

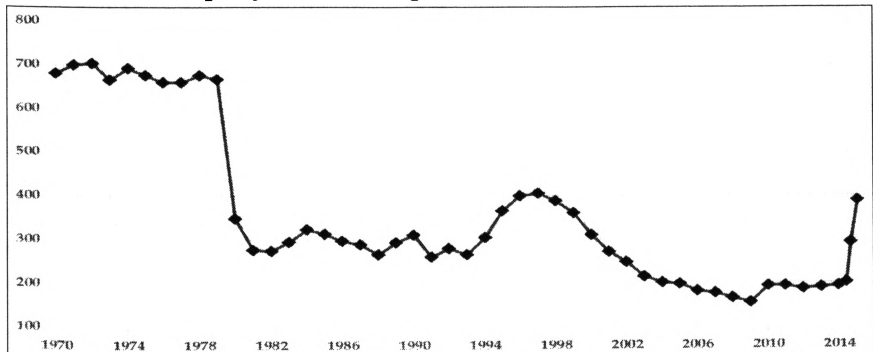
The Labour Party in Transition: From Miliband to Corbyn

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Introduction

Probably hardly any other established party has subjected itself to such manifold processes of change as the British Labour party during the last decades. The slide to the left at the beginning of the 1980s was followed by a pragmatic process of change from 1983 until 1992 that opened the party towards the political middle during the era of party leader Neil Kinnock (cf. e.g. Shaw 1994). That was followed by the rapid and determined changing of the party into “New Labour” by Tony Blair and his associates starting in 1994 (cf. e.g. Jun 2004, Michelsen/Walter 2013; Chadwick/Heffernan 2003; Beech/Lee 2008; Faucher-King/Le Galès 2010; from an internal point of view Mandelson/Liddle 1996). New Labour succeeded in spectacularly winning elections and now stands for the longest ever uninterrupted governing period of the Labour Party. If the party’s period under party leader Ed Miliband can be characterised as a phase of transition (see Bale 2015), it now seems that a new essential change can be depicted for the party since Jeremy Corbyn, an until then little known representative of the so called “hard left”, took over party leadership in 2015. Corbyn and his basis of supporters strive for the party’s complete renunciation of the contents of “New Labour”. How rapidly the party has changed since the election for the House of Commons in 2015, not only with regard to content, can be seen alone from the number of members that have clearly increased and which can be primarily explained by the support given to Corbyn by the so-called “Momentum group” (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Labour party membership in thousands (1970 – January 2016)



Source: Author’s illustration based on Richard Keen, House of Commons Library: Membership of UK political parties; Wiki Commons: Rwendland; Media reports: The Independent, The Guardian.

Is the British Labour Party facing a turn of the era after having lost the elections for the House of Commons in 2015 and changing party leadership from Ed Miliband to Jeremy Corbyn? What does this final renunciation of New Labour by Corbyn mean for the party and what are its future perspectives?

The following chapter attempts to explain the reasons responsible for the recent development of the Labour Party in the last few years. For this, the original conditions and the election result of 2015 have to be more closely analysed. What are the reasons for the party's failure in the era of party leader Ed Miliband?

Subsequently, I will discuss how Jeremy Corbyn, an until then rather meaningless member of Parliament within the party, was able to succeed not only in becoming new party leader, but also in attracting a motion of no confidence in less than a year of being in office and in facing it successfully. What are Corbyn's power resources and why does he have so many opponents within the party? Who are his supporters? What content does Corbyn stand for? Is the Labour Party on its way to becoming a modern left-wing populist party, or a socialist party of the 21st century, as Corbyn himself likes to formulate it?

The Original Conditions of the Election of Corbyn: The Labour Party during the Era of Party Leader Ed Miliband

Many of the changes leading to the taking over of the party leadership by Jeremy Corbyn occurred in the period after the election for the House of Commons in 2010 when the Labour Party had to take its seat again on the Opposition benches after the longest governing period in the history of the party (13 years of uninterrupted government). Already after losing the election in 2010 there was an indication of the party's renunciation of the ideas and contents of "New Labour" (for this see e.g. Dye 2015, Coates 2013), which was manifested with regard to staff by electing Ed Miliband instead of his brother David. Although David Miliband was supported by the majority of the parliamentary part of the party (PLP, parliamentary group of the House of Commons and members of the European Parliament, 53:47) as well as by the members in the individual constituencies (CLP, Constituency Labour Party, 54:46), Ed Miliband secured the agreement of the labour unions ("affiliated members", 40:60), which all in all led to a very narrow success for Ed Miliband in the electoral college, in which the three subdivisions count in equal measures one third respectively¹ (49,35: 50,65; for details of the electoral college see Quinn 2004; for details of the election of Ed Miliband see Pemberton/Wickham-Jones 2013),

¹ In the charter of the party, it says: "First-preference votes counted [...]. If no candidate secures majority on first preferences, bottom candidate drops out and votes reallocated on basis of second, third, etc. preferences. Process continues until one candidate achieves majority."

in which also the preferential votes in favour of Ed had a positive effect for him (Dianne Abbott, Ed Balls and Andy Burnham were also candidates, however their voters supported Ed rather than David in their second preference).

David was presumed to be “the Blairite, New Labour, ‘continuity’ candidate (Bale 2015:17), whereas Ed Miliband had stepped up to push away the legacy of New Labour and to programmatically lead the party back to more traditional social-democratic contents of policy (Goes 2016:1). Ed Miliband’s election has been judged sceptically by his critics from the beginning on (cf. Faucher 2014), since his majority consisted “only” of the support from the unions which incidentally led to his nickname “Red Ed” and which made him appear to be a left-winger of the party. Furthermore, the considerable significance of the unions in the recruiting process of party leader was discussed highly controversially within the party and outside of it (cf. Denham 2013). This controversy continued: After some disagreement, especially on the role of the unions in the election process for parliamentary candidates for the by-election during the legislative period, Ed Miliband advocated the implementation of a new election procedure within the party which was also supposed to be used to elect the party leader. This new election procedure was passed in 2014. The electoral college was abandoned and replaced by a new trichotomy, namely full members, affiliated members and registered supporters.²

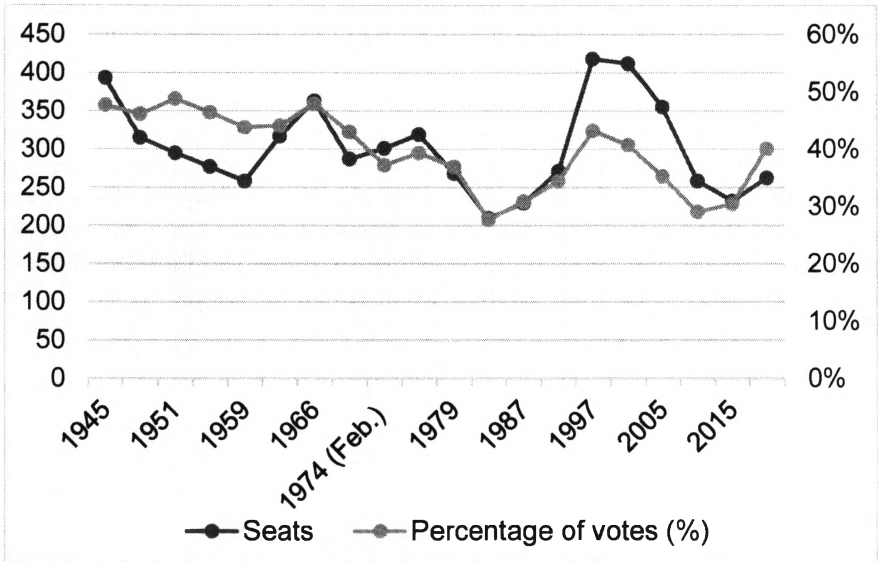
For all three groups, the same principle applied: Each member had one vote (“one member, one vote”) and each vote counted equally. The parliamentary group in the House of Commons has the prerogative to choose the candidates; a candidate for the office of the party leader needs at least 15 per cent of the members of the House of Commons as supporters in order to participate in the elections. The system of alternative votes, i.e. the naming of a second preference, was kept (see footnote 1). What probably no one could guess at the time when the new voting procedure was passed was that this new voting procedure, especially with the new category of registered supporters, would become a very big advantage for Jeremy Corbyn in the competition for party leadership only a year later. This shall be discussed in greater detail below.

A further prerequisite for the election of Corbyn as party leader was the Labour party’s loss of the election for the House of Commons in 2015, which the party’s top candidate Ed Miliband did not have an unsubstantial part in, as almost all analyses have shown. The Labour Party won 30.4 per cent in the election for the House of Commons in 2015, which

² “The affiliated supporters would be those who belonged to organisations which were themselves affiliated to the Labour Party such as trade unions. [...] They would need to register – at no extra cost – to become affiliated supporters. [...] [T]he category of registered supporters [...] would entail payment of a nominal fee, accompanied by a formal declaration that they fully support the Party’s values” (Dorey/Denham 2016).

was, on the one hand, an increase of 1.5 percentage points compared to the election for the House of Commons in 2010, but, on the other hand, was the third worst result in the party's history since 1945 (following the results of 1983 and 2010, see Figure 2). Besides, Labour lost 26 mandates in the House of Commons compared to the election of 2010 and was left with only 232 seats. Especially painful for the Labour Party were the losses in Scotland; there the Labour Party had to give up all seats to the Scottish Nationalists (SNP) except for one.

Figure 2: General election results: Labour Party, 1979-2017



Source: Author's illustration based on ukpolitical.info.

There are three main reasons which explain Labour's obvious loss:

- Low economic competence

The voters accused the Labour Party of economic mismanagement as a party in government and jointly blamed them for the economic and financial crisis of the years since 2007 (cf. Cowley/Kavanagh 2016; Beech/Hickson 2014:76). This image had hardened to such an extent that the party's figures measuring competence in economic and financial policy were very low at the end of the period in government and did not increase again during the phase in opposition. Miliband's image as a "leftie" added to the voters' lack of confidence in the Labour Party being able to lead the British national economy into a successful future.

- Low numbers in popularity and appeal of the top candidate Ed Miliband

As Philip Cowley and Dennis Kavanagh pointedly formulated (2016:368), “Ed Miliband was a dampener on his party’s vote”.³ In the polls, he was far behind the then prime minister in office David Cameron with regard to the figures reflecting his popularity and competence. Further deficits had been stated during his five years in office. “His poor communication skills were seen as a liability for the party. Labour activists and parliamentary candidates reported that Miliband’s image problems were often quoted by voters as reasons not to vote Labour [...]. Voters thought Miliband did not have the attributes of an authoritative prime minister” (Goes 2016:182 f.). His electoral weakness can also be attributed to the fact that he did not have unconditional backing within the party, which led to a hesitant stance on questions about content and strategic alignments: “Miliband was never in a position of power where he could impose his vision on the party (Goes 2016:179). Consistently there were mishaps and communication mistakes. This can be seen most explicitly in his speech at the party convention in Manchester in 2014 in which he simply forgot to present central passages on the conservative government’s budget deficit and on the Labour Party’s alternative plans, although those had been included in the manuscript that had been passed out before.⁴ Moreover, doubts concerning Miliband’s communicative competence and his rhetorical abilities were voiced over and over again.

- Low strategic competence

The Labour Party did not develop a convincing or coherent narrative; instead, unclear messages concerning the party’s points of view on content prevailed (cf. Goes 2016:176 who misses the party’s “road map”; cf. a bit more positive Atkins 2015). Already within the party, they did not succeed in developing a coherent social-democratic road in the sense of a turning away from New Labour’s policy of the third way. Miliband attempted to move different streams within the party towards compromises; however, in the opinion of many observers, he was unsuccessful: “Labour’s departure from New Labour’s and from the party’s traditional centralized statecraft was equally half-hearted (Goes 2016:179).

Neither did Labour have a strategic answer to the strength of the Scottish SNP nor to the Eurosceptic party UKIP. Ed Miliband reacted with economic solutions to the diffuse insecurities and fears of the population with regard to migration; however, he did not recognize that the conflict in migration

³ Elsewhere it says: “Ed Miliband lacked electoral appeal” (Cowley/Kavanagh 2016:83).

⁴ “Miliband forgetting to mention the deficit became a big story the next day and, worse still, something that the Tories would be able to mention again and again in the course of what promised to be one of the longest election campaigns in British political history” (Bale 2015:251).

policy is not primarily socio-economically, but socio-culturally tied, and that the topic of national identity is highly relevant to electoral behaviour: "Voters want to address culture and nationhood, but the party naturally prefers to discuss economics and redistribution" (Diamond 2016:434). Also, Cowley and Kavanagh (2016:72) conclude that "many voters blamed the last Labour government for mismanaging the economy and over-spending, allowing too much immigration and being too 'soft' on welfare claimants" – all impressions the party could not essentially refute during Ed Miliband's term of office and therefore voters were lost to various directions, to UKIP, the SNP and even to the Conservatives. The strengthening of the SNP in Scotland confronted the Labour Party with yet another strategic problem: Shortly before the election, a possible coalition of Labour and SNP was communicated by the Conservatives and the media due to the expected slim majority, tied to the message that such a coalition would strengthen the SNP to such an extent that it could enforce the autonomy of Scotland and, thus, a breaking apart of the United Kingdom would be at stake.

Furthermore, the Conservatives from their point of view warned about an irresponsible budgetary policy with high indebtedness since the SNP demanded more and higher social benefits in their manifesto. Although Miliband clearly refused such a coalition with the SNP, the possibility of a virtual coalition (Labour/SNP) became the Conservatives' ammunition in the election campaign (Sturm 2015:489). Miliband could not dispel remaining doubts about such a coalition building, which was primarily due to the fact that a governing majority consisting exclusively of Labour appeared to be unlikely.

This unlikely scenario did not only not happen, the result of the election for the House of Commons was rather disappointing for the Labour Party: In fact, 30.4 per cent was an increase of 1.5 per cent, however, the party could neither prevent the Conservatives' absolute majority of mandates nor win more seats in parliament. On the contrary: Due to the high losses in Scotland the party lost even more seats in the House of Commons compared to the already rather unpleasant result in 2010 and won only 232 seats. Thus, the way for Ed Miliband's resignation from party leadership was paved and was taken shortly after the elections for the House of Commons. Miliband assumed responsibility for the result of the elections and withdrew from party leadership.

What Direction Will the Labour Party Take under Jeremy Corbyn?

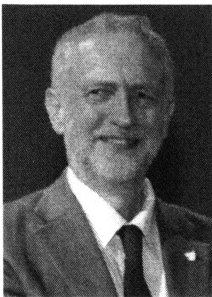
The Double Election of Corbyn and Support by "Momentum"

The voting procedure to determine the party leader that was explained in more detail above was used for the first time in the summer of 2015 and proved to be a huge institutional advantage for the candidate Jeremy Corbyn. Andy Burnham, Yvette Cooper and Liz Kendall competed beside him, and all reached the needed quota in the party's parliamentary group.

Corbyn, however, only succeeded in that because within the parliamentary group the opinion dominated that the voting possibilities should be expanded by allowing a candidate of the party's left wing ("token leftie", Bale/Webb 2015). He narrowly succeeded in reaching the 15 per cent hurdle and was probably only approved since hardly anyone saw a promising candidate in him – a momentous mistake. Former Foreign Minister Margaret Beckett, for example, was one those signing in favour of Corbyn, which she later described as a big mistake (cf. Dorey/Denham). Corbyn received 251,417 votes, which equals 59.5 per cent. With this he clearly asserted himself against the favourite Andy Burnham (19 per cent), Yvette Cooper (17 per cent) and against Liz Kendall (4.5 per cent) who was closest to New Labour. He mainly owes his electoral success to the group of supporters that registered for the election of the party leader by paying three pounds and of which 84 per cent voted for him. From union members that supported the party he received 57.6 per cent, from full members only 49.6 per cent despite the great increase in membership numbers during the campaign (for data see Diamond 2016: 18). How could this coup succeed? The grass roots movement "Momentum" is behind this success. For this reason alone, it had stepped into party-political life in Great Britain and completely committed itself to supporting Corbyn. Many of those supporters only began to show interest in the Labour Party when Corbyn declared his candidacy. The following section will highlight Momentum's role within the party transformation process and neglects for that reason other possible aspects.

Figure 3: Labour leadership election 2015

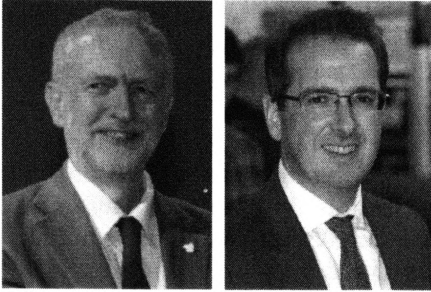
Jeremy Corbyn	Andy Burnham	Yvette Cooper	Liz Kendall
59.5%	19.0%	17.0%	4.5%
(251,417)	(80,462)	(71,928)	(18,857)



Source: See Li from London, UK - 2014-04-30, The 3rd annual Latin UK Awards (LUKAS 2014), CC BY 2.0. (Corbyn); Department of Health (Burnham); Chatham House, cropped and sharpened by Rwendland, CC BY 2.0. (Cooper), Rwendland - own work, CC BY-SA 4.0. (Kendall).

Figure 4: Labour leadership election 2016

Jeremy Corbyn	Owen Smith
61.8%	38.2%
(313,209)	(193,229)



Source: See Li from London, UK - 2014-04-30, The 3rd annual Latin UK Awards (LUKAS 2014), CC BY 2.0. (Corbyn); Owen Smith 2013 (cropped), CC BY 2.0. (Smith).

Who is actually behind this movement? According to its own data the movement has 22,000 members that are organized in 150 local groups, and furthermore, has more than 200,000 supporters (Afridi 2017). Four main groups can be found within the so-called “Corbyn Coalition” (Klug et al. 2016:37), a term used even by the movement itself:

- 1) Non-parliamentary activists from individual social movements like “UK Uncut” or “Occupy”
- 2) Rather traditional leftist protest groups such as “The People’s Assembly” and “Stop the War Coalition” or also the “Socialist Workers Party”
- 3) Labour’s left-wingers, some of whom turned away from the party during Blair’s era and have now returned
- 4) The left within the labour unions.

Patrick Diamond (2016: 18) categorised Corbyn’s basis of left supporters into three groups. First, the generation of baby boomers who had distanced themselves with respect to socio-cultural issues from the project “New Labour” that defended its migration policy with lots of people from Eastern Europe coming into the UK. Secondly, young people, mainly students, who were affected by the Conservative government’s policy due to a clear increase in tuition fees as well as through the problems on the real estate market (e.g. drastic rent increases) and who had turned against a policy of austerity. And thirdly, employees of the public service who ascribe major material disadvantages for the public service due to the

Conservatives' policy of austerity. All groups of Corbyn's supporters are united by the clear renunciation of the direction of New Labour under Blair and Brown and a rejection of any kind of austerity policy as well as a sceptical attitude towards finding a compromise and a consensus: 71 per cent view themselves as idealists and only 15 per cent as pragmatists, whereas among the supporters of the other three candidates 56 per cent rank themselves as pragmatists and only 32 per cent as idealists (for data see Quinn 2015: 773). Not few of them had voted for another party in the election of the House of Commons in 2015, mainly for the Greens and the Liberal Democrats (cf. Dorey/Denham 2016).

While the new membership has different motivations, a triumph of idealism and ideology can be mentioned since Corbyn's "analysis is rooted far more in opposing the inequalities of capitalism and using socialist solutions to redressing the problems of society" (Crines 2015: 6). Corbyn was able to establish ideological resolution and an unconditional holding on to leftist values as trademarks for himself. With this he succeeded in winning anti-capitalist powers and globalisation critics for his cause far beyond the Labour Party's realm. Appealing to emotions and social concern, he also aimed at letting the Labour Party appear to be a reservoir of the whole political Left: "Indeed, policies were the principal reason for supporting him and two-thirds of his supporters cited the break with New Labour. [...] They wanted a reorientation in Labour's strategy" (Quinn 2015: 766).

With this stance, the party is supposed to be rootedly changed towards a social protest party which sees its field of action primarily outside of parliament. The requirement for this was an inner-party restructuring to an unknown extent up until then which was made possible by completely taking advantage of the changed technological instruments of mobilisation: "Large unrepresentative groups of individuals suddenly sign up and transform the composition of the electorate. The possibility of that happening has increased in the era of social media, which has drastically reduced collective action costs" (Quinn 2015: 775). Web 2.0 played a huge role in Corbyn's campaign according to many analysts' views, however this was supplemented by other instruments. "A good, top-down social media strategy, nice graphic designs, plenty of coverage from a mischievous summer press, well-organized public meetings, a decent amount of trade union money (if not votes); this was very much politics as we have known it, and it was done rather well" (Stafford 2016: 74). The fact that the internet still played a central role beside the other instruments becomes clear in the strategy of mobilisation of "Momentum", which strongly targeted social networks and used online forums to increase its base of members or to approach and respectively recruit supporters.

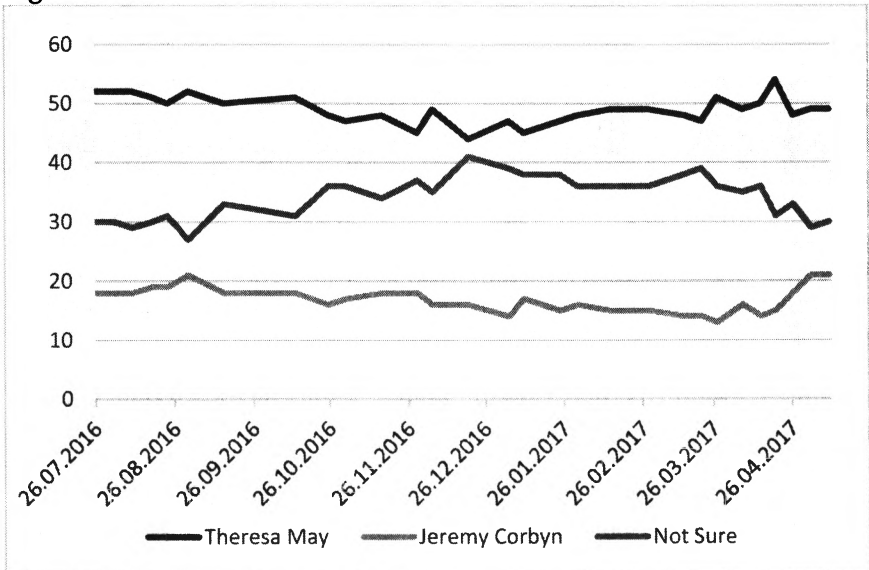
This remained unchanged also in the second round of voting in the summer of 2016: "Momentum" supported Corbyn after the vote of no confidence against him in the same way as in 2015. Of the 230 members of the

House of Commons, 172 member had initiated the process of “deselection” as a result of the referendum on the exit of Great Britain (Brexit) in June 2016 (the initiators of the deselection process were called “anti-democratic forces” (!) by Momentum activists (Afridi 2017) and agreed on Owen Smith as a rival candidate. Indeed, Corbyn did not gain the fifteen per cent of supporters in the parliamentary group of the House of Commons; however, he was able to assert that he, as incumbent, would have to be a possible candidate. This interpretation of the party’s statutes won recognition just as he himself was re-elected in the second election of the party leader which took place within 12 months. That time, Corbyn received 313,209 votes due to clearly increased membership numbers (see Figure 1), Smith, on the other hand, received only 193,229 votes. Corbyn’s share of votes was 61.8 per cent. The parliamentary group of the party had not only accused Corbyn of supporting Great Britain’s staying in the European Union without any passion, but had also strongly criticised his uncompromising and one-sided approach to politics. However, this attitude of the parliamentary group of the House of Commons led to a deadlock with Corbyn’s supporters. Whereas the members of parliament favour a pragmatic approach to politics and prioritised electability (“vote-seeking”) and the striving for public offices (“office-seeking”) by a great majority, Corbyn and his supporters of the Momentum movement favour ideologically motivated principles. Electability is explicitly not prioritised (cf. Quinn 2016; Diamond 2016), which leads Dorey and Denham (2016) to conclude pointedly that Corbyn and his supporters would be “ideologically pure but politically impotent”. If it had been important for party leaders to generally have electability in parliamentary elections up until then, i.e. the perspective of winning an election, this consideration did not play any role in Corbyn’s case. Also, the party leadership’s important consideration to establish harmony within the party before an election in order to present the party as a unity was knowingly not preferred by Corbyn’s supporters: “His own supporters acknowledged that Corbyn’s ‘correct policies’ would neither unite the party nor pave the way to electoral victory in 2020, and yet he secured a remarkable victory” (Dorey/Denham 2016). Only five per cent of his supporters believe Corbyn to be able to unite the party; and also only five per cent of them expect Corbyn to lead the party to victory in the next election for the House of Commons (for data see Denham/Dorey 2017). The result was a divided party in which the parliamentary group of the House of Commons and Corbyn’s base of supporters show few similarities, which undermined the actionability and the reputation of the party before the General Election in 2017. Momentum wants to essentially reorganise the Labour Party and, furthermore, to fundamentally change British policy (cf. Klug et al. 2016) towards social equality and participatory democracy. According to its own ideas, Momentum strives for power in Great Britain by taking four steps: 1) Taking over Labour; 2) “Winning for Labour”; 3) Establishing Momen-

tum as the most important political and social organization of the whole country; and 4) "Liberation", i.e. the freeing of British society towards more participation in all areas of living, also including reinforced economic participation that would not be in favour of market economic processes.

The result of these different factors was first of all negative demoscopic data: The Labour Party and its leader hit rock bottom in public approval (see Figure 5 and 6): "Too few voters believe that Corbyn is capable of being Prime Minister" (Diamond 2016: 22). Based on an empirical analysis, the media's coverage of Corbyn and the disrupted Labour Party could be described as being very unfavourable for the party (cf. Cammaerts et al. 2016).

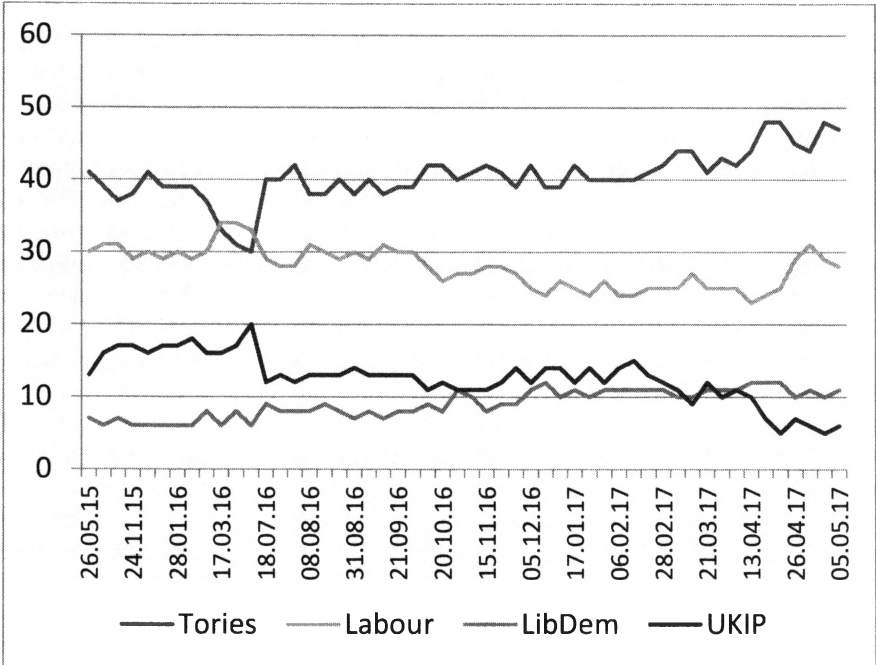
Figure 5: Best Prime Minister



Source: YouGov,

https://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/agmdwosoqz/YG%20Trackers%20-%20Best%20Prime%20Minister.pdf, [15.05.2017].

Despite the fact that compared to the Conservatives, the traditional media's coverage of the party in the long-term historical context has always been rather disadvantageous (cf. Thomas 2005), the negative peaks since Corbyn took office can clearly be seen. This can mainly be traced back to Corbyn's positions with regard to contexts and his management style, as Patrick Diamond states: "Corbyn rejects the moderate and pragmatic traditions of post-war leadership espoused in very different ways" (Diamond 2016:16).

Figure 6: Labour at the polls after the General Election 2015

Source: <http://ukpollingreport.co.uk/voting-intention-2> [15.05.2017].

The Labour Party on its Way to a Leftist Populist Party?

Singular features of the Labour Party's changes and especially the appearance of Momentum are all signs that show the gradual move towards a leftist populist party. The first evidence of this was Jeremy Corbyn's visit to Pablo Iglesias, the leader of the oppositional party Podemos in Spain, generally ranked as a leftist populist party (cf. Kioupiolis 2016), shortly after Corbyn took office. Corbyn chose not to meet his counterpart of the social democratic PSOE but rather to meet Iglesias in order to underline similarities. Is the time-honoured Labour Party also using leftist populist facets? In order to determine this and to respectively prove such a characterisation, the central features of left-wing populism need to be analysed to see in how far they correspond with the Labour Party. To this end, I will now analyse central statements from the Momentum movement and from Corbyn himself in more detail. Corbyn's central speeches at the party conventions in 2015 in Brighton and in 2016 in Liverpool have been thoroughly and qualitatively analysed (Corbyn 2015 and 2016), just as other speeches which have been included in the analysis (cf. Corbyn 2016a and 2016c). The selection of central quotations shall serve to clarify the positions of Corbyn and his movement and to

determine his position within it. This classification has to be done in a rather cursory manner due to lack of space and will be presented in more detail in the future.

The Juxtaposition of 'Ordinary People' against the Corrupt Elite

Populism in general can be characterized by its anti-establishment attitude. All populist parties and movements are unified by their opposition to the establishment, especially the political elites. Vis-à-vis the elites the common people are seen as an entity whose will, according to the view of the populists, is not represented or enforced by the elites. In a paper written by leading Momentum activists which presents a kind of positioning manifesto, it is said: "There is an increasing sense [...] that the entire establishment is corrupt, immoral or even criminal, and unaccountable" (Klug et al 2016: 38).

The opinion that the representatively elected political elites primarily take care of themselves is therefore accompanied by a kind of scepticism towards representative forms of democracy in the populists' case. They rather prefer the direct relation to the basis, which is clearly pointed out by demanding more direct democracy. The last point can also partially be found in statements of the Momentum movement, for example, it is said: "The ability for ordinary people to influence and change the world in their interests" (Klug et al. 2016: 36) would have to be accentuated again. The Momentum movement wants to establish a participatory democracy, "to maximize people's participation" (Klug et al. 2016: 36). Representative democracy shall be rebuilt in favour of direct participation, plurality, grassroots initiatives on the local level and a culture of non-hierarchical decision-making processes.

Corbyn himself as a professed socialist primarily places this attitude in the context of economic inequality and of 21st century socialism propagated by him: "But if we focus everything on the needs and aspirations of middle and lower income voters, of ordinary families, if we demonstrate we've got a viable alternative to the government's failed economic policies, I'm convinced we can build the electoral support that can beat the Tories" (Corbyn 2016b). With this, Corbyn in fact rejects far-reaching anti-establishment opportunities; however, he disclaims the party's former establishment again and again within the party and has never fully given up his confrontational course at any time. Corbyn himself profited from his supporters' anti-establishment attitudes in his election as party leader, just as Patrick Diamond as well as Dorey and Denham point out: "Corbyn was not part of the 'Westminster bubble' which was itself contributing significantly to the public's increasing loss of faith and trust in established political elites". Patrick Diamond uses similar words: "It was precisely Corbyn's lack of conventional qualifications, his status as the heroic 'anti-candidate' that enabled him to win" (Diamond 2016: 16). His authenticity and his distance to tactical attitudes of the political class are seen by his

supporters as yet another advantage of Corbyn. Corbyn's rather hesitant support of the "Remain" campaign in the context of the referendum on Great Britain's exit from the European Union (EU) and his agreement with Prime Minister Theresa May's "Brexit bill" also have to be viewed in this context. Momentum and Corbyn are tactically acting since they cannot oppose the will of the majority of the population that was expressed by the referendum if they credibly want to advocate participatory democracy which aims to repel representative forms of decision-making. Also, Corbyn wants to win back voters for Labour that have been lost to UKIP, since not only few "still existent working-class voters who had been adversely affected by the economic globalization that Third Way politics promoted sought refuge in the xenophobic but reassuring policies of the populist right" (Goes 2016: 185).

Observers claim that the Labour Party in the House of Commons was becoming more and more similar to the right-wing populist UK Independence Party (UKIP). The argument of former UKIP leader Nigel Farage that the EU stands for uncontrollable mass immigration is no longer challenged in general by the Labour leadership. Using the strictest parliamentary party discipline, Corbyn pledged to pass the Brexit bill without any additional conditions. The fact that despite this still more than one fifth of Labour's MPs voted against the bill and opposed their party leader shows how broken the party is and how contested their leader was before the 2017 election. Corbyn pointed to the fact that although Labour voters predominantly voted to stay in the EU, in two thirds of Labour's constituencies, votes for Brexit predominated. Many pro-European members of parliament represent Europe-hostile constituencies. For them the question of interpreting their mandate arises: Should they represent the opinion of the constituency's majority or should they rather be committed to their own conscience and attitude? Or should they represent the Labour voters only?

*The Defence of the Social Rights of the People against the
Economic Rapaciousness of the Elite*

Corbyn indirectly addresses this aspect by characterising the Conservative party as representatives of the elite: "Who seriously believe(s) that the Tories could ever stand up to the privileged few, funded by the privileged few, for the benefit of the privileged few [...]. They've cut taxes for the privileged few, sold off our national assets to them, always on the cheap and turned a blind eye to their chronic tax avoidance" (Corbyn 2016b: 4). From Corbyn's point of view, this leads to competition between the party of the elites and a party that represents the whole population: "We know how great this country could be, for all its people, with a new political and economic settlement" (Corbyn 2016b: 13). The leader of the Labour Party views Labour as being the latter, and he therefore places emphasis on more social justice, primarily through manifold national investment

programs in almost all areas. The measures of counter financing this major national excess expenditure are not mentioned by Corbyn. Furthermore, however, Corbyn sees Labour as an attorney for disadvantaged persons; he constructs an antagonism between a privileged minority and the socially deprived majority of the British population which could only be broken by a completely different, essentially new policy. Correspondingly, his analysis of existing modern societies is as follows: "Some people have property and power, class and capital, status and clout which are denied to the many" (Corbyn 2015: 19). Numerous investments in all areas of policy should abolish the inequalities and should finally lead to putting public institutions in the service of the common good. Not only would the political system have to be essentially changed, but also the economic structure of Great Britain would have to be newly arranged according to Corbyn's perspective, since the existing structures "work for the few, not for the many" (Corbyn 2015: 6). This is followed by the third aspect of left-wing populism.

*Egalitarianism and Overcoming Economic Inequity as Mission Statements:
A Predominant Focus on Socio-economic Issues*

"Let me be clear under my leadership, and we discussed this yesterday in conference, Labour will be challenging austerity [...]. The Tories' austerity is the out-dated and failed approach of the past" (Corbyn 2015: 4-7) – in his first speech as party leader, Corbyn repeatedly underlined his criticism of the Conservative government's course of saving money at a party convention. "Anti-austerity" is a major sign of left-wing populist parties, since they interpret a restrictive budgetary policy as the state retreating from its promise of social security. At the same time, however, they hardly present any alternatives for correcting the strongly increased, partially excessive state indebtedness of the last years in many European countries. Corbyn's statement hit the nerve of his supporters within the Labour Party that argued against the British government's austerity policy with an overwhelming majority (cf. Quinn 2016: 772); the unity of Corbyn and Momentum was completed, as the following quote from Momentum's position paper makes very clear: "This combination of a clear anti-austerity position and mass membership provides Labour with the opportunity to govern not only more efficiently and equitably than the Conservatives but also to transform the system fundamentally" (Klug et al. 2016: 39).

What could be meant by the Momentum activists' transformation of the system Corbyn concretises as follows:

It's not about me of course, or unique to Britain but across Europe, North America and elsewhere, people are fed up with a so-called free market system, that has produced grotesque inequality, stagnating living standards for the many, calamitous foreign wars without end, and a political stitch-up which leaves the vast majority of people shut out of

power since the crash of 2008, the demand for an alternative and an end to counter-productive austerity has led to the rise of new movements and parties in one country after another. (Corbyn 2016b).

Corbyn apparently seems to classify himself and the Labour Party as being equal to those new parties and movements which show critical or even sceptical attitudes towards the more recent developments in economically characterized political decisions. From Corbyn's point of view austerity measures are directed against the interests of the majority of the population and do not appear to be opportune. A criticism of the elite is accompanied by that, as well as the idea of the previous policy being economically and socially unjust to a great extent: "Rampant inequality has become the great scandal of our time" (Corbyn 2016b: 12).

Conclusion and Outlook

Jeremy Corbyn as new Labour leader was able to build on Ed Miliband's time as party leader: The introduction of a new voting procedure in the election of the party leader, as well as losing the elections in 2015 and the party's moderate turn towards the left during Miliband's term of office offered favourable conditions for Corbyn to play a leading role within the Labour Party. However, only the support of Corbyn by the Momentum movement made his candidacy a successful one.

Together, Corbyn and the Momentum movement want to extend and deepen these processes which are their central goals: inner party democratisation in favour of Momentum's strong power, complete abolishment of economic and social inequalities, an investment policy in almost all public institutions and a strengthening of the municipalities by civic participation, i.e. a "localization" of politics. A major expansion of the public sector of the British economy to the point of nationalisation and major state investments are at the centre of Corbyn's future designs.

During the time of New Labour, electability and with this the perspective of winning the election for the House of Commons were in the foreground; however, Corbyn and Momentum do not primarily want to win elections; this is only the first step to transform the Labour Party, the country's discourse and British society as a whole. For this neither Corbyn nor Momentum shy away from including single populist elements in their behaviour or argumentation; they see themselves as part of an extensive leftist and democratic movement.

They completely break with the policy of New Labour which has led to major arguments within the party as well as to Corbyn's very reluctant support of the "Remainers" in the campaign on the exit of Great Britain from the EU and his in part radical policy ideas ("socialism of the 21st century"), mainly between the parliamentary group of the House of Commons on the one hand and the Momentum movement on the other. Furthermore, many of the Labour Party's members of parliament in the

House of Commons had to be worried about their political future: "Representatives of the Momentum organization are urging mandatory reselection as they did in the early 1980s, while reasserting control over party conference; constituency boundary changes under current party rules make it possible to apply further pressure to sitting Labour MPs" (Diamond 2016b: 22). Political differences between Momentum and the parliamentary party in the House of Commons on the recruitment of future members of parliament will be a characteristic of future inner-party life. Jeremy Corbyn places himself – at least partially – at the service of Momentum, and in return the movement has been uncompromisingly at Corbyn's side. As a result, an unusual process has been activated in one of the most established parties of the world. Not only did Corbyn succeed in doing what Miliband did not succeed in, as "Miliband tried to turn the party into a movement that was open to other progressive forces and grassroots movements" (Goes 2016: 188), but in addition, these movements have left the party with an uncertain ending. "The new leader's ambition to create a 'rejuvenated, democratic mass social movement again' will only be realized if the fluidity and temporality of weaker partisans can be accommodated within existing structures, balancing the movement against traditions of collective representation; fluidity against long-term commitment" (Garland 2016: 30). Momentum appears to be determined to win the arguments with the parliamentary group of the party and, thus, to get the chance to control the party. Within the party, Corbyn's position is secure as long as he has the groups of supporters backing him.

Postscript

The polls predicted a disastrous result for the Labour Party, but it came quite differently. Why was the Labour Party relatively successful at the general election in 2017? It is not that the opposition won the election, but, first and foremost, the May Government lost it: British Prime Minister Theresa May and her advisors made lots of strategical and tactical mistakes (cf. Bale/Webb 2017). The most evident one was the fact that Theresa May with her changed attitude did not unite a divided county with regard to Britain's exit ("Brexit") from the European Union. On the contrary, during the election campaign she opted for a so called "hard Brexit", meaning that she affronted the "Remainers" and pushed them into the hands of Labour, even if Labour had no clear anti-position to May's attitude. So it was no wonder that Labour won many votes from the "remain camp": "Places where the Tories underperformed were places that were likely to have supported remaining in the EU" (Heath/Godwin 2017: 355), as an election analysis has shown. Another problem for the Conservatives was the image of its top candidate: "The perception of the prime minister as cold and heartless control freak" (Wahl-Jorgensen 2017) became more and more a liability. Added to this was the fact that May lost credibility because of her changing stance concerning her Brexit-Policy –

from a soft “Remainer” to a hard “Exiteer” within days. Many voters did not seem convinced of this twist.

An advantage for Labour was surely Momentum’s network. In 2017, Labour was very successful in gaining (back) voters from the Liberal Democrats and the Greens. Many young voters, in particular in university towns and in the big cities, opted in favour of Labour (62 per cent aged 18 to 24, 56 per cent aged 25 to 34) for several reasons. Among others there are the Brexit-Vote, a fresh campaign with innovative use of digital and social media, Corbyn’s supposed authenticity, antipathy against authoritarian values and the attractiveness of Momentum’s promises against austerity and in favour of an egalitarian economy, and, specifically, the promise to end the system of tuition fees (cf. Jennings/Stoker 2017). But Labour was successful not only among young voters, it succeeded in reaching left voters as well with its popular or populist tax and spending pledges. These voters felt uncomfortable with falling real wages, social and economic inequalities and reduced job security. Labour’s two main voter groups are the younger and more educated people in cosmopolitan areas on the one hand and the “new working class, the precariat and emergent service classes” (Jennings/Stoker 2017: 367) on the other.

The success at the last election silenced Corbyn’s opponents. In the parliamentary party, there are quite a number of people within the party who are wary about linking Labour’s success at the election 2017 with “Corbynism” (Harrop 2017: 395). These members do not support the current party leader and his policy programme with enthusiasm. Deeper and detailed inner-party analyses in the near future will show how successful Momentum will be in taking over the party in the end. The election of 2017 came too early for substantial party change, but Momentum hopes to establish a new generation of leaders within the party (Afridi 2017). It will be interesting to see whether the party will change to a left social democratic, a left populist or another kind of social democratic party. In any case, the transformation of the Labour Party will continue.

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