicion about the reality of New Labour actions. In other words, does New Labour respect the consistency of their theory in practice? Does New Labour performance in government match up the promises they made?

In fact, words in politics are often distinguished from actions. Many critics are disappointed with the credibility gap, the difference between what New Labour says and what it does. In *New Language, New Labour?* (2000), N. Fairclough explains how rhetoric and reality become an evident dichotomy of New Labour discourse. He says that:

> *the politics of the gaps between reality and rhetoric is a fundamental part of politics, and it includes the various types of gap … between what people say and what they do, between action which is linguistic and action which takes other forms, between what people implicitly claim they are through their styles of performing and what other evidence suggest they really are*. (2000: 155-156).

The politics of gaps emerged when evidence on the ground is 'less convincing' than what has already been promised. When rhetoric is used to disguise facts, dissent over governmental policies grow persistently. Despite another election

victory in 2001, New Labour's credibility started to disintegrate. In his book *New Labour's Pasts. The Labour Party and its Discontent* (2004), James Cronin suggests that the low turnout indicates a warning, a sign that voters are no longer 'enthusiastic' about New Labour's assumed novelty. A decline in participation by 12 per cent, from 71 per cent in 1997 to 59 percent in 2001 demonstrated that 'the potential for disillusionment was very high'.

Furthermore, trust for which New Labour had been first elected in 1997 was 'seriously diminished' by the party's second term in power. A wave of discontent was calling for the resignation of Tony Blair at the Bournemouth conference in September 2003. Criticism from different sources to the Prime Minister is shown in the following quotation:

> *At roughly the same moment[of the conference] the London Review of Books carried two pieces by distinguished historians – Ross Mckibbin and Peter Clarke – calling for Blair to resign in favour of Robin Cook or Gordon Brown. On the eve of conference a MORI/Financial Times poll revealed that half the voters wanted Blair to resign. The very next day The Observer reported that in a poll of Labour party members over 40 per cent believed the Prime Minister should resign; and the paper's political editor claimed that 'the Prime Minister faces a complete breakdown in his relations with large sections of the Labour Party'.*(James Cronin 2004: 459)

The government and Blair in particular, were critically denounced at the Bournemouth conference for serious domestic and foreign issues. The war in Iraq and the public sector policy were controversial subjects for New Labour at that time. Tensions with the unions grew steadily over the government plan to reform the public sector that would lower wages to maintain more spending.

Though sharply criticised, the Blair Government reversed all expectations of failure and turned the course of events from disagreement to support. A surprising strong backing from the conference participants suggests that the government strategy to divert public attention is based on a strong

scheme of persuasion. More importantly, it is based on Blair's rhetoric. Concerning the Iraq war – the hot issue in 2003 – Blair said:

Iraq has divided the international community. It has divided the party, the country, families, friends. I know many people are disappointed, hurt, angry. I know many profoundly believe the action we took was wrong. I do not at all disrespect anyone who disagrees with me. I ask just one thing: attack my decision but at least understand why I took it and why I would take the same decision again. [...] So whatever we each of us thought, let us agree on this. We who started the war must finish the peace. Those British soldiers who died are heroes. [...] whatever the disagreement Iraq is a better country without Saddam.

This is an example of Blair's rhetorical style which was intended to reverse the trend of criticism to his 'wrong' decision. His 'words' consist of an implicit reaction against those who opposed the 'action' the government took. The speech he delivered at the conference was described as a 'major success'. James Cronin says that Blair

> *was resolute and insistent in defence of the government's policies on Iraq and on crime, public service reform and taxation, and he proudly proclaimed that he had 'no reverse gear'… the sense that his position was quickly dissipated, and by the end of conference at least some journalists were visibly disappointed that there was no blood on the floor. It would, at least, have been a more exciting story.* (2004: 470)

What is behind this power that could turn denunciation to support? How could a speech transform an atmosphere of anger and mobilise a positive reaction among the conference audience? In fact, this is 'political speech' and the political field is

> *the site par excellence in which agents seek to form and transform their vision of the world and thereby the world itself: it is the site par excellence in which* ***words are actions*** *and the symbolic character of* ***power*** *is at stake. (John B. Thompson 1991: 26)(emphasis mine)*

It is argued that language is 'never ideologically innocent' i.e. it is usually constructed to impose a certain knowledge that aims to achieve power and domination.

But '*domination is not only a matter of instilling fear into people*', as Allan Finlayson said, '*it is far better to make the people love you, believe in you, and want to follow you*' (2003: 19). This is what New Labour has taken into consideration while calculating for their political discourse. It is the language of the New Clause IV, the Third Way and the 1997 election manifesto that introduced the concept of the 'New' for Labour to restore 'power' after eighteen years of absence. To preserve power after 1997 New Labour has intensified its relation with the media that became a source from and through which New Labour could exert its influence to 'monopolise' British politics. The next chapter is intended to tackle the inevitable relation between New Labour and the media.

Endnotes:

01- The statement was originally written by Joseph Conrad to describe the function of the artist in a literary work, but the politician's role, particularly in modern politics, has become quite similar, since politics – like literature – is also considered as an art. The word 'politics' which is written between bars in the quote is replacing the original term 'fiction', and this is another reason for the relevance of the statement to define the performance of a politician who is mostly viewed as an actor performing on a political ground especially when rhetoric is used as a means to conceal a dull reality. Yet the objectives of literature and politics remain quite different.

02- The importance of Norman Fairclough's work relies on its transdisciplinary orientation, i.e. 'dialogue between disciplines and theories with each drawing upon the concepts, categories, and 'logics' of others' (Fairclough 2003) to provide a consistent study of a certain research topic. The intersection between linguistics, politics, and how language and power are all connected issues for the study of discourse is discussed in a quite interesting approach in his works (titles are mentioned in the bibliography).

03-Michail Bakhtin is a Russian scholar who is known by his considerable influence on discourse analysis in terms of dialogism and intertextuality – very useful concepts for language studies. Though his name is not dominant in this research, the credit for his ingenious ideas should be recognised especially his notion of the double-voiced discourse which is adopted in the analysis of Blairite discourse in chapter three, part two in this study.

04- Arthur Henderson (1863-1935) and Sidney Webb (1859-1947) were active Labour politicians. Arthur Henderson served as Labour leader for three terms: 1908-1910, 1914-1917, and 1931-1932; he was known by his anti-strikes belief and tried to avoid violence whenever possible, subsequently he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1934. Sidney Webb was an economist, reformer, and co-founder of the London School of Economics in 1895. He joined the Fabian Society in 1884 and provided many influential writings for the society and Labour Party, the Clause IV is an example.

05- Cited in Ken Coates (1995), *Common Ownership. Clause IV and the Labour Party*, p.01.

06- The Fabian Society is a British socialist movement which was founded in 1884; its aim was to promote the values of democratic socialism through gradual reforms rather than revolutionary means. Many Fabians participated in the formation of the Labour Representation Committee in 1900 which would change into the Labour Party in 1906. The Fabian Society still has an influence on New Labour ideas and played a significant role in the election of Tony Blair as Labour leader.

07- Revisionism, modernisation, and progressivism are key words in this research work; they are explained in the course of this work. In fact, the whole study revolves around their meanings which entail change, reform and rethinking Labour's doctrine. The difference at the level of terminology is part of the social change which has

affected the language used to describe social transformations. Revisionism, for example, is scarcely used in contemporary politics when referring to New Labour altered policies, modernisation and 'new' progressivism are used instead.

08- Douglas Jay (1907-1996) is a Labour politician who served as an Economic Secretary to the Treasury (1947-1950), Financial Secretary to the Treasury (1950-1951), and President of the Board of Trade (1964-1967). He was a Member of Parliament from 1946 until 1983.

09- Division over the issue of change has always been present in Labour's history, yet the difference occurred at the level of naming the two groups in conflict. For example, fundamentalists and revisionists, hard left and soft left, traditionalists and modernisers. The former section in each pair is against reform and change, whereas the latter section is often motivated for the case of renewal.

10- Cited in Ken Coates (1995), *Common Ownership. Clause IV and the Labour Party*, p.40.

11- Ibid, p.127.

12- Ibid, p.128.

13- Cited in Anthony Seldon (2004), *Blair*, p.217.

14- Cited in Steven Fielding (2003), *The Labour Party. Continuity and Change in the Making of 'New' Labour*, p.77. Other parts of the New Clause are also taken from the same reference, the same source.

15-'Partnership', 'co-operation', and other concepts of the new clause will be also used as components of the Third Way.

16- Tony Blair cited in Steven Fielding (2003), *The Labour Party. Continuity and Change in the Making of 'New' Labour*, p.181. 'Meritocracy' is a new lexical item within New Labour discourse, more about it will be found in the Third Way discussion.

17- Cited in Alan Finlayson (2003), *Making Sense of New Labour*, p.118.

18- Tony Blair Cited in Norman Fairclough (2000), *New Labour, New Language?* p.10.

Chapter Three

New Labour Mediatised Discourse:

A Quest for Power

The achievement of power has always been an ultimate goal for politicians. To construct a strong policy agenda is by no means effective to attain power, but policy presentation has become even more important in contemporary politics; politicians have become increasingly obsessed with finding new communicative strategies to transmit an image of electability to voters. However, people in a democratic society are not easily manipulated; they are usually ready to challenge political conceptions if they are not well informed about them. In order to gain support of and control public perceptions, political leaders struggle through the media's techniques of persuasion. Henceforth, a mediatised representation has developed as a result of the growing relation between politics and the media. Subsequently, the exercise of power in modern societies is not forcefully imposed; it is rather achieved through 'manufacturing' consent in the media.

Policy formation and its communication are no longer different processes; both are taken as one integrated system in modern politics. Media management for New Labour has developed into a crucial means to achieve power. The interaction between political discourse and media discourse is part of New Labour's intention to match appearance with reality, i.e., to create an image of electability, New Labour relies heavily on media strategies of persuasion and mobilisation of meaning. The media cannot only reflect reality; it is the site *par excellence* where events are 'manufactured' for commercial purposes. The media financial and persuasive power is employed by New Labour to exert political influence. The special pact between Tony Blair and Rupert Murdoch - the media tycoon - may illustrate the mutual interest between the two power-holders i.e. the former holds political power and the latter possesses commercial power (Norman Fairclough 1989: 43, Anthony Sampson 2005:234).

In fact, the Blairite discourse is embedded within the media discourse. Blair's communicative style lies at the heart of New Labour discursive

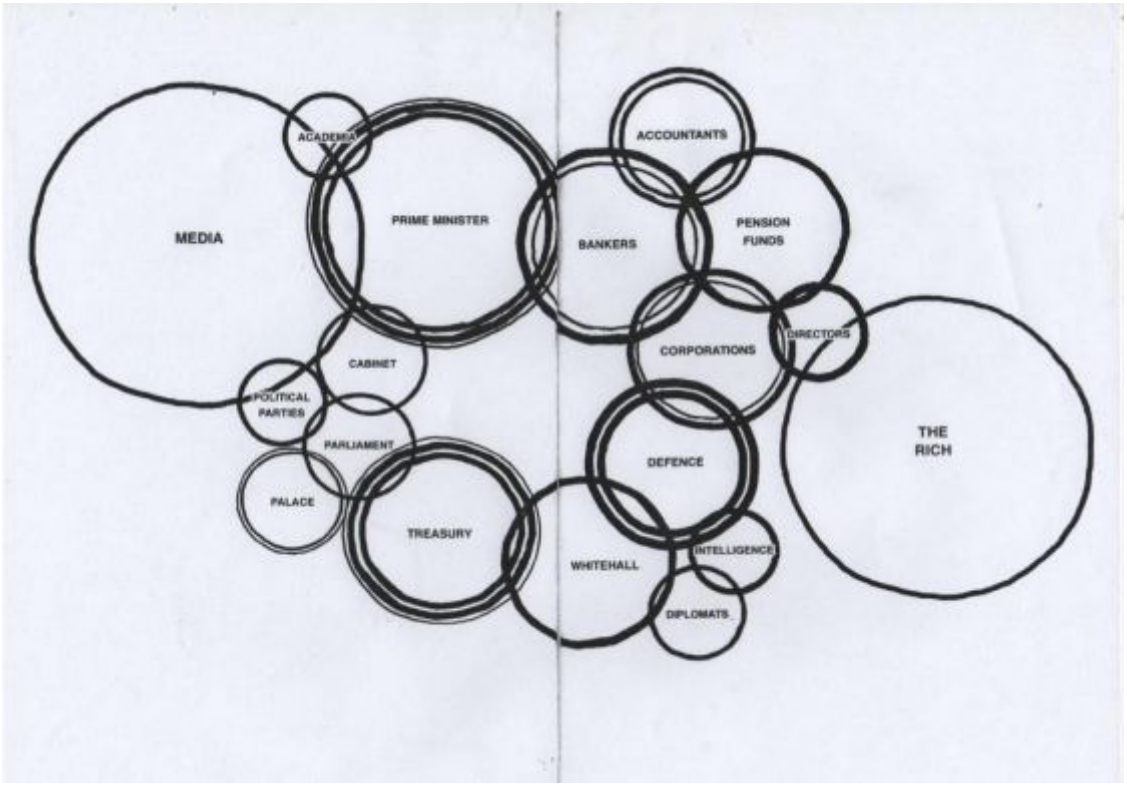
formation. His ability to convey a trustful image of leadership has been reinforced by the media. His popularity as a new type of leader attracted the electorate in 1997 and New Labour gained the majority of the media support. But his unpopularity in 2005 – because of media coverage of his 'wrong' conduct – repelled voters and New Labour command over the media started to weaken. Though New Labour was elected in 2005, its relation with the media became critical. Many analysts have wondered as to what had happened to New Labour's honeymoon with the media barons and what were the causes of their dissociation.

III.01. New Labour Media Management

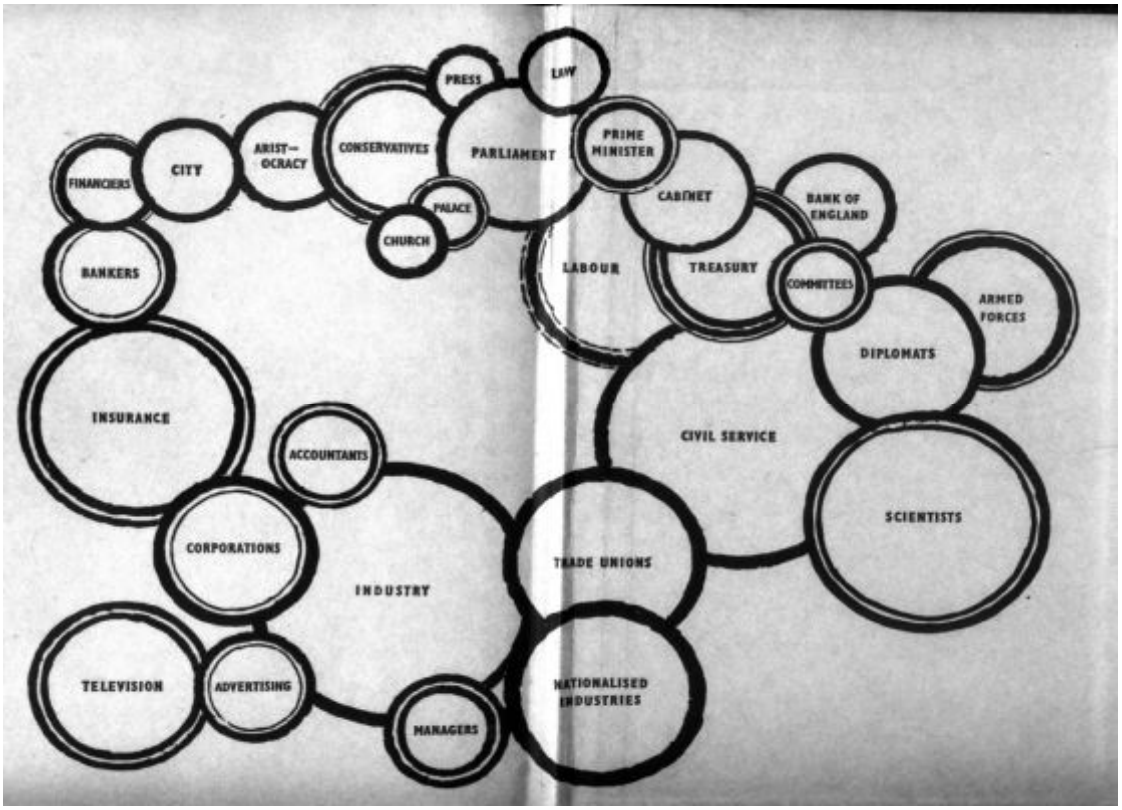
The interaction between politics and the media is not a new phenomenon. Political actors have always been in need for media strategists, or 'spin doctors' who could help leaders to find appropriate means for communicating the policy agenda. New Labour obsession to mediatise the political discourse has been unprecedented; that obsession is justifiable if one considers the age during which New Labour was created. It is the Communication Age, a time known by the power of the media to shape, determine, and control public attention. That is why, '*managing the media was a necessity – not an option – for Blair and New Labour'*. (Raymond Kuhn in Anthony Seldon 2007: 123)

Perhaps the circles of Britain's power-centres that are suggested by Anthony Sampson could illustrate the pervasive power of the media. In *Who Run This Place* (2005), Anthony Sampson represents Britain's establishment in the form of interlocking circles, each of them is different in size, which is itself indicative of the different powers attributed to each institution. Two circles look bigger than others: the rich and the media. The prime minister's circle is also large but not as much as the rich and the media's (figure 1). The link between money, politics, and the media has become a necessity in a contemporary society. Each of them provides facilities to empower the other

i.e. private donations, for example, could supply governmental projects and the media power of manipulation could mobilise particular situations for the sake of their common interests. About forty years ago, A. Sampson suggested the same idea through circles, but the size of each circle has changed according to its importance in a changing British society (figure 2).



(Figure 01) Source: Anthony Sampson (2005), *Who Run this Place.* (Opening pages).



(Figure 2) Source: Anthony Sampson ( ), *Who Run this Place.* (Opening pages).

In fact, the powerful influence of the media over people enhanced New Labour to adapt a media strategy in the party political discourse. As studies confirmed, like 'reception studies' – *'a research tradition indebted to literary studies and the methodology of commercial focus group research'* (James Curran et al. 2005: 255), and other media studies held by the new cultural critics like Stuart Hall, the media could raise interest; shape public understanding; fix opinions; help create reality not only reflect it (J. Curran & J. Seaton 2003: 344); and more importantly inform the electorate about political projects. Because of these qualities, the media have developed an authoritarian relationship with the audience, and that audience is the very target for politicians to exert power on. In order to achieve this goal, politicians employ different means, but before dealing with these various strategies, one should ask: what is power? What makes it so 'precious' a goal? Why are some people (politicians) striving to achieve it through diverse means while others see nothing worth to gain?

In one of his definitions of power, Michael Foucault provides the following statement:

> *It is a set of actions on possible actions; it incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; it releases or contrives, makes more probable or less; in the extreme, it constrains or bids absolutely, but it is always a way of acting upon one or more acting subjects by virtue of their acting or being capable of action; a set of actions upon other actions.* (Michael Foucault in James D. Faubion 1994: 341)

Though Foucault (1) does not clarify what could be that 'set of actions', the exercise of power does not imply the use of violent force. His use of words like 'incite', 'induce', and 'seduce' demonstrates that power is not directly acted upon 'other actions', it works through strategic ways to obtain legitimacy for the actions of the dominant bloc. Foucault concludes that power is '*less a confrontation between adversaries … than a question of 'government'*, and to govern means *'to structure the possible field of action of others'*. (Michael Foucault in James D. Faubion 1994: 341)

The implied meaning of the above statement refers to the notion of consent that should be won in a political struggle. If confrontation is despised, then concession is a good way to integrate with society at large. It is the idea of consent that politicians are trying to construct through their collaboration with the media. The latter has become a crucial asset for manufacturing consent. As Ralph Negrine has suggested:

> *Political leadership over the whole of society depends 'not only on the expression of the interests of the ruling class but also on its* ***acceptance*** *as "normal reality" or "commonsense" by those … subordinated to it'.* ***Consent*** *must be won*. (Cited in R. Negrine 1994: 17). (emphasis mine)

Though the true interests of the ruling class are hardly revealed explicitly to the public, the media could sustain what is expressed and mobilise its meaning to get the audience's acceptance. Reception studies have argued that meaning is created through the media interaction with the audience. It is suggested that the meaning-making process is 'strongly influenced by the 'discourses' that

audiences derive from everyday life.' However, what is transmitted by the media does not always have the same impact, the context within which the media operate and the audience's attitudes usually determine the media influence on particular occasions but not others (J.Curran et al. 2005: 255).

The case of New Labour relation with the media is a good example to illustrate a shift in media partisanship, especially the press. In the 1997 General Election, the alignment of the British national press had been remarkable. Six out of ten papers supported New Labour. After more than twenty years' support for the Conservatives, *The Sun* for example decided to change its loyalties to pro-Labour. In 2001 even more national dailies supported New Labour (A. Seldon 2007: 131). Consequently, the national daily circulation support for New Labour in 1997 and 2001 was 61 and 70 per cent, respectively (J.Curran & J.Seaton 2003: 74). Subsequently, one could ask, what is behind the press backing? How could New Labour win the papers' support after eighteen years in the Opposition? More importantly, from their origins Labour had often been attacked by a Tory press, what makes the difference with New Labour?

In fact, there are many reasons for the realignment of newspapers – especially the Conservative's. The well-crafted image of the party constitutional reform in the 1997 election campaign had been stimulating. The widely publicised concept of modernisation improved New Labour electoral fortunes, unlike the Conservatives whose relation with the press started to break up because of the charges launched against some domestic issues like the National Health Service, rail privatisation, and salary increases. Another important fact for newspapers partisanship is the facilities offered by New Labour to media companies to extend their commercial power in return for political support (Raymond Kuhn in Anthony Seldon 2007: 130). The defection of Murdoch's papers to New Labour has been advantageous for both.

Many political commentators observed the tacit agreement between Tony Blair and Rupert Murdoch, the former is said to be a 'market-friendly politician' and the latter is a 'pragmatic businessman' (J.Curran & J.Seaton 2003: 75). Their common objective is to achieve power 'without responsibility' to people. Actually, this expression goes back to 1931 when Stanley Baldwin, Tory prime minister, accused press owners – notably Lord Beaverbrook owner of the *Daily Express* – to wield 'power without responsibility'. That statement becomes often collocated with media magnets whose main concern is to make profit and extend their commercial enterprise. Murdoch Media Empire is no exception. But Tony Blair politics is based on compromise, unlike Baldwin who challenged Beaverbrook and then both ended as adversaries.

In order not to repeat the same experience, a tacit agreement has been forged between Tony Blair and Rupert Murdoch, confirming Foucault's idea that power is a matter of concession, not confrontation (discussed above). The growing awareness of the potent power of media barons over political leaders is manifested in New Labour strategic approach to media management. The whole process is regulated by highly professional strategists, usually called 'spin doctors' who have been appointed by New Labour to ensure a good contact with the media and have a positive impact on the audience i.e. courting the media.

Alastair Campbell, Blair's press secretary (1994-2003) is said to be the 'personification' of that professionalism. As former journalist and political editor of the *Mirror* and *Today*, Campbell has acquired a reputation for handling governmental news. David Bradshaw and Philip Basset, former journalists in the *Daily Mirror* and *The Times* respectively, have also been employed as media mindset for New Labour government to secure professional operations of the news (Raymond Kuhn in Anthony Seldon 2007: 126). These advisers and many others work in coordination within a highly centralised framework i.e. there should be a governmental approval before major media

appearances to ‘impose’ a consistent image of New Labour or what is mostly presented as the Blair Project.

Political communication (2), therefore, relies heavily on the contribution of journalists who secure a ‘privileged position’ in a democratic society; they are considered as a ‘dominant social group’ for their ability to shape the ‘appropriate’ discourse for different audiences. The power to convince the public about governmental action is not only achieved through the individual effort of politicians, it is also the making of media spin. The use of the media as an instrument of control is a matter of using the ‘right’ language, and the latter ‘*has become perhaps the primary medium of social control and power*’ (Norman Fairclough 1989: 02).

In *Language and Power* (1989), Norman Fairclough makes a comprehensive relation between political communication and how it is transmitted through media discourse. He said:

> *The media operate as a means for the expression and the reproduction of the power of the dominant class and bloc. And the mediated power of existing power-holders is also a hidden power, because it is implicit in the practices of the media rather than being explicit.* (Norman Fairclough 1989: 43)

This kind of mediatised political communication asserts the power of the governing body. Though it is a hidden power exerted behind the rhetorical wording, discourse analysis can trace the reality of this power. Fairclough further explains that ‘*it is a form of power to constrain content: to favour certain interpretations and ‘wording’ of events while excluding others’* (N.Fairclough 1989: 43). In fact, what is included in and what is excluded from media texts and how the selected event is represented through a particular language are all crucial considerations for media discourse. It has even been suggested that the idea of excluding the ‘Other’ is a necessary element in the formation of ‘dominant discourses’ (B. Busch in Keith Brown et al. 2006: 610).

For this reason, the media are viewed as a powerful means of 'inhibiting opposition to the social order'. Some critics, like Stuart Hall, have also argued that the most general function of the media is to maintain the status quo, i.e. the media help New Labour to emphasise the strength of the party's project by means of reworking their beliefs in the public sphere; it is a media strategy to block and stifle alternative views. In so doing, the media are regarded as an agency of class domination (J. Curran & J. Seaton 2003: 343). But as it has already been mentioned, social control is hardly achieved if it is forcefully imposed by the government. There is a growing tendency to control by consent, as Finlayson said:

> *Domination is not only a matter of instilling fear into people ... it is far better to make the people love you, believe in you, and want to follow you. (Finlayson 2003: 19)*

Critical discourse analysis, therefore, could reveal certain realities concerning the connection between the political and media discourses. Because of its socio-political orientation, discourse analysis is seen as a standard approach to uncover the inequalities of power in media texts. For instance, textual analysis is related to the social and cultural forces that shape the discursive practice, i.e. text production, distribution, and consumption (Norman Fairclough 1992: 78). For a clear understanding, Tony Blair is taken as an example to explain the relation between politics, media, and power. How did Blairite discourse gain power at the beginning of his leadership of New Labour and how did he become the 'most hated object' in media coverage by his third mandate?

III.02. Blairite Discourse: Rise and Fall

Blair's popularity at the beginning of his leadership was influential for Labour's revival. His personal and political skills were major factors for the rise of New Labour to power in the 1997 General Election. Many political

commentators recognise his pivotal role within New Labour discourse, especially his communicative style. For this reason, it is quite necessary to discuss Blair's rhetoric and its impact on the rise of New Labour, and how his damaged reputation inflicted the fall of his career and the party's status in general.

The declining effectiveness of the Conservatives in the mid-1990s generated a sense of disappointment amongst the British people. To gain the public trust in New Labour, Tony Blair made a great effort to make people *see* that he was a 'young' man qualified for the task of leading 'young Britain'. His ability to project a coherent image of leadership is sustained by his telegenic and persuasive skills which have been employed to his advantage. Unlike the Kinnock leadership in the 1980s which failed to attract media support, the Blair cohort was saved by the media courtship in three successive elections: 1997, 2001, and 2005. The venomous attacks of the press on Neil Kinnock are viewed as a 'fatal damage' for the party's electoral prospects (Eric Shaw 2007: 159).

To avoid the 1980s press hostility towards 'old' Labour, New Labour strategist advisers like Peter Mandelson, Philip Gould, and Alastair Campbell played a significant role in shaping and directing the steps of the 'new' leader; it was Peter Mandelson, for example, who decided that the leadership candidacy should be announced from Sedgefield – Blair's constituency; it was Mandelson' responsibility to advise Blair when and where and how much to speak (J. Cronin 2004: 379). These advisers had found in Tony Blair the essential attributes of celebrity that could raise him to the height. In order to achieve this goal, Blair and his cohort have relied heavily on the media to display a distinct image of the 'new' leader of 'New' Labour. On television, Tony Blair is shown as:

> *the embodiment of a new type of political leader: a young, family man, at ease with the cameras, unbridled by the old politics of left–right ideological*

> *conflict, firm in his values and pragmatic in policy choices.*(Raymond Kuhn in Anthony Seldon 2007: 140)

In addition to all these qualities, Blair's eloquent speeches (examples are given below) that were delivered on different occasions had shown that the speaker is not common, i.e. his power of articulation distinguished him from Labour's previous leaders. His ability to make an argument and then anticipate and counter a possible opposition is typical of Blair's political discourse. This kind of structure is intended to '*block alternative views to the argument being proposed'* (Blackledge 2005: 94). For example, in his first leadership speech, on the 4th of October 1994, Blair said:

> *Parties that do not change die and this party is a living movement not an historical monument. If the world changes and we don't, then we become of no use to the world. Our principles cease being principles and just ossify into dogma.*
> *We haven't changed to forget our principles, but to fulfil them.*
> *Not to lose our identity but to keep our relevance.*
> *Change is an important part of gaining the nation's trust.*

Implicitly, it seems that Tony Blair in this statement is addressing those people – Labour in particular – who are against the concept of change and renewal which 'New Labour' has suggested; as if there is a kind of dialogue between two opposing interlocutors: a moderniser and a traditionalist (3). The voice of the former – Blair's in this case – is authoritative; it is constructing another invisible presence of an opposition only in order to stifle it (Muntigl in Blackledge 2005: 04). In this respect, Norman Fairclough said: "*What is 'said' in a text* [political speech] *is 'said' against a background of what is 'unsaid'"* (Fairclough in Adrian Blackledge 2005: 96). In fact, what is described as ambivalence in meaning is part of the intended message which is inherent within political texts. Hence, to understand Blairite discourse it is important to go deeper into the credo of Tony Blair and analyse his words to '*rediscover beyond the statements themselves the intention of the speaking subject*' (Michel Foucault 1969: 30).

Accordingly, it would be interesting to analyse Blair's words (see quotations on pages 69 and 72 for illustration) with reference to Foucault's theory of discourse, especially what concerns speaking the 'unspeakable'. As he put it:

> *We must reconstitute another discourse, rediscover the silent murmuring, the inexhaustible speech that animates from within the voice that one hears, re-establish the tiny, invisible text that runs between and sometimes collides with them. The analysis of thought is always allegorical in relation to the discourse that it employs, its question is unfailingly: what was being said in what was said* (Michel Foucault 1969:30).

The focus on 'what was being said in what was said' is a question that reflects the interplay between what Foucault calls the manifest and the incorporeal discourses (4). The credibility of the former is based on the 'silent murmuring', 'a never said', i.e. the incorporeal discourse which goes beneath and covers the essence from 'what was said'.

Speaking, for Michel Foucault is not only a means of expression; it is not only transmission of one's knowledge; nor is it a simple play with words. Rather, it is a '*complicated and costly gesture which involves conditions … and rules … to show that change in the order of discourse does not presuppose 'new ideas' … but transformation in practice … and in their common articulation'* (Foucault 1969: 230). Blairite discourse, therefore, is conditioned by the new realities that transformed the context of articulation. The supposed 'new ideas' that Blair was often speaking about in his frequent media appearances are but reflection of a new mediatised political discourse which is based on the power of rhetoric to make people believe in the novelty of New Labour's strategy (5).

In fact, the 'new' strategy itself is designed to reconcile pre-existing strategies. As it has already been mentioned in the previous chapter, New Labour Third Way discourse has compromised neo-liberalism and classical

social democracy, and Blair seems to navigate between the two ideologies in his presentation of the 'new' politics. He said, for example,

> *My vision for the 21st century is of popular politics reconciling themes which in the past have wrongly been regarded as antagonistic– patriotism **and** internationalism; rights **and** responsibilities; the promotion of enterprise **and** the attack on poverty.* (Tony Blair in A. Chadwick and R. Heffernan 2003:28).

Moreover, in his book *Tropics of Discourse* (1978), the American theorist Hayden White suggested an interpretation of discourse which could explain Blair's mediation between the two philosophies:

> *A discourse moves "to and fro" between received encodations of experience and the clutter of phenomena which refuse incorporation into conventionalized notions of 'reality'… It also moves "back and forth' (like a shuttle?) between alternative ways of encoding this reality… Discourse in a word is quintessentially a **mediative** enterprise* (Hayden White 1978: 04).

This typical 'mediative enterprise' constitutes a central premise in Blairite and New Labour discursive structure. Unlike Margaret Thatcher, Blair has chosen compromise, not confrontation. Her famous (or infamous) statement about the negation of society as a concept has been modified by Tony Blair; Thatcher said: '*there is no such a thing as society; there are individual men and women*'. Blair, however, has chosen another language for his conception of society, he said: '*society is a community of people who share common values and purposes, where everyone thinks of "we" as well as of "me", about what they can put in as well as what they can take out'*. In his effort to be the representative of Third Way politics, Blair has often tried to be the leader of the new consensus (discussed in chapter four) through his persuasive language which moves 'to and fro' between opposing notions, arguing for the possibility of their 'incorporation into conventionalised notions' within New Labour framing.

However, the admiration Blair received at the beginning of his leadership and the first term of his premiership did not last long. His rhetoric could not

save him from an increasing resentment especially after 2003, because of the Iraq war. The British involvement in this war was mainly Blair's responsibility. It was this 'wrong' action which decisively brought his decline. Though he was re-elected in 2005 for a third mandate, New Labour support in the press was remarkably reduced, there were many reasons behind this shift but Blair's responsibility is undeniable. Though he did not explicitly admit his responsibility, he was obliged to refer to it indirectly in his last speech as Labour leader and prime minister in May 2007:

> *I ask you to accept one thing. Hand on heart, I did what I thought was right.*
> *I may have been wrong. That is your call. But believe one thing if nothing else. I did what I thought was right for our country.*
> *… I give my thanks to you, the British people, for the times I have succeeded, and my apologies to you for the times I have fallen short.*

His return to Sedgefield, his own constituency, to end up his 'political journey' in that speech – in which he apologised 'politically' to the British people – was surely intended to attract media coverage and make of it a special story in the news. But there was nothing surprising in the event. His resignation was warmly welcomed by Labour MPs and the public because they had discovered the difference between the political vision and its reality. As Blair said in the same speech:

> *Politics may be the art of the possible – but at least in life, give the impossible a go.*
> *So of course the vision is painted in the colours of the rainbow, and the reality is sketched in the duller tones of black, white and grey.*

It could be said that the difference he made here between a colourful vision and a black reality is a true reality of his own political career. Had he meant to say it, only the future will tell. In fact, critical discourse analysts confirm the idea that no text (spoken or written) exists in isolation; there is a profound relation between discourse and social practices. Therefore, an examination of Blair's language in this speech could reveal the 'colourful painted' words that are used

to embellish the political vision which covers – to use his own words, a 'dull' reality (see appendix I and II, how *the vision* is truly 'painted with the colours of the rainbow' in Blair's first leadership speech 1994 and the 1997 manifesto, and then compare the words and their content to Blair's last speech as Prime Minister in 2007, appendix III). Yet, to discover the reality of a 'fabricated' vision within political discourse is not difficult in a democratic country where the role of the media is basically to unveil the truth (though at other times conceal it).

Perhaps Blair's rhetoric was intended to present a 'modern prince', whose qualities were already established by Nicholas Machiavelli's *The Prince* (1513). Machiavelli's book comprises the skills of manipulation to protect the 'principality of the prince' by means of showing the traits of a good politician without necessarily possessing them. However, *'having the ability to retain one's principality is not at all the same thing as possessing the art of governing'* (Michael Foucault in James D. Faubion 1994: 205). It seems that Tony Blair's persuasive rhetoric was employed to keep his position as Prime Minister which he successfully did for ten years (1997-2007), but when the media started to launch against him charges of incompetence in government, he turned out to be called Tony *Bliar* and '*war-monger'*. At last, his downfall was inevitable. He was even described as a 'tragic hero':

> *a good man who tried to run his country wisely and well. But his character flaws, above all his hubristic belief in his own powers of persuasions and the rightness of his own 'principled' course of action, damaged him greatly*.(Anthony Seldon 2004: 69)

Could Blair then, have been saved from this 'tragic' end if his 'words' had been consistent with his 'actions'? In fact, he was destroyed by the very power which raised him to the height: his words and the media.

III.3. From Spinning to Sniping

After the historic shift of many Conservative papers to New Labour camp in 1997 and 2001, circumstances in the run up to the 2005 General Election could not allow to keep the same pattern. Public discontent over the Government policies in areas like the health service, taxation, and pension had inflicted the press response. The *Daily Express*, for example, returned to the Conservatives in 2004 accusing Labour of being a government of spin and broken promises. *The Sun* and *The Times* agreed on the failed policies of the Blair Government particularly the health sector. *The Sun* editorials reported Labour's inconsistency on immigration control. Being Conservative papers, the *Telegraph* and the *Mail* based their criticism on the Government non-achievements, some of their charges are presented in the following box:

Daily Telegraph and Daily Mail Charges against the Blair Government

- Failure to achieve real improvement of the public services (the NHS, public transport, secondary education, law and order); using "spin" to cover up failures.
- Drifting towards European federalism; preparing to give up the pound (2001); refusing proper debate on the EU constitution.
- Losing control over immigration and asylum.
- Undermining Britain's institutions and the democratic process: relying on "cronies" and unelected advisers; bypassing Parliament; virtually abolishing Cabinet government; politicising the Civil Service.
- Tinkering with the constitution: bungled reform of the House of Lords; devolution (2001); abolition of the office of Lord Chancellor.
- Wasting public money, e.g. on the Millennium Dome (2001). "The spend thrift Chancellor".
- Introducing taxation "by stealth" (2001); generally increasing the tax burden.
- Pretending that the ever-growing State can do everything; increasing the number of public employees; creating welfare dependants.
- Political correctness: vilifying critics as "racist", "homophobic", etc.
- Mishandling the foot and mouth epidemic (2001); being actively hostile to the countryside.

Source: Ragnhild M.V.Nessheim, 'British National Newspapers and the Blair Government 1997-2007. Part II: How Tony Blair became "Tony B.Liar" and Nearly Caused another Realignment of the Murdoch Press', p.22.

Though other newspapers asked their readers to vote Labour in 2005, this does not mean that they were supporting the Government. The vacillation between support and criticism has also been the characteristic feature of some papers. The *Independent* was divided between exposing positive and negative records of the Government in 2005; despite the most 'horrific' decision to back the U.S.A in the war against Iraq, the *Independent* found that Britain had changed for the better, and it would be much better if Gordon Brown replaced Tony Blair. What was important for the *Guardian* was to vote against the Conservatives. Like the *Guardian*, the *Mirror* found that Labour was the "ONLY choice", not because the Government had been perfect, but because the alternative would be "Michael Howard and his opportunist vultures" (6).

More harmful than all the Government failures was Blair's damaged reputation. From 2003 onwards, the story of Blair's 'shameful lies' ran prominently in media coverage – the Iraq War was a turning point in his career. Many newspapers emphasised the fact that Tony Blair lied to Parliament on the legality of the war. The anti-Blair campaign never ceased till 2007 when he was obliged by his own MPs to resign to avoid further disintegration of the party. This fact demonstrates the importance of Tony Blair to New Labour, i.e. how his good-looking image of a young moderniser raised New Labour electoral prospects to the height, and how his descent affected badly his party (7). It is the media which transformed his image from the most popular Tony Blair to the most unpopular Tony *Bliar*. In a fast moving society, who could have more power to direct the course of action, politicians or media pundits? How political orientation becomes heavily directed by the media? In order to answer these questions there should be a clear understanding of the nature of the British society, and how the changing realities have transformed the mechanisms of social relations. Chapter four is about the British cultural context which has given birth to New Labour consensus.

Endnotes:

01-The text of Foucault's article 'The Subject and Power' from which this passage is taken appeared first in English in 1982 as an appendix to Hurbert Dryfus and Paul Rabinow's (eds), *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics.*

02- The concept of communication is discussed at length in chapter four.

03-It is quite interesting to discuss this statement according to Bakhtin's concept of double-voiced discourse; it is a kind of discourse which involves a sort of dialogue between two people: "*the second interlocutor is invisibly present, his words are absent, but the profound traces of those words determine all of the first interlocutor's words. Although only one person is speaking, we feel that this is a conversation, and a most intense one.*" (Bakhtin in Blackledge 2005: 15).

04- The manifest and the incorporeal discourses are tackled in this research in chapter two, part five.

05- The word strategy is recurrent in this research, whenever it is associated with New Labour, it is employed to transmit one of the three definitions which Michel Foucault has given to the term:

'First, to designate the means employed to attain a certain end; it is a question of rationality functioning to arrive at an objective. Second, to designate the way in which a partner in a certain game acts with regards to what he thinks should be the action of the others and what he considers the others think to be his own; it is the way in which one seeks to have the advantage over others. Third, to designate the procedures used in a situation of confrontation to deprive the opponent of his means of combat and to reduce him to giving up the struggle; it is a question, therefore, of the means to obtain victory'. (Michael Foucault in James D. Faubion 1994:346).

06- Quoted in Ragnhild M.V.Nessheim, 'British National Newspapers and the Blair Government 1997-2007. Part II: How Tony Blair became "Tony B.Liar" and Nearly Caused another Realignment of the Murdoch Press', p.17.

07- Though Gordon Brown was seen as Blair's 'true successor' by Labour's MPs and the British national press, he could not secure a landslide victory in the 2010 General Election as Blair did in 1997. But Labour's loss is not only Brown's responsibility; the Conservatives on the other hand presented an electable party under David Cameron who increased the Conservatives chances for victory. The remarkable event was Blair's appearance in the scene when he was asked by Labour Party in 2010 to help mobilise the election campaign when opinion polls showed that the Conservatives were ahead of Labour. Why Tony Blair? Why not Gordon Brown?

Chapter Four

New Labour Consensual Discourse within a British Cultural Context

The idea of consensus politics in contemporary Britain embraces the notion of agreement and continuity of policy goals of both parties, Conservative and Labour, from the mid-1940s to the mid-1970s. However, disagreement over the means and methods to reach these goals is also part of consensus theory, because the two parties differ fundamentally in their assumptions and political commitments. That is why, at the end of the 1970s disagreement about the post-war consensus became fierce, and the semi-collectivist programme was blamed for the economic and political dismay of the country. To reverse the British decline, the Thatcher government in 1979 suggested a 'new project', and its acceptance was manifested in the Conservative electoral success in 1979.

The move from the post-war consensus to the Thatcherite consensus was mainly sustained by the idea of bringing stability to Britain. And this notion of stability is also central to consensus politics. However, by the end of the 1990s, a general sense of disappointment was spread amongst the people who realised the deficiencies of Thatcherism and its 'irrelevance' to the context of the 1990s despite its efficacy at the end of the 1970s. Subsequently, the increasing decline of the Conservatives paved the way for the Labour to renovate and reformulate a 'new project' which corresponded with the 'new' political context. The new project was welcomed with great enthusiasm in the historic landslide victory in the 1997 General Election, and from then, New Labour is said to have brought a new consensus for Britain, a consensus built on the premise of the Third Way.

The shift, therefore, from one consensus to another is part of the British culture of transition which Raymond Williams identifies within his theory of culture (explained below). In addition, New Labour's paradigm-shift is part of the new progressive politics of the party. The renewal of social democracy and the reformulation of the Left values have smoothed the transition towards a New Labour consensus. In this respect, Giddens ideas are unavoidable because he provided the theoretical basis for New Labour progressive politics. But success is relative. New Labour dominance was challenged by a 'new'

Conservative project which led to their electoral 'victory' in the 2010 General Election. It seems that New Labour rhetorical style could not help the party to survive in front of the 'new' realties of the 'new' context.

IV.1. The Post-War Consensus and the Thatcherite Consensus

Consensus politics has become a political tradition in contemporary Britain. After the Second World War, the main parties in Britain started to consider not only the interests of the people who are represented in their political programme, but the interests of society at large. Since the 1940s Britain has experienced a shift from one consensus to another: from the post-war consensus, to the Thatcher consensus, and then to New Labour consensus. Though consensus as a concept involves notions of stability, continuity, and compromise, the term is meant to denote different situations.

Dennis Kavanagh (1987) refers to three possibilities where the term consensus can be used:

> *01- A high level of agreement across the political parties and governing elites about the substance of public policy […]*
> *02- A high level of agreement across the political parties and governing elites about the nature of regime or about the rules of the political game […]*
> *03- The political style by which differences are resolved, namely a process of compromise and bargaining and a search for policies which are acceptable to the major interests […]* (Kavanagh, 1987:06).

Though the three situations may define broadly the concept of consensus politics, Dennis Kavanagh wants to clarify the 'common agreement' between post-war governments on the continuity of Labour's programmes of the 1940s which included Keynesianism, the welfare state, and trade unions reconciliations. By the end of the war there had been an urgent need for a new social and economic plan to rescue the country from its deplorable state. In a historic report, Sir William Beveridge wrote in 1942 about the Five Evils that stood 'on the road of reconstruction': Want, Disease, Ignorance, Squalor, and

Idleness. The Beveridge report became an official document for change. Two years later, the Butler Education Act (1944) was introduced to attack 'Ignorance', the act maintained free education for children between 11 and 18.

Further measures were introduced by the Labour Party under the leadership of Clement Attlee (1935-1955) and the British people voted in 1945 mainly for the 'new' project which held that the state would be directly responsible for healthcare, education, and social security. Thus, Attlee's 'welfare' programme was embraced by the British society against the Conservative Winston Churchill's 'warfare'. Even after Labour's electoral defeat in 1951, the Conservative governments under Churchill, Eden and Mac Milan continued the post-war political practices producing what became known as the post-war consensus which both governments – Conservatives and Labour – shared until 1979.

Though 'consensus', as a term, is Latin for 'agreement', the concept should not be understood as total agreement. Richard Heffernan (2000) suggests that political consensus *'does not mean, nor should it imply uniformity of belief or behaviour. Nor does it presuppose a homogeneous conformity among all political actors of whichever political origin'* (Heffernan 2000: 146). Hence, the appellation 'Butskellism' which was coined by *The Economist* in 1954 – referring to the general agreement between the Tory Chancellor of the Exchequer R.A. Butler and the Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell – received different reactions from the two politicians. Gaitskell appreciated the phrase, whereas Butler 'hated' it and rejected the idea which compared his political commitments to Gaitskell's: *"both of us, it is true, spoke the language of Keynesianism", Butler said, "but we spoke it with different accents and with different emphasis"* (Richard Heffernan 2000: 154).

Difference, therefore, is part of the making of consensus. The process involves both agreement and disagreement between political actors in the form

of synthesis as those actors have different political assumptions. But disagreement over the semi-collectivist regulation reached a serious point of confrontation by the late 1970s. Public desperation, social fragmentation, and economic stagnation were indications of a failing system. It is argued that *'belief in the efficacy of the main planks of post-war consensus – high public spending, the mixed economy, and income policies – was declining in both major parties'* (Dennis Kavanagh 1987: 12). And here there is a 'general agreement' on 'disagreement' which is itself a characteristic feature of consensus politics. That is why, the Thatcher Government in 1979 is said to have brought a new consensus i.e. there was a general consent that the Thatcher neo-liberal project was the right alternative to the failed post-war consensus.

The shift from one consensual settlement to another is said to reflect a dramatic political change. It is also maintained that change can prosper only if the status quo is discredited (Richard Heffernan). In reply to criticism from her Tory predecessor Edward Heath and to emphasise her conviction in breaking away from the Butskellite consensus, Margaret Thatcher said in 1981: *"For me, consensus seems to be the process of abandoning all beliefs, principles, values and policies."*(Quoted in D.Kavanagh 1987: 07). Thus, in contrast to the post-war consensus which had been toppled by the Conservative Government under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher in 1979, the 'new' alternative was based on Thatcher's neo-liberal project which marked an important transition in the history of contemporary Britain, *"'Thatcherism' marked the greatest political, economic and cultural shift in Britain of the twentieth century"* (David P. Christopher 2006: 01).

The significance of Thatcherism as a new political phenomenon lies in the different measures it introduced to replace the discredited social democratic consensus. The intention to be different was proclaimed from the outset in the 1979 Conservative manifesto which stated: *"Our country's decline is not inevitable. We in the Conservative party think we can reverse it"* (Gamble 1988: 208). Margaret Thatcher on her own part scorned consensus politics in

her frequent public speeches and interviews. In the 1979 General Election speech, for example, she compared herself to the Old Testament prophets by saying:

> *The Old Testament prophets did not say 'Brothers I want consensus'. They said: 'This is my faith; this is what I passionately believe. If you believe it too, then come with me'.* (Gamble 1988)

In fact, Thatcher's strong determination to challenge the status quo made her an exceptional figure in the political scene. Her personal contribution in the construction of Thatcherism is widely acknowledged amongst writers and critics. That is why Thatcherism is considered as a political style i.e. it emanates from Mrs. Thatcher's personal character and strong beliefs in the values of self-reliance, hard work, thrift, and discipline – the traditional Victorian values that Mrs. Thatcher adopted in her political agenda to restore the strength of the individual in society.

However, to reduce Thatcherism to a style of leadership would be inadequate. There has been a general agreement that Thatcherism stands for both a political style and a set of policies (Kavanagh 1987, Gamble 1988, Heffernan 2000). As a programme of policies, Thatcherism is associated with four main planks that are classified as follows:

01- Reduction the money supply (to beat inflation).

02- Encourage a free market-oriented economy and reduce spending on the public sector (to encourage privatisation).

03- Free the labour market through reforms as: *'pre-strike ballots, periodic and secret ballot elections of union leaders, restriction of secondary picketing, and removal of some immunities which unions had long enjoyed under common law'.*

04- Restore the government authority by strengthening the British military service and establishing law and order. (Dennis Kavanagh 1987: 12-13).

The combination of all these measures had created 'the free economy and the strong state' which successfully reversed the failed policies. Despite a rise of unemployment and an increase of inflation at the beginning of 1980s, the Thatcher Government was quite convinced that monetarism was the practical alternative for the weakened Keynesian techniques (1). Eventually, the Thatcherites succeeded in overcoming much of the opposition, especially from the 'wets' – those Conservative MPs like Francis Pym and Ian Gilmour who were against the 'radicalisation' of the Conservative politics.

Subsequently, Thatcherism became a striking expression of the 'new' Right; its success in the process of reconstruction dominated the political debate in the late 1980s. The gradual disengagement from the social democratic practices and the move towards the neo-liberal project became an evident reality after the three consecutive election victories of the Thatcher Government. Though different reasons may lead to an election victory, the people's support to the proposed political project is a crucial factor in the making of success (but support sometimes could be a necessity for there is no other alternative). Acceptance of the new ideas appeared also amongst the main Opposition who were obliged to recognise the emergence of a new consensus. Andrew Gamble maintained that:

> *The idea of a new consensus had become conventional wisdom in 1987, buttressed by the Conservatives' electoral success and the spread of 'new realism' in the ranks of their opponents* (1988: 209).

A general agreement on improvement is undeniable. The long-term consequences of Thatcherism created a strong economy regulated by the spirit of competition and enterprise. It seems that the Thatcherites' attempt to change the British attitudes was achieved 'successfully' as Labour leaders themselves started gradually to break away from the premise of nationalisation. '*By late 1985 and early 1986 Labour leaders were making clear that renationalisation would not be a high priority for a Labour government'*.

(Dennis Kavanagh 1987: 300). Meanwhile, a sense of 'excitement and optimism' was generated in the 'new' affluent society. (David P. Christopher 2006: 13)

But the financial crash in 1987 raised suspicions about the credibility of the Thatcher project. After a momentary recovery, recession reappeared. Consequences on the economy were very bad as inflation rose again and the impact on society was even worse. Greater poverty, social insecurity and a sense of dissatisfaction spread among the public who started to realise the reality of what is called the 'Thatcher Experiment' or the 'Thatcher Experience' because the lives of those people were used to test the nature of that 'experiment'. But the Thatcher Government had ignored the enormous social dislocation caused by her 'Revolution', or to use Gramsci's expression, Thatcher 'Passive Revolution' i.e. a concept in the Gramscian lexicon referring to a form of domination of a majority by a minority.

Further division within the Conservative party complicated matters for Margaret Thatcher to carry on the 'revolution'. After 11 years in power, Mrs. Thatcher was forced to resign. But the fall of Mrs. Thatcher did not imply the disappearance of Thatcherism. The legacy of the doctrine would serve future political parties to recast their policies and redefine their priorities. However, Mrs. Thatcher's 'absolutist style' – to use Francis Pym's own words – 'absolutely in favour of one thing, absolutely against another' would not be imitated. Andrew Gamble had rightly expected in 1988 that:

> *The future political development may not be towards ever-increasing extension of market solutions, but towards* ***new forms of collectivism and state intervention****. If this occurred, the Thatcher years might appear in retrospect not the dawn of a new era, but a transitional period* (1988: 241), (emphasis mine)

Indeed, this is what happened by the mid-1990s. After the declining popularity of the Conservatives and their weak leadership under John Major,

new ideas from the Left started to dominate the British political debate. The renewal of social democracy became a major theme, and there was a general agreement that the success of any future political project could (only) be achieved by making a balance between the state, economy and civil society, without over-empowering any of the three aspects because if this happened the ultimate result would be either authoritarianism or social disintegration. This is part of the reforms proposed by Anthony Giddens's revision of social democracy which found expression in the New Labour project. Ultimately, Britain had witnessed the development of another consensus, a post-Thatcherite one which Gamble had predicted as mentioned in the quote above.

IV.02. New Labour Consensus

It is significant to place the politics of New Labour within a British cultural paradigm which advocates creative effort to find new meanings for the purpose of renewal. Those new meanings are set to function with traditional cultural values. In his definition of culture, the British cultural theorist Raymond Williams said:

> *A culture has two aspects: the known meanings and directions, which its members are trained to; the new observations and meanings, which are offered and tested. These are the ordinary processes of human societies and human minds, and we see through them the nature of culture: that it is always both traditional and creative; that it is both the most ordinary common meanings and the finest individual meanings.* (Raymond Williams in John Higgins 2001: 11).

Williams recognises the coexistence of two opposite but complementary aspects of culture that '*are ordinary processes of human societies*'. He suggests a correlative meaning of culture which is composed of '*tradition and creativity*'. Tradition lies in the old '*common meanings*' that regulate the ordinary lives of the community members and creativity is the new '*individual meanings'* that are offered to challenge the new realities. '*The significance of*

their conjunction' – the traditional and the creative aspects – is at the heart of Williams' cultural theory.

It is remarkable to notice the duality of Williams' thinking in the above quotation, especially that of 'tradition and creative'. A recent collocation of this pair may transform the word 'creative' into 'modern', and thus 'traditional and modern' becomes the new equivalent of 'traditional and creative'. The implied meaning is that 'modernisation' can be effective for social development as long as the basic institutions are taken into consideration (2). *"The making of society"* Williams said, *"is the finding of common meanings and directions, and its growth is an active debate and amendment under the pressure of experience"* (Raymond Williams in John Higgins 2001: 11).

What is presented as New Labour consensus, therefore, is a reflection of the party's project which is said to find 'common meanings' for a changing society (local and international) at the end of the twentieth century. The shifting structure of the world; the rapid pace of change; the decline of classical social democracy and the increasing excess of neo-liberalism are all environmental 'pressures' that dictated Labour's structural 'amendment'. Thus, the whole effort of making agreements and finding consensual settlement is part of the making of a 'modern' society that New Labour claimed to introduce to 'New' Britain. For instance, *'consensuses are not arrived at but are constructed'* (Heffernan 2000: 154). The implication here is that New Labour consensus did not appear suddenly; it had been created through a long process of transformation which had involved the reconstruction of the party's institutional pillars to raise New Labour to power.

Labour's victory in 1997 was the beginning of a new direction in British political history. Though it is difficult to date exactly the beginning of historical periods, the case for an election victory could be decisive to announce the dawn of a new era. New Labour resounding electoral success in

the 1997 General Election marked a significant shift towards what had been called New Labour 'velvet revolution' (David P. Christopher 2006: 15). More than fifty years ago, Raymond Williams wrote about the 'long revolution' of change, an expression he used in *Culture and Society* (1958) and which was developed into the title of another book: *The Long Revolution* (1961). Williams says:

> *We* [the British in particular] *are living through a long revolution, which our best descriptions only in part interpret. It is a genuine revolution, transforming men and institutions; continually extended and deepened by the actions of millions, continually and variously opposed by explicit reactions and by the pressure of habitual forms and ideas.*(1961: x)

Williams further maintains that understanding the process of change should be related to the different revolutions that Britain has already experienced: the Democratic Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, and the Cultural Revolution. However, these great revolutions should not be regarded as separate processes, it is their progress and integration which make sense of a '*whole way of life, from the shape of our communities, to the organisation and content of education, and from the structure of the family to the status of art and entertainment'* (Raymond Williams 1961: xi). It is this 'Long Revolution' i.e. the great process of change that should be correlated with the '*changes covered by the disciplines of politics, economics and communications'*. The integration of all these points would clarify the nature of the British culture of transition.

The relevance of this transitional culture in contemporary Britain is typified by the course of paradigm shift from the social democratic discourse to the neo-liberal and then towards a Third Way discourse. This shift, however, does not entail a total abandonment of the past, it is achieved through '*gradual disengagement from the practices of the past combined with their partial retention in some form'* (Heffernan 2000: 158). According to this perspective, New Labour project does not reject totally 'old' Labour values, nor does it reject the whole doctrine of Thatcherism, the new project retained the social

democratic ideals within a neo-liberalised agenda and by so doing, New Labour offered a new consensus (further explained below), the kind of consensus which Dennis Kavanagh defined as a *'political style by which differences are resolved, namely a process of compromise and bargaining and a search for policies which are acceptable to the major interests'* (Kavanagh 1987: 06).

The shift from one consensus to another therefore reflects the British transitional culture which is interpreted by Raymond Williams as a long progressive 'revolution'. He said: "*We live in a transitional society*", and the experience lived in contemporary Britain is proving the viability of his findings. By implementation, the construction of New Labour consensus had undergone many 'transition points' including Kinnock's leadership (1983-1992) and his influential role to set the ground for change; the 1987 Policy Review; Smith OMOV; Blair's leadership and the reforms he brought to the party notably the New Clause IV. All these points culminated in the 1997 official change when New Labour gained power and control over 'New' Britain. This kind of achievement according to Williams' theory is not a simple evolution but a struggle fought for over generations. However, once the aims are achieved, they are '*quite quickly absorbed, and either new expectations are commonly defined, or in their absence there is a mood of both stagnation and restlessness* […] *today's concession is tomorrow's springboard*. (Williams, 1961: xii-xiii)

That is why Labour's progressive change is described as a 'velvet revolution', an expression which is connotative of softness, consistency and pliability. Unlike the 'Thatcher Revolution' which aimed to abandon '*all beliefs, principles, values and policies'* of the past as Thatcher herself said in 1981, New Labour 'velvet revolution' was said to offer 'new' meanings for 'old' values, the old values of the Left were refashioned within what came to be known the 'new progressive politics'.

IV.03. New Labour Progressive Politics

Progressive politics has always been concerned with introducing gradual reforms against oppressive and unjust regimes. The perceived 'failure' of American Liberalism and European social democracy in the 1990s appeared in the decline of the Thatcherite and Reaganite regimes, on the one hand, and the collapse of communist politics, on the other. This fact had been stimulating for politicians on the centre-left to find an alternative politics that could transcend the New Right and the Old Left. The emergence of the New Democrats in the USA and New Labour in the UK is said to have brought a new way, a 'Third Way' which is meant to provide a revisionist response to the deficiency of past systems and renew progressive politics for the global age (Henry Tam 2001: 02).

Together with other intellectuals like Anthony Giddens, both Bill Clinton US president (1992-2001), and Tony Blair have set a new vision for progressive politics. In their effort to project a new progressive discourse,

> *Bill Clinton and Tony Blair reignited the progressive bid for political power with a common set of themes: securing equal opportunity for all; enhancing the responsibility of citizens and the government; and promoting a genuine sense of community […] both Clinton and Blair tried to project their politics as radically different from previous progressive governments in their respective country. Consequently, many people wondered whether progressive politics had found a new platform to deliver its reform objectives, or whether it was being watered down so much that it was becoming virtually indistinguishable from moderate, or, as some have called it, 'compassionate', conservatism.*(H.Tam 2001: 06)

In fact, the progressive themes that are mentioned in the above quotation – equality of opportunity for all, the issue of responsibility of government and citizens, and the sense of community – have all been emphasised within New Labour discourse. It is the work of Anthony Giddens in particular which gave meaning to the 'new common sense' that was developed by New Labour

modernisers who sought to reconstruct the British society by redefining the values of the centre-left.

The significance of Giddens' ideas is not only limited in providing a redefinition of the Left values in the 'new times', but also reformulating partially the content of those values , and by so doing Giddens would alter '*the meaning of what it meant to be on the Left*'. Equality, for example, a crucial value for the Left is given special attention by Giddens. *"Equality is important above all"* Giddens said, *"because it is relevant to people's life chances, well-being and self-esteem"* (1998: 41). Equality is no longer restricted to the distribution of wealth; it becomes strongly associated with promoting equal 'life chances' for individuals to improve their 'well-being'. Instead of the old social democratic version of equality which advocated an egalitarian social system, Giddens promoted an *equality of opportunity* for all members of society to work and prosper.

The new progressive language defines 'equality as *inclusion* and inequality as *exclusion*'. Both concepts are defined by Giddens as follows:

> *Inclusion refers in the broadest sense to citizenship, to the civil and political rights and obligations that all members of a society should have, not just formally, but as a reality of their lives. It also refers to opportunities and to involvement in public space. In a society where work remains central to self-esteem and standard of living, access to work is one main context of opportunity*. (1998:102-103)

On the other hand, the idea of inequality is coined in the word 'exclusion'; it '*is not about gradations of inequality, but about mechanisms that act to detach groups of people from the social mainstream.* (1998: 104) Accordingly, inclusion and exclusion as concepts are meant to give new understanding for the new era which is characterised by growing inequalities. The relation between equality of opportunity and the concept of an inclusive society is part of Giddens' objective to foster the necessary principles for a '*society of positive welfare'*.

This objective is achieved through a collaborative effort between the state and the individual in terms of '*no rights without responsibilities'*.

The individual is viewed by Giddens to possess the necessary capacity to turn 'potential threats into rewarding challenges'. Simultaneously, it is the responsibility of the state to facilitate the opportunity for citizens to develop their 'autotelic selves' i.e. individual autonomy; and by nurturing an 'inner confidence' which is enhanced by the ethic of self-realisation, individuals will be able to confront risk to accomplish their aims. These progressive values like self-realisation and risk-taking – that are also promoted in Thatcherism – are strongly encouraged by Giddens to 'eradicate a dependency culture' and endorse a sense of responsibility within a modern civil society. Under the precept of 'no rights without responsibilities' the relation between the state and citizens is given a new common sense. The state becomes an enabler, providing 'equal' opportunities to empower an active citizen whose main concern is to improve his well-being.

In addition to the individual's autonomy and self-realisation, the new progressive politics encourage the spirit of solidarity; *"when solidarity is divorced from personal well-being, it is likely to be a caricature of community, not a fair representation of its meaning and promise"*. (Philip Selznick in Henry Tam 2001: 81). Interdependence, reciprocity and cooperation are compulsory ethics to strengthen the bond of community; it is this communal sense which is fundamental to the progressives. More importantly, the concept of community is '*not just an abstract slogan*' as Giddens said; it should be also understood in practical terms:

> *'Community' doesn't imply trying to recapture lost forms of local solidarity; it refers to practical means of furthering the social and material refurbishment of neighbourhoods, towns and larger local areas.* (Giddens 1998:79)

So ‘community’ and ‘responsibility’ are quite linked in the new progressive discourse and both are closely related principles within the communitarian philosophy of John Macmurray which is essentially about *‘the idea that individuals are created through their relationship to others in families and communities’* (Fairclough 2000: 38). Macmurray emphasises the fact that community is the locus for individual fulfilment and the latter can be achieved when a sense of responsibility is strengthened as an ethic which governs personal action. This communitarian discourse combines a Christian communal belief (3) and a criticism of neo-liberalism which enhances personal freedom. In a society which proclaims social inclusion, freedom becomes conditional, not absolute, where the individual’s right to act in society is conditioned by his duty towards it.

The influence of communitarianism on New Labour and Tony Blair in particular is reflected in the moral discourse of Third Way politics. In a speech he gave to the South African Parliament in January 1999, Blair said:

> *The Third Way needs a concept of a modern civic society that is founded on opportunity and responsibility, rights and duties going together. Society has a duty to its citizens and its citizens have a duty to society […] That society should be fair and it should give the equality of opportunity that people need but it should also demand that responsibility back from them as citizens of that society*. (Tony Blair in Norman Fairclough 2000: 38).

The proliferation of terms like ‘opportunity’, ‘responsibility’, ‘rights’ and ‘duties’ in New Labour discourse can be linked with the new progressive language that Anthony Giddens has used in his redefinition of the values of the New Left as mentioned before. So the combination of Macmurray’s communitarianism and Giddens’ ‘new onto-ethical nexus for progressive politics’ culminated in the formation of New Labour discourse which promoted a non-adversarial politics i.e. capitalism is no longer problematic since radical anti-capitalism is dismissed from the new politics of ‘New Britain’. It has

become the task of New Labour to remould its institutions to *'defeat outmoded thinking on left and right in order to smooth the (inevitable) transition to the neo-liberal global knowledge economy.'* (Will Leggett in M. McNally & J.Scharzmantel 2009: 151).

Taken together, new progressivism and communitarianism offered New Labour a political position which distinguished the party from the Thatcherite and the old social democratic discourses. The alternative has been the Third Way which is not only meant *'to position Blair and New Labour as neither left nor right but also to define them as 'progressive''* (Allan Finlayson 2003: 106). Subsequently, the new addition in New Labour is the consensual approach which aims at steering a path between the moral claim and the pragmatic concern of society. And by so doing, the economic imperatives are balanced with ethical ends. But is it possible to achieve this aim in a market-driven society? Has New Labour project succeeded in changing the people's attitudes toward themselves and towards the 'community' in which they live? In fact, many political observers wrote arguably that the whole project reflects the *'triumph of style over substance in a post- ideological age.'* (Will Leggett in M. McNally & J.Scharzmantel 2009: 138). And 'style' is a matter of language which is itself fundamental to New Labour politics of persuasion.

IV.04. New Labour Communicative Style

The rebranding of Labour as 'New Labour' is not only meant to change a label, it has been intended to shift the political culture and remodel the traditional institutions of the party to meet the challenge of a shifting socio-political geography of Britain in the 1990s. The redefinition of the party's legacy could hardly have been achieved if Labour's think-tanks and strategists have not crafted a new structure and presented a new image to the electorate. Though criticised for giving much attention to image and representation, Blair

responded saying that: *"Getting the image right is just part of the job; no more, no less"* (Tony Blair in James Cronin 2004: 399). What many critics call 'spin', New Labour consider as 'smart politics' and this kind of politics has led the party to three consecutive electoral victories – 1997,2001, and 2005 – the first time ever in Labour's history.

It is widely agreed that successful politics is largely about making the people interested, and to stir the public interests is a matter of convincing them. According to Raymond Williams, *'any governing body will seek to implant the 'right' ideas in the minds of those whom it governs'* through effective communication which '*is not only transmission, it is also reception and response'* (Williams 1958: 332). It seems that New Labour has aimed to achieve the same objectives as Williams stated in his book. To install the 'right' ideas in the people's minds is basically about using the 'right' language to ensure clear 'reception' and elicit positive 'response'. Communication for Williams is *'a science of penetrating the mass mind and of registering an impact there'* (Williams 1958: 333). The whole process is performed by 'dominative techniques' in a situation where the attempt to communicate is matched with an intention to dominate. As Williams said: *"The whole theory of mass – communication depends, essentially, on a minority in some way exploiting a majority."* (1958: 333). Such a minority is usually the governing body which proclaim in their political discourse to establish an 'apparent conformity'.

From this perspective, one can realise that New Labour has functioned according to a systematic theory of communication which involves a hegemonic intent, the kind of hegemony that Lawrence Grossberg defined as:

> *the struggle to articulate the position of 'leadership' within the social formation, the attempt by the ruling bloc to win for itself the position of leadership across the entire terrain of cultural and political life. Hegemony involves the mobilisation of popular support, by a particular*

> *social bloc, for the broad range of its social projects. In this way, the people assent to a particular social order, to a particular system of power, to a particular articulation of chains of equivalences by which the interests of the ruling bloc come to define the leading positions of the people.* (Lawrence Grossberg in D.Morley & K.Chen 1996: 162).

It seems that New Labour 'hegemonic' project is grounded on the phenomenon of 'linguistic slippage' to serve the two strands – the neo-liberal and the social democratic – that are reconciled by New Labour's 'Third Wayers' (see quotations on pages 43 and 52 for illustration). More importantly, hegemony is a matter of containment, not compulsion i.e. it is a struggle to mobilise the popular consent by means of concessions and negotiations, not force. But which strand is contained within the other? What is dominant and what is subordinate in New Labour reconciliation?

Many observers notice New Labour leaning towards neo-liberalism despite its claims of public morality and social concern. John Schwarzmantel, for example, denied the fact that New Labour has introduced ingenious political ideas, rather, New Labour project involves an acceptance of the hegemonic neo-liberal practices *'while disguising this with a vague rhetoric of social justice'* (J. Schwarzmantel 2009: 14). On the other hand, Stuart Hall believes in New Labour 'double- shuffle', an expression he used to refer to the party's double belonging – the new right and the old left – and thus its 'double-pronged mode of address'. In this context Hall said:

> *The fact is that New Labour is a **hybrid** regime, composed of two strands. However, one strand – the neo-liberal – is in the dominant position. The other strand – the social democratic – is subordinate. What's more, its hybrid character is not simply a static formation; it is the process which combines the two elements which matters. The process is 'transformist'. The latter always remains subordinate to and dependent on the former, and is **constantly being 'transformed'** into the former, dominant one.* (4)

Hall's interpretation of New Labour as a 'hybrid' regime is a reminder of Norman Fairclough's conception of the Third Way as a *'hybridisation of the 'old' political discourses of the left and the right'* (5). More importantly, both

writers agree on the fact that neo-liberalism is favoured over social democracy. Whether it is an 'acceptance and accommodation' of neo-liberal capitalism (Fairclough, Heffernan, and others), or a 'social democratic variant of neo-liberalism' (Hall), New Labour is mainly presented as a reproduction of neo-liberal capitalism (W. Leggett and others). That is why New Labour is also interpreted according to Gramsci's idea of 'passive revolution', a concept that refers to '*movements which used revolutionary rhetoric while seeking to maintain the existing order in its essential features.'*(J. Schwarzmantel 2009: 14)

It is argued that New Labour 'passive revolution' (6) involves those state interventionist measures which are 'said' to be antagonistic to market fundamentalism, but at the same time New Labour has enabled the reproduction of some basic capitalist principles like the enterprise culture. To secure the interests of the ruling class, *'a variety of mechanisms are used to co-opt, fragment, and dilute oppositional actors and demands.'* (Leggett in M. McNally & J. Scharzmantel 2009: 145). Moreover, what is viewed as 'spin', 'duplicity', and 'manipulation' in New Labour discourse is part of a stratagem to serve basic aims of 'passive revolution' as identified by Gramsci, it is *'disorganising and disorienting the opposition'* (Leggett in M. McNally & J. Scharzmantel 2009: 146).

However, New Labour binary arrangement of ideas is not only spin, it is intended to be counter-hegemonic. What characterises New Labour hegemony is the dominance of what is even called the 'Blair revolution' or the hegemony of Blairism (Steinberg and Johnson 2004: 9). Undoubtedly, the emergence of Tony Blair as a young charismatic leader of the party has fundamentally altered Labour's political culture. The uncertainty that was lurking in the minds of voters at the beginning of the 1990s was cleared up by New Labour rhetoric which was conducted by the active leader of the party. In this respect, Gramsci' insight about the 'active politician' is worth quoting:

> *The active politician is a creator, an initiator; but he neither creates from nothing nor does he move in the turbid void of his own desires and dreams. He bases himself on effective reality, but what is this effective reality? Is it something static and immobile, or is it not rather a relation of forces in continuous motion and shift of equilibrium? If one applies one's will to the creation of a new equilibrium among the forces which really exist and are operative – basing oneself on the particular force which one believes to be progressive and strengthening it to help it to victory – one still moves on the terrain of effective reality, but does so in order to dominate and transcend it (or to contribute to this). (7)*

By implication, the contribution of Tony Blair as an active 'creator' and 'initiator' of the 'new' notion of the party is true to a great extent though many influential people had participated in the making of the 'new' project. Yet the content of this concept of the 'new' is not originally his own creation. His originality resides in the 'new equilibrium' he made between the existing forces of neo-liberalism and social democracy, by making concessions and reconciliations ostensibly ending the adversarial politics between the Left and the Right. But in reality the neo-liberal wing in the Blairite discourse was dominant. Subsequently, the electorate have realised the reality behind Blair's rhetoric and the collapse of Blairism was the inevitable result.

Despite the continuity of New Labour Government under Gordon Brown, the effectiveness of the 'equilibrium' which raised New Labour to the height started to shake; trust was lost. And 'New' Labour became 'Old' story. However, Third Way politics has outlived both – Blairism and New Labour. The balance between economic efficiency and social cohesion – a key measure within the Third Way has been adopted by David Cameron, the 'new' Conservative leader who emerged as an 'active politician' and 'initiated' the 'new equilibrium' for the Conservatives which ultimately led to their victory in the 2010 General Election.

The resignation of Gordon Brown after Labour's electoral defeat in 2010 further indicated the collapse of New Labour, even the label 'New' has faded

away from the party's language. However, Labour's tradition of revising and changing its institutional structure to cope with the new operating forces would never cease. In his acceptance speech, Ed Miliband, the new leader of the Labour Party who was elected in September 2010 said: *"A new generation has taken charge of Labour. It's a new generation that understands the need for change – in our party and in our country"*. He started pledging to restore trust in Labour, giving promises to make Britain *'more prosperous, more equal, more fair and just'*. Here again, the language of the 'new' leader is employed to assist a project of renewal which is undertaken by a 'new generation' of politicians. Since politics is a matter of 'who gets what, when and how' (H. Lasswell 1936), one is left to expect what this 'new generation' could offer to Britain in the Globalised Age where technology and communication are controlling power.

Endnotes:

01- Keynesianism and monetarism are explained in chapter one, in notes 06 and 08.
02- 'Modernisation' in this context refers to the 'new observation and meanings' that are mentioned by Williams in the selected quotation.

03- It is important to mention that Tony Blair is a fervent Christian believer and his deep religious faith does not allow him to dismiss the values upon which societies are rested. The Christian communal faith is a strong element in the making of Blair and his cohort.

04- Cited in M. McNally & J.Scharzmantel (2009), *Gramsci and Global Politics*, p.145.

05- This idea is explained in chapter two, section five in this research.

06- It is interesting to notice the different expressions that are employed to denote New Labour revolutionary change; 'velvet revolution' and 'passive revolution' are used in this chapter to show two different views: the former is intended to transmit a positive idea about the process of change which undergoes a soft and steady progress; the latter is meant to suggest the persuasive rhetoric which has projected a highly coherent image of New Labour through the language of its presentation which aims to achieve 'unspeakable' goals; a revolutionary rhetoric then, is used by the governing body to exert power without force.

07- Cited in Mark McNally and John Schwarzmantel (eds) (2009), *Gramsci and Global Politics*, p.150.

Conclusion

Throughout this study, New Labour political discourse has been examined from the historical, ideological, socio-linguistic, and cultural perspective and found to be multi-dimensional. The process of discourse analysis is undertaken through the critical theories of Michel Foucault and Norman Fairclough. Moreover, Raymond Williams' theories of culture, communication, and society have also been adopted in this dissertation to trace the particularity of the British political culture. The works of these theorists help to interpret the changes that occurred within Labour's conceptual structure, and explain how the act of representation has become a major priority in the party's new politics. What is critical with New Labour exacerbated focus on presentation is the rhetorical persuasion which is said to cover the 'truth' and make people believe in a proclaimed reality that is shaped in the selected wording.

It is important to bear in mind that critical discourse analysis is the most appropriate approach for a transdisciplinary study which aims to reveal the contrived discrepancy between rhetoric and reality. This issue is central to the modern politics of persuasion which is essentially concerned with the way language is used and how it is linked with the struggle over power and domination. Yet, language does not possess power within itself; the power of language is acquired by the way people make use of it. For this reason, the study has focused on Tony Blair who has made a strenuous effort to present himself as a different kind of leader, modern, young, enthusiastic for change to distinguish himself from some of the previous failed Labour leaders. His ability to convey a strong image of leadership through his rhetorical style has increased Labour's prospects for success in 1997, a fact which led New Labour to the historic electoral victory after nearly two decades in the opposition.

Indeed, the new political agenda of New Labour has been very consistent with the national (and international) exigencies of post-Thatcherite era; a period known as post-ideological epoch which is characterised by non-dogmatic ideological beliefs. The new principle of the time is phrased in '*what*

counts is what works', an expression which appeared in the 1997 New Labour election manifesto and then has become Blair's motto. In a project which has incorporated neo-liberalism and social democracy, New Labour is said to have introduced a non-adversarial politics, drawing an apparent equity between the precepts of the two antagonistic political doctrines. The culminating result has been the Third Way politics which reconciled values eclectically from both ideologies.

The main impetus for change in the politics of New Labour is widely attributed to the legacy of Margaret Thatcher. The pro-market policy inaugurated by the New Right has been Thatcher's trump card in her struggle to reverse the British decline. The assumption that the Left was defeated in the 1970s because of economic incompetence is proved - from the Conservative point of view - by Thatcher's strict monetarist system which ultimately brought British recovery. The neo-liberal strand within New Labour, therefore, has given the party an electoral liability which has helped New Labour to distinguish its policies from the failed 'Old' Labour regime that was based on the tenets of classical social democracy. However, and because the new politics is a kind of reconciliation, as mentioned before, and the latter is achieved by means of synthesis between the ideas and ideals of both ideologies, New Labour Third Way version has been advantageous in placing the modernisers not only at the centre-Left, but at the centre of political landscape, a position which serves the interests of the Left and the Right as well.

In fact, New Labour has postulated the difference in the New Clause IV, a text which provides a prologue for change in a language that comprises equal importance between social cohesion, economic efficiency, and a mutual responsibility between the state and citizens. What is remarkable in the discursive analysis of the New Clause is the affinity it holds between the language of the Third Way, new progressivism, and communitarianism. That is why, New Labour discourse is said to be consistent. However, many observers

have commented arguably about New Labour credibility gap, the ostensibly consistent discourse is essentially strategic, 'fabricated' to achieve a wider consent among the people. New Labour relentless pursuit to influence the audience and win their trust is exercised through a highly manipulative and manipulated British media system.

Understandably, it has been crucial to discuss the relation between politics and the media. New Labour obsession to communicate through media spin has been instrumental to reinforce the political discourse. Seen from different perspectives, the media can interpret, reproduce, refract, or distort reality. Because of this potent power of the media, New Labour has developed media strategies to represent the policy agenda to influence and mobilise public opinion. However, the media's impact on New Labour is a double-edged-sword. To a great extent, New Labour skilful handling of the news has been advantageous to attain power at the beginning of the 1990s, but when support declined in the press in particular, and the media started to be critical of government's broken promises, New Labour lost control over the media and lost the widely publicised image of a strong leadership.

To discuss the vitality of discourse for the rise and fall of New Labour, Blairite discourse has been analysed in this dissertation to illustrate the power of words when they are communicated through a well-crafted image. Blair's rhetorical style has widely been recognised to attract voters and give dynamism to New Labour. More importantly, his appeal and ability to use rhetorical devices in the delivery of his public speeches have been stronger than the text. That is why, the "*who*' matters in politics, for language cannot be powerful on its own if words are not loaded with heavy meaning which is itself derived from the mind of the speaking subject. Yet Blair's damaged reputation – especially after his decision to back the USA in the Iraq war – brought his own decline and that of New Labour in general.

It seems that success is relative; after three consecutive victories at the 1997, 2001, and 2005 General Elections, New Labour hegemony over the British political scene started to crumble. Though New Labour project has markedly contributed in shifting the political spectrum from adversarial competition towards consensual debate, its survival in a society which has irrevocably changed becomes difficult to administer. Moreover, Blair's responsibility for New Labour demise is undeniable. Though his role in leading the party to power should not be ignored, his erroneous decision to involve his country in the Iraq war is unforgivable – to quite many people. None of the preceding Labour leaders has enjoyed Blair's popularity and celebrity. His reputation for powerful oratory has been triumphant to strengthen New Labour discourse to win public confidence to regain the glow of success for the party after eighteen years of political wilderness.

However, the moment when this public felt betrayed by '*empty*' rhetoric, ***trust*** was lost and the party and its leader lost the credibility for which they had been elected. Is it important then, to speak what one is able to do, or politics is an exception where politicians act according to what is reserved in their discourse? On the other hand, political leaders are required to show qualities of strength, courage, tenacity, and decisiveness which Gordon Brown failed to demonstrate while being Prime Minister. Unlike his media-savvy predecessor, Brown's inability to convey a winning media image in the 2010 General Election, besides, his weak discourse on modernisation had been devastating for Labour's electoral chances. In contrast, his opponent David Cameron, the new Conservative leader, has succeeded to grapple with the political realm; his image of a young articulate leader who has reformed the Conservative party is a reminder of Blair's earlier representation of New Labour. So the key to political success is not only to construct a 'new' political agenda, but '*who'* will be able to communicate convincingly that notion of novelty through a subtle persuasive rhetoric.

Appendices

Appendix I

The First Speech by Tony Blair as Party Leader. Labour Party conference 1994, Blackpool, England.

Tony Blair's New Labour Vision – 1994

4 October 1994

Today I set out my vision for our party and our country: what we are; where we stand; how we will govern. We meet in a spirit of hope, hope that change can come….hope that we can rid our country of this Tory Government their broken promises their failed policies their discredited philosophy and elect in its place, a Labour Government for Britain. We all remember where we were, and what we were doing, when we heard that John Smith had died. Together, one nation, all parties united in mourning, and in celebration of his integrity, his honesty and his decency. We were proud to know him and proud to be led by him. We will honour his memory best, by ensuring the Party he loved becomes, once again, the Government of the country he loved. We have begun our task. The people have already elected us to control 175 councils. In May we won over two and half thousand new seats. We have won 4 by-elections this year, and three of our four new MPs are women. In the European elections we gained record numbers of seats. These were not opinion polls. They were elections. We are winning them. And we are proud that one of our MEPs, Pauline Green, is the first woman leader of the Socialist Group in Strasbourg. There is one other representative in Europe to whom we pay tribute…Commissioner Kinnock, a credit to our party here, as he will be to our country in Brussels. We had our own election too.
One million people took part in a leadership contest that was a tribute to our democracy, and from which we emerged with our unity and strength enhanced.
I would like to thank John Prescott for his magnificent contribution to our party, and on behalf of all of us pay tribute to Margaret Beckett for the credit she brought to our party in picking up the reins of leadership and leading us with such dignity.
We celebrate too the record growth in our membership. 14,000 members in August alone. I can announce today that by the end of this month, we will have passed the 300,000 mark. And I am glad, too, we have an active young Labour section again, three times as many as members as the Young Conservatives. I am the first leader in a generation who can say with confidence to our youth section:
I want to see an increase in your influence.
One other debt of gratitude.
Larry Whitty is to leave the post of General Secretary of the Party to take up a new and important job co-ordinating the Party's links with Europe. Larry is one of the most genuine and least self-serving people I know and we thank him for all the loyalty and dedication he has shown us.

We are a Party proud of our international solidarity. I am delighted to welcome representatives here this afternoon from the government of the new Republic of South Africa. I was 10 years old when Nelson Mandela was imprisoned on Robben Island.
Since then, the words Nelson Mandela have been an inspiration. But aren't the words President Mandela even more inspiring?
We welcome too representatives of the Israeli government. We applaud Yitzhak Rabin's Labour government and Yasser Arafat's PLO, for breaking new ground to help the Palestinian people towards self government in the Gaza Strip and Jericho and bring peace to the Middle East.
We also congratulate our sister parties in Sweden, Australia, Denmark and Holland on their recent election successes. And we wish every success to socialists and social democratic parties in Austria and Germany in their forthcoming elections.
Fifty years ago, the British Labour government helped to form the United Nations.
We will continue to work for it to be stronger, more cohesive and capable of bringing new order to a world no longer dominated by the Cold War.
In particular, in Bosnia, we urge acceptance of the peace plan now on the table to avoid further brutality and bloodshed.
We live in a world where a quarter of its population lack drinking water and a fifth starve; where civil war in Rwanda and elsewhere is rife. We should not forget those people. I can tell you overseas aid and development will always be a central part of the Labour Party I lead.
We should show courage too, over a quite different sphere of international relations: Europe. Britain's interests demand that this country is at the forefront of the development of the new Europe. Of course Europe should change. Of course we should stand up for British interests, as others stand up for theirs.
Indeed we should be taking on the Common Agricultural Policy costing the average British family 20 pounds a week and about which the Tories do nothing.
But, the Tories are playing politics with Europe and the future of this country.
Let them.
Under my leadership, I will never allow this country to be isolated or left behind in Europe. The tide of ideas in British politics is at last on the turn.
For the first time in a generation, it is the right-wing that appears lost and disillusioned. No longer believing in their own language, they turn to ours.
Some are trying out "community". "Partnership". Even "fairness." Some are now talking of Civic Conservatism. A contradiction in terms. Most absurd, "full employment" was tried out by desperate David Hunt at the TUC. His reward – the most humiliating demotion imaginable: one day, counting the unemployed…the next, he's counting traffic cones.
Today politics is moving to our ground.
Across the nation, across class, across political boundaries, the Labour Party is once again able to represent all the British people. We are the mainstream voice in politics today. Back on the side of the vast majority…to speak out for them and against the entrenched interests that hold them back.
To parents wanting their children to be taught in classrooms that are not crumbling, to students with qualifications but no university place, let us say, the Tories have failed you, we are on your side, your ambitions are our ambitions.
To men and women who get up in the morning, and find the kitchen door smashed in, again…the video gone, again…to the pensioners who fear to go out of their homes, let us say the Tories have abused your trust, we are on your side – your concerns are our

concerns. To the small businesses, pushed to the wall by greedy banks, employers burdened by government failure, to employees living in fear of the P45…and above all to the men in their 40s, shamefully laid off at Swan Hunter, the thousands others insecure in their jobs in every part of this county… let us say the Tories have forgotten you, but we will not – your anxieties are our anxieties.
To middle and lower income Britain, suffering the biggest tax rises in peacetime history, the Tories have betrayed you.
We are back as the Party of the majority in British politics.
Back to speak up for Britain.
Back as the people's party.
Look at Britain 15 years after Mrs. Thatcher stood on the steps of Downing Street.
Where there was discord, is there harmony?
Where there was error, is there truth?
Where there was doubt, is there faith?
Where there was despair, is there hope? Harmony?
When crime has more than doubled. Truth?
When they won an election on lies about us and lies about what they would do? Faith?
When politics is debased by their betrayal.
Hope?
When three million people are jobless, nearly 6 million on income support…. and one in three children grow up in poverty?
They have brought us injustice and division but these have not been the price of economic efficiency. Because tax is also up – 800 pounds a year extra for the average family. Spending is up and growth over the last 15 years is down. And look at what they wasted on the way. Billions of pounds gifted by Nature, the God-given blessing of North Sea oil, billions we could have invested in our future.
Billions they squandered. One hundred and eighteen billion pounds – five thousand pounds for every family in this country – gone, wasted, vanished.
And to hide the truth of the nation's problems they have sold our nation's capital assets, built up over many years and used the proceeds not to invest, but to cover current spending . Seventy billion pounds gone forever. Its time to take these Tories apart for what they have done to our country. Not because they lack compassion, though they do. But because they are the most feckless, irresponsible group of incompetents ever let loose in the Government of Britain. Their time is up. Their philosophy is done. Their experiment is over. Their failure is clear. It is time to go.
And why are they incompetent?
Not just because of the individuals. It is not this or that Minister that is to blame, it is an entire set of political values that is wrong. They fail because they fail to understand that a nation, like a community, must work together in order for the individuals within it to succeed. It is such a simple failing and yet it is fundamental. Go and look at a company that is succeeding. It won't treat its workforce as servants but as partners.
They will be motivated and trained and given a common purpose. Of course sweatshop conditions in the short-term can make do. But in the end they fail. The quality and commitment isn't there.
Its the same with a country.
It can be run on privilege and greed for a time; but in the end it fails. This is not theory. We have living proof of it. At the end of 15 years, we are taxing and spending more not to invest in future success but to pay for past failure.
I don't mind paying taxes for education and health and the police.

What I mind is paying them for unemployment, crime and social squalor.
After 15 years we spend more of our national income on unemployment and poverty and less on education.
If the share of national wealth invested in housing was the same as in 1979, we would spend 11 billion more; next year we will spend 11 billion on housing benefit.
Now they want to cut the benefit. Instead of cutting benefit, why not cut the homeless queue, cut unemployment, and build the houses. And if it needs an initial capital investment, release the money tied up in local authority bank accounts and put it to work to start the house building programme.
The Tory economics is based on a view of the market that is crude, out of date and inefficient. And their view of society is one of indifference, to shrug their shoulders and walk away. They think we choose between self-interest and the interests of society or the country as a whole.
In reality, self interest demands that we work together to achieve what we cannot do on our own.
More and more, I believe that though, of course, ability plays a great part in life, what most distinguishes those at the top from those at the bottom is their life-chances.
So much talent is wasted. So much potential underdeveloped. I don't just mean the unemployed. I mean those who just have jobs, when they should have careers
with prospects and a hope of advancement.
We can learn from the family.
The Tories have posed as the Party of the family for too long.
They are no more the Party of the family than they are the Party of law and order.
They have done more to undermine stable family life in this country than any other Government in memory.
The Tory view of the family is the same as its view of the individual: you are on your own.
But the essence of family life is that you are not on your own.
You are in it together. Families work best when the members of it help and sustain each other.
The same is true of communities and of nations.
Community is not some piece of nostalgia.
It means what we share.
It means working together,
It is about how we treat each other.
So we teach our children to take pride in their school, their town, their country.
We teach them self-respect; and we teach them respect for others too.
We teach them self-support and self-improvement; and we teach them mutual support and mutual improvement too.
The Tories despise such principles. Their view is simple: let's just watch as the hospitals spring up, as the schools rise in green and pleasant playing fields.
Let's just sit tight on this planet of miracles, where the free market builds business, trains employees, controls inflation, preserves demand, ensures everlasting growth.
Let's congratulate ourselves that thanks to our inspiring inaction the elderly live in comfort. The young play in safety.
All around, people on this planet sing hymns of gratitude to the invisible hand of the market, as it brings equality and prosperity to all, as 'cascades of wealth' tumble down from generation to generation.
Welcome to Planet Portillo.

It is the theatre of the politically absurd.
Market forces cannot educate us or equip us for this world of rapid technological and economic change.
We must do it together.
We cannot buy our way to a safe society. We must work for it together.
We cannot purchase an option on whether we grow old.
We must plan for it together.
We can't protect the ordinary against the abuse of power by leaving them to it; we must protect each other.
That is our insight. A belief in society. Working together. Solidarity. Cooperation. Partnership.
These are our words.
This is my socialism.
And we should stop apologising for using the word.
It is not the socialism of Marx or state control.
It is rooted in a straight forward view of society.
In the understanding that the individual does best in a strong and decent community of people with principles and standards and common aims and values.
We are the party of the individual because we are the Party of community. It is socialism.
Our task is to apply those values to the modern world. It will change the traditional dividing lines between right and left. And it calls for a new politics. Without dogma and without swopping our prejudices for theirs.
It is time to break out of the past and break through with a clear and radical and modern vision for Britain.
Today's politics is about the search for security in a changing world.
We must build the strong and active society that can provide it. That is our project for Britain.
It will be founded on four pillars:-
- opportunity
- responsibility
- fairness.
- trust
A society of opportunity must be built around a strong and stable economy in which all of us have a stake. Mass unemployment is inconsistent with a civilised society.
It is time to state clearly, in the words of the pioneering White Paper of 1944, that it is the duty of government to maintain a high and stable level of employment.
It is a responsibility we share as a society.
That commitment – the goal of full employment – I reaffirm today.
It will take time.
The means of doing it will change. But it must be done if this is to become a society of which everyone feels a part. Above all, we must conquer the weaknesses of our economy that hold our country back. It won't be done by state control.
But it won't be done by market dogma.
It can only be done by a dynamic market economy based on partnership between Government and industry Between employer and employee and between public and private sector. Take investment in infrastructure. Only in Tory Britain could the Government have tried to build the Channel Tunnel without public investment.
They even passed a law against it.

In desperation they had to ask the taxpayer to fork out more than half the cost.
Now it's up and running…trains speed through France at 185 miles per hour, through the tunnel at 85 miles per hour, and then go through Kent – at 47 miles per hour.
The French got the high-speed link. We got the slow coach link. But then we've got the Tories.
Government must take the lead, and a Labour Government would do that. We would get public and private finance working together in transport in housing, in capital projects in health and education.
And if there are Treasury rules or antiquated concepts of public borrowing that hold us back, change them.
That is what intelligent Government is for.
In technology, there is an information revolution under way.
- Fifty per cent of employees in Britain now work in information processing.
- In the next century, Seventy per cent of wealth will be created in the information industries.
- And 80 per cent of all the information stored anywhere in the world is in English.
Massive markets.
Massive competitive advantage.
But massive Tory failure.
We should be investing in the new electronic superhighways - satellite and telecommunications technology that is the nerve centre of a new information economy – doing for the next century what roads and railways have done for this one.
The Government failed to see this revolution coming and because of that, a new market is operating under old rules which work against our companies, large and small.
We will set the framework which encourages the new investment so we coordinate a new national effort so that British companies are at the head of the competition not falling behind.
We have to invest for the long term.
In the Tory years, dividends have risen by 12 per cent per year in manufacturing, profits by 6 per cent, and investment by only two per cent.
We have to invest in economic regeneration.
There are areas of the country laid waste by the shedding of old industry. The market won't rebuild them on its own.
A partnership economy will, and where imaginative Labour authorities have worked with business it is. But we want more of it. That is why we have proposed one stop shop development agencies for our regions to help create the wealth they need.
Small and medium-sized businesses will be the driving force of a new economy.
The Tories have done nothing for them.
Labour has put forward recently the most comprehensive programme for small business development seen in this country.
Welcomed by small business.
Active Government working in partnership.
Now, I hear people, some of them in our own party, falling for the Tory attack that we have no policies. What nonsense. We have a huge body of policy which we are now developing. The difference is that we now have policies that win us votes rather than lose them.
Most of all, we need to train and educate our people.
Education will be the passion of my Government.

I know how important the education of my children is to me.
I will not tolerate children going to run-down schools, with bad discipline, low standards, mediocre expectation or poor teachers, and nor should anyone else.
If schools are bad, they should be made to be good.
If teachers can't teach properly, they shouldn't be teaching at all.
And if the Government can't see why education matters – then sack the Government and get one that does.
Nowadays, if you want to earn, you have to learn, throughout life.
The University for Industry, the nineties equivalent of the Open University, will use satellite, cable and the new information highways to give every home and workplace access to information, to skills and to teaching, to achieve our objective of permanent educational opportunity for all. Switching on your computer to link up with work and education opportunities will one day be as natural as switching on your TV to watch a football match.
And education is just one of the public services we provide together to improve the quality of opportunity for each of us.
It cannot be left to the market. Nor can our health service. Or our armed forces. Or our police. Neither should the railways or the Post Office. These are public services – they should be run for the public; and they should stay in public ownership for the people of this country.
And if the Tories say there is no money to fund better public services, then let us tell them the cuts they could make. They could save 700 million pounds on the costs and fees and city charges of railway privatisation. 700 million could have been used to build a high speed link from London to Manchester and Liverpool, upgrade lines between there and Hull and Middlesborough, and still have enough left over to improve commuter services on Network South East.
While waiting lists are past 1 million, when patients are lying unattended on hospital trolleys, when dentistry has virtually gone out of the NHS, they could save the 1.6 billion they are spending on the NHS changes and spend it on patient care.
Or the 30 million to turn Police Authorities into quangos. Let that money go on putting police on the beat. And while students scrimp to get through college, a University Vice-Chancellor gets a huge vote of no confidence, and is rewarded with a 500,000 pound pay-off. We could have bought half a million exercise books with that.
It's their system.
Their dogma.
Their shambles.
But it's our children.
Labour's way is to fund the frontline of the public services.
It's time to change.
I want hospital resources released, from the administrative chaos of opting out, so that nurses can nurse again.
I want schools released from form filling and red tape, so that teachers can teach again.
And I want our uniformed services, freed from paper pushing.
So that we can put police officers on the beat again. With opportunity must come responsibility.
For the Tories, the language of responsibility is what those at the top preach to the rest, whilst neglecting it themselves. But the left have undervalued the notion of responsibility and duty and it is time we understood how central it is to ourselves.

Parents should have responsibility for their children. Fathers too. Companies to their employees and their community. Ministers to the truth. Citizens to each other.
It is at the heart of our message about crime.
The Labour Party is now the Party of Law and Order in Britain today. And quite right too.
- 1 in 50 crimes ever goes punished.
- Sentencing is haphazard.
- Victims are given short shrift.
Meanwhile, the Home Secretary protests that he has been attacked, week after week, for being too tough. He's dreaming. He'd love to be attacked for being tough.
He's attacked because he is long on rhetoric and short on policies that work.
Michael Howard, the man in charge of prison catering. Last year he told the Tory conference he was building six tough new prisons. Butlins wouldn't win the contract, he said. He was right. The Savoy got it. We can all get angry because crime hurts, and it hurts most the people who are least able to fight back. But it is not enough to get angry, to stamp your feet, and shout from the Tory conference platform. That is the soft option. We need a new approach. One that is tough on crime, and tough on the causes of crime. Over the past year we have put forward a range of detailed programmes to fight crime.
Tough on crime:
- Measures to tackle juvenile offending
- to crack down on illegal firearms
- to punish properly crimes of violence, including racial violence
- to give victims the right to be consulted before charges are dropped or changed
Tough on the causes of crime:
- a comprehensive crime prevention programme
- an anti-drugs initiative
- long term measures to break the culture of drugs, family
instability, high unemployment, and urban squalor in which some
of the worst criminals are brought up.
Responsibility means a recognition that there is no divorce from the outside world.
Social responsibility for all.
The unemployed youngster has no right to steal your radio. But let's get just as serious about catching the people in the city with an eye on your pension.
This is where the Tories fall down. Responsibility is a value shared.
If it doesn't apply to everyone it ends up applying to no-one. It applies to those who defraud the state of benefits. It applies to those who evade their taxes.
And it also applies to those water, gas, electricity company bosses, running monopoly services at our expense, awarding themselves massive salaries, share options, perks and pay-offs. They have responsibility too. It applies in the health service.
Remember how the reforms were sold in the name of better, quicker patient care – we'd all be able to get the doctor I want, at the time I want, in the hospital I want.
Who have those reforms benefited?
Not the patient but the penpusher, getting the carpet I want, the wallpaper I want, and the nice big company car I want…and can we get the wife on the board too.
It applies in the financial services.
The big bang… their pensions claim lost all sense of their role and responsibility to the nation…

A society without responsibility is the enemy of the society built on merit and hard work. It creates an economy in which enterprise is just another word for the quick buck.
The Thatcherites used to boast they were anti-establishment. But the trouble with them is that they never wanted to bust the establishment, just buy their way into it.
And the new establishment is not a meritocracy, but a power elite of money-shifters, middle men and speculators…people whose self interest will always come before the national or the public interest.
If they are allowed to go on running the country in their interests, is it any wonder that it is not run in ours.
So it is hardly surprising if after 15 years, sleaze in high places has given birth to the yob culture. Tory philosophy is the most effective yob creation scheme ever devised.
We have one further proposal to make here.
There are nearly one million young people in this country who have no work, or training or education.
This is not just a waste of talent but the breeding ground for resentment, crime, and drugs. The Social Justice Commission has called for a new civilian service.
A voluntary national task force of young people given constructive tasks to do.
I support that. I think they do as well.
Working for the community that is useful, on environmental projects, or caring for the elderly, something useful to the community and personally fulfilling, to instill a sense of responsibility, self-discipline, self respect, a sense of achievement and value.
Responsibility and opportunity require fairness, justice, the right to be treated equally as a citizen.
That means a strong stand against discrimination on grounds of race, sex, creed, or sexuality. But, justice is about much more than fighting discrimination.
It is about our lives at work. The laws we live under, and about the tax we pay.
If you ever want to know whose side the Tories are on, look at the tax system.
Millionaires with the right accountant pay nothing while pensioners pay VAT on fuel.
Offshore trusts get tax relief while homeowners pay VAT on insurance premiums.
Middle income taxpayers get stung, whilst perks and privileges at the top roll on unstopped.
And because the Government changed the rules, two million more people now pay the top rate of tax. We will create a tax system that is fair which is related to
ability to pay.
Where the abuses end, the perks stop, and where ordinary families are not squeezed to pay for the privileged.
It sticks in my gullet when I see Tory Mps, some of whom earn more for a half day's consultancy work than some of my constituents earn in a month, denounce our plans for a minimum wage.
And it is also wrong that the tax payer ends up paying more than a billion pounds on benefits to subsidise poverty pay. A minimum wage exists in every European country, in America too, for the simple reason that it makes social and economic sense.
Of course the minimum wage should be set sensibly. And it will be, but there will be no retreat from its basic principle because it is right.
And we will sign the Social Chapter because it is right for our country.
And we will give the right to people at work to join a trade union, and where they want it, to have that union recognised.
And let one small but significant act be a signal of our commitment to people at work.

That is the restoration to the workers of Cheltenham GCHQ of their trade union rights.
We will make work pay. John Smith put it simply when he set up the Commission on Social Justice: 'People don't want hand-outs; they want a chance to achieve'.
The Tories always complain that the welfare state costs too much.
The answer is not just increasing benefits, adequate though those benefits should be.
But the people on benefits need and deserve better. Not more benefits, but help in getting off benefits.
Welfare should be about opportunity and security in a changing world. It is about helping people to move on and move up.
Because the world has changed, the welfare state has to change with it. And we are the only people who can be trusted to change it, because we are the people who believe in it.
The Tories will cut benefits and make poverty worse. We will put welfare to work.
A nation at work not on benefit. That is our pledge. But there is one big obstacle in the way of all our plans for change.
It is the legacy of the Tory years – disillusion with politics itself.
And if we want to remove it, we must show that our politics is not theirs. Not just that our vision for Britain is different, but also our means of achieving it. A new politics.
A politics of courage, honesty and trust.
It means telling it as it is, not opposing everything every other party does for the sake of it. If the Government are getting it right, as over Northern Ireland, we give credit.
We welcome without reservation new hope beginning there.
We pay tribute to our own government, the Irish government, Unionist and Nationalist opinion in the North for their efforts in the peace process.
And let us pay a special word of tribute to John Hume, leader of our sister party, who we welcome tomorrow to address us, for his unceasing commitment to that cause.
It means speaking the same language to each other as we know we need to speak to the country.
People look to politicians for leadership.
And leadership is about having the courage to say no as well as yes.
Even this week I have heard people saying a Labour government must repeal all the Tory trade union laws.
Now there is not a single person in this country who believes that to be realistic, or that we will do it.
No one believes strike ballots should be abandoned.
So why do we say it?
We shouldn't, and I won't.
I am absolutely committed to the goal of full employment. We will develop the plans to achieve it.
But let's not pretend that we can deliver it overnight.
Let's not seek to fool the unemployed into thinking we will walk into power on Thursday and they will walk into a job on Friday.
Let us be honest. Straight. Realistic. Those most in need of hope deserve the truth.
Hope is not born of false promises; disillusion is.
They are tired of dogma. They are tired of politicians pretending to have a monopoly on the answers.
They are tired of glib promises broken as readily in office as they were made on the soap box.

When we make a promise, we must be sure we can keep it.
That is page 1, line 1 of a new contract between Government and citizen.
But we should do more. We have to change the rules of government and we will.
We are putting forward the biggest programme of change to democracy ever proposed by a political party.
- Every citizen to be protected by fundamental rights that cannot be taken away by the state or their fellow citizens enshrined in a Bill of Rights.
- Government will be brought closer to the people.
We will legislate for a Scottish Parliament, an Assembly for Wales, in the first year of a Labour government.
And the Tory quangos will be brought back under proper democratic control.
- We will enact a Freedom of Information Act to attack secrecy wherever it exists, public or private sector.
- We will reform the House of Commons to make its working practices and its powers to investigate more effective, and to achieve through our Party the increase in the number of women Mps that we have talked about for so long.
- We will make history by ending the ancient and indefensible privilege of hereditary peers voting on the law of the land.
- We will tighten the rules of financing of political parties.
And since trade unions are balloted on their political contribution, it is only fair that in this free country shareholders are balloted on theirs.
The people of this country are not looking to us for a revolution. They want us to make a start.
I want you with me in that task.
I want you with me. Head and heart.
Because this can only be done together.
Leaders lead, but in the end the people govern.
Some of you will think we are too modest in our aims, too cautious.
Some of you support me because you think I can win.
But it is not enough.
We are not going to win despite our beliefs.
We will only win because of our beliefs.
I want to win not because the Tories are despised, but because we are understood, supported, trusted.
There is no choice between being principled and unelectable; and electable and unprincipled. We have tortured ourselves with this foolishness for too long.
We should win because of what we believe.
The task of renewing our nation is not one for the faint hearted, or the world weary, or cynical. It is not a task for those afraid of hard choices, for those with complacent views, or those seeking a comfortable life.
At the next election, the voters will have had this Tory government for 17 or 18 years.
They may hate them, but they know them. I want them now to know us.
Our identity.
Our character as a party.
And change is an important part of that.
We have changed.
We were right to change. Parties that do not change die, and
this party is a living movement not an historical monument.

If the world changes, and we don't, then we become of no use to the world. Our principles cease being principles and just ossify into dogma.
We haven't changed to forget our principles, but to fulfil them.
Not to lose our identity but to keep our relevance.
Change is an important part of gaining the nation's trust.
We were right to introduce one member one vote last year and that change is done.
And look at how the Regeneration Project being run from Party HQ has begun the task of taking the party closer to those communities.
Are we not right to reach out and touch the people in this way, to show them that politics is not some byzantine game played out over screeds of paper in wintry meeting rooms but a real and meaningful part of their lives. This week we reach out further.
On Friday John Prescott will announce the biggest programme of political education undertaken by any party in Britain for a generation. John's efforts will be central not just to building our membership but in engaging those members – new and old – to help shape this party's future.
Let us have the confidence once again that we can debate new ideas, new thinking, without forever fearing the taunt of betrayal.
Let us say what we mean and mean what we say.
Not just what we are against.
But what we are for.
No more ditching.
No more dumping.
Stop saying what we don't mean.
And start saying what we do mean, what we stand by, what we stand for.
Caution will not win us the next election.
Courage will.
It is time we had a clear, up-to-date statement of the objects and objectives of our party.
John Prescott and I, as leader and deputy leader of our party, will propose such a statement to the NEC. Let it then be open to debate in the coming months.
I want the whole party involved, and I know this party will welcome this debate.
And if that statement is accepted, then let it become the objects of our party for the next election and take its place in our constitution for the next century.
This is a modern party living in an age of change.
It requires a modern constitution that says what we are in terms the public cannot misunderstand and the Tories cannot misrepresent.
We are proud of our beliefs.
So let's state them.
And in terms that people will identify with in every workplace, every home, every family, every community in our country.
And let this party's determination to change be the symbol of the
trust they can place in us to change the country.
The British people are a great people.
- We have proud democratic traditions.
- We are a nation of tolerance, innovation and creativity.
- We have an innate sense of fair play.
- We have a great history and culture.
- And when great challenges face us, as they have twice this century, we rise to them.

But if we have a fault, it is that unless roused, we tend to let things be. We say “things could be worse” rather than “things should be better”.
And the Tories encourage this fault.
They thrive on complacency.
I say it is time we were roused.
Let us be blunt.
- Our system of Government has become outdated.
- Our economy has been weakened
- Our people have been under-educated
- Our welfare state and public services have been run down
- and our society has been made more divided than at any time for 100 years,
But our politics need not be like this.
Our country need not be like this.
Ours is a project of national renewal, renewing our commitment as a nation, as a community of people in order to prepare and provide for ourselves in the new world we face. We must build a nation with pride in itself. A thriving community, rich in economic prosperity, secure in social justice, confident in political change.
A land in which our children can bring up their children with a future to look forward to.
That is our hope.
Not just to promise change – but to achieve it.
Our Party. New Labour.
Our mission. New Britain.
New Labour. New Britain.

Accessed from: “http://keeptonyblairforpm.wordpress.com”on 01/02/2011.

Appendix II

The beginning of the 1997 Manifesto text:

New Labour because Britain deserves better.

Britain will be better with New Labour.

‘Our case is simple: that Britain can and must be better'

'The vision is one of national renewal, a country with drive, purpose and energy'

'In each area of policy a new and distinctive approach has been tapped out, one that differs from the old left and the Conservative right. This is why new Labour is new'

'New Labour is a party of ideas and ideals but not of outdated ideology. What counts is what works. The objectives are radical. The means will be modern'

‘This is our contract with the people'

I believe in Britain. It is a great country with a great history. The British people are a great people. But I believe Britain can and must be better: better schools, better hospitals, better ways of tackling crime, of building a modern welfare state, of equipping ourselves for a new world economy.

I want a Britain that is one nation, with shared values and purpose, where merit comes before privilege, run for the many not the few, strong and sure of itself at home and abroad.

I want a Britain that does not shuffle into the new millennium afraid of the future, but strides into it with confidence.

I want to renew our country's faith in the ability of its government and politics to deliver this new Britain. I want to do it by making a limited set of important promises and achieving them. This is the purpose of the bond of trust I set out at the end of this introduction, in which ten specific commitments are put before you. Hold us to them. They are our covenant with you.

I want to renew faith in politics by being honest about the last 18 years. Some things the Conservatives got right. We will not change them. It is where they got things wrong that we will make change. We have no intention or desire to replace one set of dogmas by another.

I want to renew faith in politics through a government that will govern in the interest of the many, the broad majority of people who work hard, play by the rules, pay their dues and feel let down by a political system that gives the breaks to the few, to an elite at the top increasingly out of touch with the rest of us.

And I want, above all, to govern in a way that brings our country together, that unites our nation in facing the tough and dangerous challenges of the new economy and changed society in which we must live. I want a Britain which we all feel part of, in whose future we all have a stake, in which what I want for my own children I want for yours.

A new politics

The reason for having created new Labour is to meet the challenges of a different world. The millennium symbolises a new era opening up for Britain. I am confident about our future prosperity, even optimistic, if we have the courage to change and use it to build a better Britain.

To accomplish this means more than just a change of government. Our aim is no less than to set British political life on a new course for the future.

People *are* cynical about politics and distrustful of political promises. That is hardly surprising. There have been few more =ross breaches of faith than when the Conservatives under Mr Major promised, before the election of 1992, that they would not raise taxes, but would cut them every year; and then went on to raise them by the largest amount in peacetime history starting in the first Budget after the election. The Exchange Rate Mechanism as the cornerstone of economic policy, Europe, health, crime, schools, sleaze - the broken promises are strewn across the country's memory.

The Conservatives' broken promises taint all politics. That is why we have made it our guiding rule not to promise what we cannot deliver; and to deliver what we promise. What follows is not the politics of 100 days that dazzles for a time, then fizzles out. It is not the politics of a revolution, but of a fresh start, the patient rebuilding and renewing of this country - renewal that can take root and build over time.

That is one way in which politics in Britain will gain a new =ease of life. But there is another. We aim to put behind us the bitter political struggles of left and right that have torn our country apart for too many decades. Many of these conflicts have no relevance whatsoever to the modern world - public versus private, bosses versus workers, middle class versus working class. It is time for this country to move on and move forward. We are proud of our history, proud of what we have achieved - but we must learn from our history, not be chained to it.

New Labour

The purpose of new Labour is to give Britain a different political choice: the choice between a failed Conservative government, exhausted and divided in everything other than its desire to cling on to power, and a new and revitalised Labour Party that has been resolute in transforming itself into a party of the future. We have rewritten our constitution, the new Clause IV, to put a commitment to enterprise alongside the commitment to justice. We have changed the way we make policy, and put our relations with the trade unions on a modern footing where they accept they can get fairness but no favours from a Labour government. Our MPs are all now selected by ordinary party members, not small committees or pressure groups. The membership

itself has doubled, to over 400,000, with half the members having joined since the last election.

We submitted our draft manifesto, new Labour new life for Britain, to a ballot of all our members, 95 per cent of whom gave it their express endorsement.

We are a national party, supported today by people from all walks of life, from the successful businessman or woman to the pensioner on council estate. Young people have flooded in to join us in what is the fastest growing youth section of any political party in the western world.

The vision

We are a broad-based movement for progress and justice. New Labour is the political arm of none other than the British people as a whole. Our values are the same: the equal worth of all, with no one cast aside; fairness and justice within strong communities.

But we have liberated these values from outdated dogma or doctrine, and we have applied these values to the modern world.

I want a country in which people get on, do well, make a success of their lives. I have no time for the politics of envy. We need more successful entrepreneurs, not fewer of them. But these life-chances should be for all the people. And I want a society in which ambition and compassion are seen as partners not opposites - where we value public service as well as material wealth.

New Labour believes in a society where we do not simply pursue our own individual aims but where we hold many aims in common and work together to achieve them. How we build the industry and employment opportunities of the future; how we tackle the division and inequality in our society; how we care for and enhance our environment and quality of life; how we develop modern education and health services; how we create communities that are safe, where mutual respect and tolerance are the order of the day. These are things we must achieve together as a country.

The vision is one of national renewal, a country with drive, purpose and energy. A Britain equipped to prosper in a global economy of technological change; with a modern welfare state; its politics more accountable; and confident of its place in the world.

Programme: a new centre and centre-left politics

In each area of policy a new and distinctive approach has been mapped out, one that differs both from the solutions of the old left and those of the Conservative right. This is why new Labour is new. We believe in the strength of our values, but we recognise also that the policies of 1997 cannot be those of 1947 or 1967. More detailed policy has been produced by us than by any opposition in history. Our direction and destination are clear.

The old left would have sought state control of industry. The Conservative right is content to leave all to the market. We reject both approaches. Government and industry must work together to achieve key objectives aimed at enhancing the dynamism of the market, not undermining it.

In **industrial relations**, we make it clear that there will be no return to flying pickets, secondary action, strikes with no ballots or the trade union law of the 1970s. There will instead be basic minimum rights for the individual at the workplace, where our aim is partnership not conflict between employers and employees.

In **economic management**, we accept the global economy as a reality and reject the isolationism and 'go-it-alone' policies of the extremes of right or left.

In **education**, we reject both the idea of a return to the =1-plus and the monolithic comprehensive schools that take no account of children's differing abilities. Instead we favour all-in schooling which identifies the distinct abilities of individual pupils and organises them in classes to maximise their progress in individual subjects. In this way we modernise the comprehensive principle, learning from the experience of its 30 years of application.

In **health** policy, we will safeguard the basic principles =f the NHS, which we founded, but will not return to the top-down management of the 1970s. So we will keep the planning and provision of healthcare separate, but put planning on a longer-term, decentralised and more co-operative basis. The key is to root out unnecessary administrative cost, and to spend money on the right things - frontline care.

On **crime**, we believe in personal responsibility and in punishing crime, but also tackling its underlying causes - so, tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime, different from the Labour approach of the last and the Tory policy of today.

Over-centralisation of **government** and lack of accountability was a problem in governments of both left and right. Labour is committed to the democratic renewal of our country through decentralisation and the elimination of excessive government secrecy.

In addition, we will face up to the new issues that confront us. We will be the party of **welfare reform**. In consultation and partnership with the people, we will design a modern welfare state based on rights and duties going together, fit for the modern world.

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Appendix III

Blair’s resignation speech, May 2007. (Video)

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