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The Pluralisation of British Party Politics:

Is There a Split in the UK Party System?

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Doctoral Dissertation

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Szüleimnek…

To my Parents…

1 INTRODUCTION

In recent times, there have been an increasing number of unusual political developments in the United Kingdom. They started with the 2010 hung parliament, when the winner Conservative Party was obliged to involve the third, minor party, Liberal Democrats, into a coalition government, continued with the 2011 Alternative Vote referendum, which was the second UK-wide referendum in history aimed to reform the current first-past-the post electoral system, then the surprising UKIP victory during the 2014 European Parliament elections, which was the first time that none of the two major parties secured a victory at nationwide elections. These were followed by the 2014 Scottish independence referendum, which endangered the UK political union, then the 2016 Brexit referendum, which provided the unprecedented outcome in the European Union that a full member state decided to leave the integration and, recently, the 2017 snap election, which was an unexpected step from the Prime Minister to confirm her legitimacy in the House of Commons.

These events don't fit into the paradigm of Westminster democracy. Lijphart (1984, 2012) set up his criteria for two different types of democracies; the Westminster and the consensual democracies. Based on his criteria, he argued that the UK political system has a lot in common with his ideal Westminster type democracy. However, the UK political system has lost some of these criteria. (E.g. single governments with an absolute parliamentary majority, the exclusivity of majority (first-past-the-post) electoral system, the absence of referendum which would undermine parliamentary democracy, a balanced two-party system where two major parties regularly alternate and the predictable nature of political mandates where single governments always serve their full terms.) So what we can see is a growing number of *exceptions* or *deviations* from the Westminster model. Therefore, the question rises easily; is the UK still a good example for Westminster democracy? Can we still call it a Westminster democracy if so many irregularities occur?

This dissertation tries to understand and explain this contradiction. I argue that it comes from a dual phenomenon; on the one hand, the Westminster parliamentary arena, which is the manifestation of the Westminster democracy, keeps conserving the

past by providing *continuity* with the earlier decades of the 20th century (mainly the ones after the Second World War). On the other hand, however, there is a *dynamically changing* UK electoral arena which leads to the erosion of traditional major parties and to the popularity of 'other' (third) parties. Hence a certain kind of pluralisation has been going on in the UK party competition for a while. I think that the dual phenomena of a stable parliamentary arena and an unstable electoral arena are responsible for much of the current anomalies in British politics. I call them anomalies because (1) they cannot be explained from the traditional Lijpharitan point of view and (2) they highlight systematic problems which recur time to time. The growing number of such anomalies, however, does follow certain logic and regularity, which comes from the disconnect of Westminster parliamentary arena and UK electoral arena. So in this dissertation, I want to observe the trends behind these anomalies and look for *regularities* behind these superficial *irregularities*. In other words, I want to put the non-systemic anomalies back to a systemic level in order to conceive them again as regularities and not as irregularities (or exceptions.)

The title *Is There a Split in the UK Party System?* refers to this problem. I observe the evolution of British politics in both the parliamentary and electoral arenas. By comparing the two phenomena, I want to evaluate which side of the controversy is stronger? Is it the tradition of Westminster democracy which shapes British politics more or the pluralisation of UK party competition? Hence at the end of this thesis, I want to make a summary about the current situation of the UK party system.

In order to do so, the overall dissertation will have the following structure;

- Determining the key *concepts* and their *operationalisations*
- The *categorisation* of the evolution of British party politics
- The observation of *4 critical junctures:*
    - 1945
    - 1974
    - 1997
    - 2010/15
- *Comparing* the impacts of the 4 critical junctures on the evolution of British party politics
- Testing three *hypotheses*

    - H_1 – *pluralisation* assumption
    - H_2 – *polarisation* assumption
    - H_3 – *threshold* assumption
- *Conclusion* and *possible prediction* based on the three hypotheses and the whole thesis.

This structure first sets the theoretical framework by defining the key concept of *party system, party system change* and the *different arenas of UK party system.* Then I also operationalise these concepts with measurable indicators (both qualitatively and quantitatively.) These operationalisations will be important during the whole dissertation; however, they receive particular attention later at the hypothesis verification. If I have solid conceptual and operational background, I can make stronger statements, as well. Hence operationalisation first helps confirming or rejecting the past and then it can serve as a prediction for the future, too.

The most important part of the dissertation is the observation of four critical junctures in British politics. For this, I overview and compare those scientific works which identify different periods (or intervals) in the evolution of British party politics. Then I establish my own categorisation. The major difference between those authors' and my approach is using critical junctures. In fact, all the previous literature about the evolution of British party politics focused on the *intervals* of different periods. In other words, they distinguished different periods according to different patterns of party interactions during the intervals. However, my logic is somewhat the opposite; I prefer looking for the starting point of each interval that I call critical juncture. Besides accepting the previous authors' idea about the continuity of intra-party patterns during a period, I want to understand *why* such change happened and one period was replaced by another. This is quite an explanatory approach which both relies on and surpasses the already existing works. In this dissertation each critical juncture has exactly the same approach:

- Explaining the *importance* of the critical juncture.
- Supporting the importance with quantitative *data*.
- Evaluating the *causes* of the critical juncture.
- Observing the *aftermath* of the critical juncture.
- *Comparing* the given critical juncture with another one.

- Drawing a *bottom line* (or conclusion) about the critical juncture.

The explanation of the anomalies then is followed by three hypotheses which test the same phenomenon from different perspectives. H_1 states the adaptational pressure is a long trend of British politics. H_2 supposes that the long trend of pluralisation can be temporarily reversed by short-term setbacks. Finally, H_3 tries to understand the lack of electoral system change in the UK despite pluralisation. The three hypotheses hence give help to answer the original research question which evaluates the split in the UK party system.

The novelty of this research is particularly relevant in Hungary. This topic of British politics has not been observed by Hungarian researchers in such depth until now. Hungarian scholars mainly wrote about (1) British history, (2) British-Hungarian relations (3) British political thinking and institutions and (4) British politics in general. In the following, I give an illustrative (and non-exclusive) list about the most important Hungarian works dealing with Britain.

1. *British history:* Egedy (1998), Egedy (2002), Egedy (2011), Frank-Magyarics (1994), Gálik (2015), Gálik and Egedy (2017), Havas (2009), Magyarics (2005) Rapcsák (2005).
2. *British-Hungarian relations:* Arday (2005), Egedy (2008), Egedy (2015a), Magyarics (2002).
3. *British political thinking and institutions:* Egedy (2005), Egedy (2010b), Egedy (2014), Ilonszki (1993), Ilonszki (1998), Nagy (2002), Nagy (2013), Rapcsák (1994).
4. *British politics:* Egedy (2006), Egedy (2010a), Egedy (2015b), Gálik (2011), Magyarics (2008), Magyarics (2014), Rapcsák (1998).

I know that there are many more Hungarian works dealing with Britain than the list above would suggest. I am sorry if I missed someone unintentionally. There are also plenty of cases when one author published plenty of works which I could not fully list. For instance, Gergely Egedy just alone published more than 200 works (papers and books) about Britain. It certainly makes him the best British expert in Hungary. I think, however, that this illustrative list is enough to prove that Hungarian authors have not published major works about the British party system change until now. So my dissertation would be new for the Hungarian audience. There is just one

publication which comes very close to my topic. Nagy (2015b) wrote a brilliant book in Hungarian about the problems of electoral disproportionality. Although his work is mainly theoretical, there is one chapter which uses the British case study to observe electoral disproportionality (Nagy, 2015b: 131-137). The methodology of this chapter is very similar to mine. Obviously, this dissertation goes much more into details when it comes to British politics. However, I am very happy that I have found another Hungarian researcher who believes in linking historical facts with statistical data.

So I think that my dissertation is novelty in Hungary.

Otherwise, this work might have further novelty in the international academic community, as well. Obviously, British researchers have a longer record in analyzing British politics than their Hungarian counterparts. So it is beyond my means to delve into such details as my British counterparts. Nevertheless, this dissertation has some novelty for the British as well. For instance, the British scholars usually focused on time intervals when it came to the evolution of British politics. By contrast, I focused on the beginning points (critical junctures) of such long intervals. This is a new approach which I have not seen before in the works of British scholars. Second, I looked for a scientific problem which can be relevant for many. The recent changes in British politics should be explained by some method. This dissertation offers one even though it is certainly not the only way to understand changes. However, the mere fact that this dissertation tries to be relevant and useful is certainly the merit of it. Third, I combined two scientific disciplines with each other: political science and political history. I used empirical data and statistical variables to measure changes in British politics. This method belongs to the realm of political science. However, I also used historical facts to understand the background of such statistical changes. I explained the critical junctures (one-off ruptures in UK electoral data) with qualitative historical facts. This method belongs to the realm of history rather than political science. I think this mixture is quite straightforward. I always thought that there should be more synergy between political science and history. The lack of synergy is, by the way, not just a Hungarian case. In Britain, I think political science and history are also largely detached from each other. I hope that this dissertation can help building bridges between these two academic areas. Although this work is certainly not perfect, however, the good intention to reconcile the two rivalling disciplines might be

valuable. I hope everybody reading it can better understand or even enjoy British politics. On my part, I did so. I wish that others could also benefit from this work.

2 METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 THE CONCEPT OF PARTY SYSTEM

2.1.1 Definition

In the literature of political science, I argue, there is a somewhat general consensus about the definition of party system. (Please note that other scholars like Enyedi and Casal Bértoa (2011: 117) might have a different idea. However, they also suggest that there is a kind of 'convergence' in the conceptualisation.) Most of the scholars agree that Giovanni Sartori's (1976) party system definition is a quite appropriate and straightforward concept. He famously defined party system as the *pattern of interactions among parties*. Sartori (2005: 39) says that

> *'party system is precisely the system of interactions resulting from inter-party competition.'*

This concept consists of two major things; on the one hand, a party system is more than just a set of parties because it has some additional (systemic) characteristics. On the other hand, a party system is a dependent variable (a result) of inter-party competition. The enduring patterns of party competition create the party system. These two elements can be found in other definitions as well. For instance,

> Duverger (1954: 203): *'the forms and modes of (...) coexistence [of parties].'*
>
> Mainwaring and Scully (1995: 4): *'as the set of patterned interactions in the competition among parties.'*
>
> Wolinetz (2006: 52): *'a party system consists of regular and recurring interactions among its component parties.'*

Due to the wide theoretical consensus over Sartori's (2005) definition, on the one hand, and the practical relevance for my research, on the other hand, I want to use his definition during my whole dissertation. So the definition will be:

the system of interactions resulting from inter-party competition. (Sartori (2005:39))

This definition is very simple; however, it has some further consequences. I classify these consequences into three baskets: *typological*, *temporal* and *spatial consequences*. The *typological consequence* focuses on the similarities and differences in the patterns of party competition in a comparative way. Hence, certain party systems will likely belong to a similar category while others fall into different ones. The *temporal consequence* focuses on the durability of these patterns. Hence, one could separate different stages in the evolution of the patterns of interaction in a given polity. Finally, the *spatial consequence* focuses on the different (often parallel) arenas in a party system. Thus the patterns of interaction can be observed in a multi-level polity. So the *typological*, the *temporal* and *spatial consequences* all help us to understand the various aspects of the patterns of party competition which take place in a party system. In the following, I deal with all these three consequences in more detail.

2.1.2 Typological consequence

The early typologies of party systems usually depended on the *number of parties.* For instance, Duverger (1954) identified *two-party systems* and *multi-party systems* according to the number of parties in the legislature. Later, Dahl (1966) and Rokkan (1970) still remained at counting the number of parties. However, they also added the importance of the g*overnment* vs. *opposition* distinction. Blondel (1968) made significant progress when he explicitly started to use the *relative weight* of parties. He used the *electoral vote share* of every party in a system. Hence he could distinguish four categories of party systems: (1) the two-party system, (2) the two-and-a-half party system, (3) the multiparty system with a predominant party and (4) the multiparty system without a predominant party.

The typologies arrived to a next level with Sartori's (1976) seminal work. Not only did not he use the *number of parties* and their *relative weight*; but also added their *ideological positions*. Hence he differentiated the following categories of party systems; 1) predominant party system, (2) two-party system, (3) moderate pluralism and (4) polarized pluralism. (Later a fifth additional category was also added: the (5) atomized party system; (see Wolinetz, 2006:5.) These categories also detached from

the mere *quantitative* approach (i.e. counting parties and their relative weight) and introduced some *qualitative* concerns (i.e. what is the ideological position and distance of a given party). If I said that Sartori's (1976) definition of party system enjoys a broad consensus among political scholars, it is also true for this typology, as well.

After Sartori (1976), there have been two other important contributions to the typologies of party systems. Mainwaring and Scully (1995) emphasised the *institutionalisation* of party systems. They said that the strength of the patterns of inter-party competition can be strong or weak. It suggests that certain party systems are more institutionalised and stable while others are less institutionalised and unstable. Mair (1996) used the party competition for the *government* as the cornerstone of his new party system typology. He used three variables (*alternation, innovation* and *accessibility)* to distinguish between party systems. It resulted in a binary outcome: a party system can be either *closed* or *open.* Until today Mair's (1996) contribution was the last major one in the typologies of party systems. Although Siaroff (2000) and Enyedi and Casal Bértoa (2011) also provided interesting insight into party systems, they mostly rely on Sartori's (1976) and Mair's (1996) previous ideas.

Table 1 The evolution of party system typologies

Scope of typology	Author
1. Number of parties	Duverger, (1954)
2. Government vs. Opposition	Dahl (1966), Rokkan (1970)
3. Relative weight of parties	Blondel, (1968)
4. Ideological distance	Sartori (1976)
5. Degree of institutionalization	Mainwaring and Scully (1995)
6. Open or closed	Mair (1996)

2.1.3 **Temporal aspect**

Party system must consist of certain *enduring* patterns of party interactions. The *enduring* patterns come from the idea of 'system.' A system can only exist if there is certain stability or predictability in the chains of events. In party politics it would mean that certain regularities occur in the inter-party competition. If there is no such regularity over time, it is difficult to talk about a 'system.' So a party system *by definition* has an enduring time framework which also suggests another thing: a party

system is necessarily rigid and inflexible during a certain period of time. However, it is far less evident how long such time interval should take. Here, in this thesis, for practical reasons, I follow Smith's (1989) recommendation, who suggests at least three consecutive general elections (or minimum twelve years) before talking about *enduring* patterns in a party system. I think this approach is very reasonable because it can help us avoid the overestimation of one-off irregularities. However, if such irregularities consecutively re-occur over time, we can start thinking of the birth of a 'new system.' This question leads us to the next issue: *party system change*.

Mair (1997: 51-52) particularly observes party system change in detail. He says that party system change can only happen if we use typologies. If we don't, it is rather difficult to estimate what party system change really means. Thus, he states that,

> *'Party system change occurs when a party system is transformed from one class or type of party system into another.*

He also adds that this change must be substantial; otherwise, we can't say that the patterns of party competition have fundamentally changed. Therefore he argues that

> *[if] the change involves simply the realignment of the social bases of party support, or the emergence of a new set of issue concerns, while leaving the pattern of competition essentially untouched, this might not be considered of major significance—at least in terms of the party system.'*

In another work, Mair (2006: 64) suggests that party system change can be only understood from a qualitative rather than a quantitative perspective. In the chapter entitled *Against Numbers*, he argues that party system change can only be effectively observed if political scientists use discrete categories (a typology) rather than quantitative numbers (indices.)

Other scholars also underline the importance of *durability* in their concept of party system change. Pennings and Lane (1998:5), for instance, say that *'party system change may be defined as an enduring change in the inter-party relationships that both results from and affects the competition and cooperation between political parties.'* Mershon and Shvetsowa (2013: 3) also call attention to the *direction* of such party system change. They say that a *bottom up* party system change happens if *'people provoke shifts among those who rule'*, while a *top down* one occurs if *'the rulers redefine options for the people whose consent they seek.'* Nevertheless, both

Pennings and Lane (1998) and Mershon and Shvetsowa (2013: 3) accept Mair's (1997) original idea that party system change must necessitate a fundamental change in the patterns of party interaction. Subtle or temporary changes aren't enough to state that a party system change has happened.

These ideas are important for my findings in this thesis as well. When we talk about *enduring patterns* it also means for me that the whole concept of party system is rather *rigid* or *inflexible*. The party system conserves the status quo (or the past) to a certain extent. It means that subtle changes in the patterns of party competition are not reflected immediately in the party system. These changes must be fundamental. So a certain level of unresponsiveness between the party system and the current patterns of party competition is almost natural. This unresponsiveness when the party system does not reflect changes to the party competition can be called *resilience*.

Later in this thesis, I will argue that the problems of *party system change*, *resilience* and *unresponsiveness* can be observed by comparing two different *arenas* of UK party competition. The *parliamentary arena* reflects the enduring patterns of UK party competition while the *electoral arena* reflects the current changes in the inter-party competition. Therefore, I argue that the *parliamentary arena* might conserve the status quo (or the past), however, it must follow the changing patterns in the *electoral arena* as well. So the *temporal* approach of party system change must be linked to the *spatial* approach as well. Party system change truly happens in time, however, at different spatial levels as well. It will be particularly important for Britain where I argue that a party system change has already happened at the *electoral arena*, however, it has not indeed at the *parliamentary arena*.

2.1.4 **Spatial consequence**

The definition of party system has a *spatial consequence* as well. Party system is likely everywhere where political parties interact with each other. These places of interactions can be called *arenas*. Smith (1989: 165) identifies three different *arenas* in a 'split' party system: the *electoral*, the *parliamentary* and the *coalitional* (or governmental) *arenas*. It means for him that party competition happens in parallel in three different places; in the *electoral arena* for votes, in the *parliamentary arena* for *seats* and in the *governmental arena* for the executive power. Later, Mair (1996) further emphasizes the importance of the *governmental arena* when he differentiates

closed and open competition for government. Finally, Bardi and Mair (2008: 156-159) give a detailed classification of the different *arenas* in a polity. They distinguish party system arenas in three different ways: *vertically*, *horizontally* and *functionally*. The *vertical division* can happen in a pillarized society where the traditional left-right ideological cleavage is cross-cut by another cleavage (usually linguistic, religious or ethnic). For instance, in Belgium the Flemish-Walloon cleavage or in Northern Ireland the Catholic-Protestant cleavage overwrites the traditional left-right programmatic cleavage. Therefore, the party competition happens in two arenas: in a *sectarian arena* along the ethno-linguistic or religious cleavage and in a *national arena* along the left-right programmatic cleavage. The *horizontal division* is characterised by different arenas at the regional levels. For instance the Basque province of Spain or the Canadian province of Quebec reproduces the national arenas in the regional context with some subtle differences. It means that the party system is dominated by the national (state-wide) arena whereas local (regional) arenas appear as the second tier of national party competition. Finally, the *functional division* creates the categories of *electoral* and *parliamentary arenas.* The functional distinction classifies parties according to their behaviour. Whilst the *electoral arena* is a competition for vote-maximalisation, the *parliamentary arena* is for power-maximalisation. So they partially return to Smith's (1989) original concept. Bardi and Mair (2008: 159), however, subsume the *governmental arena* to the *parliamentary one.* They think that in most countries the patterns of party interaction can be best analyzed by comparing the parliamentary and electoral arenas. I also agree with their argument.

Based on these previous works and on my previous research, I think the following arenas can be identified in the UK multi-level polity:

- The *parliamentary arena* hosts the party competition in the legislation. In the UK, the main legislative body is in the Palace of Westminster. Although there are other regional legislative bodies as well (i.e. devolved assemblies), their legislative power is less important. They are also rather derivative, which means that they can be retreated to Westminster at any moment. So the Westminster legislation enjoys a certain supremacy over the devolved legislations without doubt. We can hence limit the *parliamentary arena* to Westminster.

Nevertheless, the Palace of Westminster has further two chambers; the Lower House (the House of Commons) and the Upper House (the House of Lords.) Given the fact that the House of Commons has a supremacy over the House of Lords (see Rogers and Walters, 2015), I argue that the *parliamentary arena* can be further limited to the House of Commons. Therefore, the *parliamentary arena* in this dissertation will be the House of Commons.

- The *electoral arena* is the place of party competition for votes. In a multi-level polity like the UK, such *electoral arena* can be perceived in various ways. For instance, party competition for votes happens at the national, devolved, local and EP levels. However, like in many other countries in the world, the national level belongs to first-order elections whilst other levels belong to second-order elections. (See Reif and Schmitt (1980), Marien et al. (2015) and Marsh (1998)) This implies that the most important level of the *electoral arena* is the national one. Therefore, the *electoral arena* at the national level is directly linked to the *parliamentary arena* (the House of Commons) during general elections. It means that the most important level of the electoral arena is attached to the most important segments of legislative power.
- The *governmental arena* is the place of party competition for the executive power. In the UK this arena is rather closed (Mair, 2009). There are usually two parties (the Conservatives and Labour) which can form a government. Hence, a*lternation* is usually wholesale, *familiarity* of the governing parties is very high (either the Conservatives or Labour), and the *access to government* (third parties' access) is very low. (See Mair (1996) and Mair (2009).) Hence I think that the *governmental arena* does not reflect quite well the general patterns of UK party competition. It is much more biased than the *parliamentary* or the *electoral arenas*. For this very peculiar British case, I will use Bardi and Mair's (2008: 159) technique to subsume the *governmental arena* to the *parliamentary arena*. So I can make assumptions about the *governmental arena* through the *parliamentary arena*.
- The *devolved arenas* are the places of party competition in devolved assemblies. These arenas can be found in Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and London. The *devolved arenas* use mixed electoral systems whereas the *parliamentary arena* uses the first-past-the-post electoral system. A significant

difference in both territory and the electoral system can give sufficient grounds for the emergence of new (regional) issues and new (nationalist) parties. The *devolved arenas* have also shown that they can influence other *arenas* (e.g. the parliamentary) as well. So there is a spill-over effect from the devolved arenas to other arenas. However, devolved elections still remain less important elections than the parliamentary elections.

- *The local and mayoral arenas* are the places of party competition for local council and mayoral positions. These arenas are very difficult to grasp because they are fragmented both vertically and horizontally. The vertical fragmentation means that lots of hierarchical levels exist in the same local arena (i.e. unitary authorities, non-metropolitan counties, county councils, municipal boroughs, parishes etc.). The horizontal fragmentation means that two authorities at the same level do not necessarily have the same rights (e.g. the cities of Manchester and Newcastle). In addition, only a handful of communities elect their mayors directly. The rest of them elect the mayors indirectly through the councils. Therefore, the local and mayoral arena is very difficult to grasp. Independent candidates play an important role in this party competition, as well. And this arena belongs to the second order elections, too. In sum, the mayoral and local arena is very different from any other arenas. Hence it is also difficult to match with the general patterns of UK party competition.
- The *European Parliamentary arena* is the place of party competition at the European level. The UK had EP elections since 1979. From 1979 to 1994, the electoral system was first-past-the-post, and from 1999, it became proportional (PR). Hence the EP arena, similarly to the devolved arenas, supported new issues (euroscepticism) and new parties (e.g. UKIP) in the British party competition. There is, however, a significant difference. The EP arena is the only nation-wide parliamentary contest besides the general elections. Of course, the EP arena is a clear example for second-order elections; however, it still remained an important challenge for national party competition. Hence the general elections and the EP elections could have always been easily compared with each other. The EP arena also had a spillover effect on both the electoral arena and the referendum arena.

- Finally, the r*eferendum arena* is the place of party competition around a referendum question. The referendum arena had not existed till the 1970s, when referenda gradually became part of the British party competition. The devolution process in the 1990s gave a further boost for this arena. However, the referendum arena is very odd; it is limited to one question at one given moment. Political parties might take positions in it or leave it free to voters to decide. The 2016 Brexit referendum has shown that a referendum can significantly influence the patterns of party competition in other arenas as well (parliamentary or electoral). Hence the referendum arena has become a very dynamic place of British party competition recently. (Please see more about Brexit and its consequences in Koller et al. (2016))

From the above listed arenas, I want to pinpoint two major arenas: the *parliamentary* and the *electoral arenas*. I think these two arenas have particular importance for British politics because they are at the *national level* and they have *first-order importance*. The other arenas at the national level are the *governmental*, the *EP* and (sometimes) the *referendum arena*. The *governmental arena* can be truly seen as a national and first-order arena, however, it should be subsumed to the parliamentary arena because it is rather biased in Britain. The *EP arena* is a national arena, however, it falls much behind the importance of the other national arenas having only second-order importance. The *referendum arena* can sometimes be part of national politics and the question at stake can be first-order importance as well, however, it is rather exceptional and irregular to measure the patterns of party interactions. Therefore, based on my previous remarks and on Bardi and Mair's (2008: 159) recommendation, I will mainly use the *parliamentary* and *electoral arenas* to observe the British party system at different levels. It does not mean, however, that I will not rely on any other arenas during this research. It just means that the findings about other arenas will be *complementary* to the findings about the parliamentary and electoral arenas. In this way, I also hope that I can limit the scope of my observation and carry out better research. The same approach was accepted by two leading British scholars in their work. (See Webb (2000) and Mitchell (2005).)

2.1 OPERATIONALISATION

The operationalisation of a party system usually means that scholars use *variables* to detect the mechanics (or patterns) of inter-party competition. These variables can be the following: *ideological polarisation, electoral volatility* and *fragmentation* (Enyedi and Casal Bértoa, 2011: 118). I will talk about each variable in the following sections.

2.1.1 Polarisation

Polarisation deals with the ideological-programmatic differences between political parties. Every party has its own ideological-programmatic position usually on a left-right scale. Therefore the patterns of party competition can be described by using those party positions. If the ideological-programmatic differences are significant between the parties (and hence there are large distances in the party positions) the party system is polarised. If the very same differences, however, tend to be insignificant (and hence there is just a small distance in the party positions) the party system is not polarised. It is consensual instead. So the patterns of party competition can be operationalised by measuring the ideological-programmatic party positions.

However, the measurement of polarisation lacks a broad scientific consensus. Enyedi and Casal Bértoa (2011:119) say that the *"measurement of polarisation is inevitably (more) controversial, since this field lacks a formula that would be as universally accepted as ENP (the effective number of parties.)"* Obviously, the problem with the measurement of polarisation comes with its rather *qualitative bias*. It is very difficult to determine what a party position is and where it is to be compared with other parties. Thus, one should always keep in mind that polarisation has its limitation in operationalisation. It is less neutral than other operationalisations which I discuss later (i.e. fragmentation and volatility.)

In order to measure the polarisation of UK parties, I will use the data of the Comparative Manifesto Project (Comparative Manifesto Project, 2017).This project observes the electoral manifestos of major parties from all around the world. So the British party manifestos also make part of it. CMP does not merely qualitatively analyse the manifestos but they also try to compare them in a quantitative way. In order to do so, they first identify party positions from various aspects and then they code them in a quantitative way. As a result, CMP assigns a measurable number value

to different parties concerning different issues based on their manifestos. For instance, the index of *'Multiculturalism: Negative'* (which has the identifying code of '*per608'*) evaluates all those statements which encourage assimilation and social homogeneity in a manifesto. The higher the value is, the more often a manifesto refers to multiculturalism in a negative sense. At the same time, the index of *'Traditional morality: Positive'* (or *'per603'*) stands for traditional social values such as family, religion and nation. Its value also increases or decreases based on the references made to it. In the British case, there are 56 such indices which measure party positions on different topics (starting with *'per101'* and ending with *'per706'*.) In addition, CMP also provides some aggregated indices which sum up lots of these individual indices. Such aggregated indices are *'rile', 'planeco', 'markeco', 'welfare'* and *'intpeace.'* All these aggregated indices use different techniques (and selection) to sum up the individual indices for a wider interpretation. For instance, *'welfare'* relates to individual indices which have something to do with the welfare economy. From these aggregated indices, I will use the most political one: *'rile.'* This index gives an overall estimation about political position on a left-right scale. That's why its abbreviation is *'rile'* (right-left.) This index puts party positions on a continuous right-left scale with an exact numerical number. I think this is the best way to operationalise party polarisation in the UK.

There are, however, concerns as well. CMP's electoral manifesto analysis is limited in the British case. Although the time framework starts with 1945 and continues until recently, only three major parties are analyzed (the Conservatives, Labour and the Liberals or later the Lib Dems.) It also means that smaller and more recent parties such as UKIP, SNP, Plaid Cymru or the Greens do not usually constitute part of the analysis. Their manifestos either appear very belatedly (e.g. SNP's first manifesto analysis in 2015) or there are some gaps in the election years (e.g. UKIP manifestos appear twice; in 2001 and in 2015.) Therefore, the CMP data are mostly relevant for the two big parties (the Conservatives and Labour.) Otherwise, the party positions of smaller parties cannot be measured effectively.

Yet, I think, CMP data are very useful. It can give us a nice picture how Conservative – Labour rivalry evolved over time during the last decade. In addition, this picture is quite reliable. There are three reasons why I trust in CMP data when it comes to the Conservative – Labour rivalry. First, CMP covers a very long period in the UK (the

one between 1945 and 2015). Hence, individual electoral years (and manifesto positions) can easily be compared with each other. This can help us to avoid the overestimation of individual one-off irregularities. The previous and following electoral years can serve as counter-variables. Second, the *"rile"* index further helps us avoid false conclusions. Since *'rile'* is an aggregated index, it can counter-balance individual mistakes in individual small indices. For instance, CMP evaluated that in 2015 in the category of *'Multiculturalism: Negative' (per608),* Labour was twice as much negative as the Conservatives (Labour: 0.595 and Conservatives: 0.378). Similarly, in the category of *Traditional morality: Positive' (per603),* the Liberal Democrats were measured more traditional than the radical right UKIP (Liberal Democrats: 0.156 and UKIP: 0.148). These values apparently do not reflect the general idea about these parties. However, *'rile'* can compensate for such mistakes with other (correct) values. Eventually, *'rile'* gives us a pretty reliable and rational idea about UK party positions. Third, "rile" index can be compared with the qualitative findings of historians as well. For instance, the ideas of a post-war consensus or the polarisation years of Margaret Thatcher are justified with *'rile'* values. In most of such cases historical facts overlap with the measured indices of polarisation. So, I will use *'rile'* to measure the Conservative – Labour manifesto polarisation from 1945 to 2015.

2.1.2 **Volatility**

The patterns of party competition can be measured by electoral volatility, too. This measurement deals with both vote share change and party system stability. If electoral volatility is high, it means that a large part of the electorate decided to change their party affiliation. However, if electoral volatility is low, the electorate tend to keep their party affiliation and they would not vote for another party.

This phenomenon will be measured by the Pedersen index (Pedersen, 1979):

$$\mathrm{V} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} \left|\mathrm{P}_{\mathrm{i,t+1}} - \mathrm{P}_{\mathrm{i,t}}\right|}{2}$$

where *n* is the number of parties, *t* is the election year and *P* is the vote share of a given *i* party.

The Pedersen index measures how vote shares changed over time in a very simple and easy way. It is relatively consensual to use the Pedersen index in political science. This index is very useful because it can evaluate which UK electoral results could be considered the most hectic or revolutionary. In this dissertation, I give a pivotal role to critical junctures in the history of UK party competition. Later I will demonstrate that each of such critical junctures (which fundamentally changed the patterns of UK politics) actually started with a record high level of electoral volatility. I think that a fundamental change in the patterns of UK party competition necessarily coincided with high electoral volatility. So electoral volatility can help us to estimate which electoral years could have been very decisive in the evolution of British party politics. Otherwise, electoral volatility can also give an impression about the institutionalisation of a given party system. If electoral volatility is low (as it happened in the 1950s in the UK), the party system is relatively institutionalized. If the electoral volatility is high (as it has happened in the UK since the 1970s) the party system is less institutionalized. This index will certainly help us understand better the patterns of UK party politics.

2.1.3 **Fragmentation**

The third way to operationalise a party system is through fragmentation indices. This sort of operationalisation tries to evaluate the integrity or disintegrity of a party system. If a party system is not very fragmented (as it happened in the UK after the Second World War), the party competition is characterized by a rivalry of very few parties. However, if a party system is fragmented (as it has happened in the UK recently) the party competition is characterized by the rivalry of many parties. Therefore, the fragmentation index gives us a very holistic picture how the patterns of UK party competition changed over time.

Perhaps the most popular way to measure party system fragmentation is Laakso and Taagepera's (1979) index of the *effective number of parties.* This index has additional usefulness when it comes to comparing the *parliamentary arena* and the *electoral one*. The *effective number of parties* can be calculated by either *seat shares* (which suppose the parliamentary arena) or *vote shares* (which suppose the electoral arena.) Hence the following two mathematical indices can be used;

The effective number of parliamentary parties (ENPP):

$$\mathrm{ENPP} = \sum_{i=0}^{n} \frac{1}{{s_i}^2}$$

where s_i stands for the parliamentary seat share of n parties.

The effective number of electoral parties (ENEP):

$$\mathrm{ENEP} = \sum_{i=0}^{k} \frac{1}{{v_i}^2}$$

where v_i stands for the electoral vote share of k parties.

In this dissertation, I want to use these two indices for my research. I think they are quite simple, intuitive and straightforward indices. For instance, if ENPP is 2.0 in the Westminster party system, it means that only two major parties (the Conservatives and Labour) dominate the House of Commons. However, if ENEP is 3.0 at the same time, it means that three equal sized parties compete for votes in the *electoral arena*. So this index can give us a very brief and intuitive idea about the level of fragmentation of a party system in different arenas.

2.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PARLIAMENTARY AND ELECTORAL ARENAS

Previously, I have said that scholars like Bardi and Mair (2008) suggest comparing the party system at different levels. They recommend comparing the *parliamentary* and the *electoral arenas*. However, this relationship can be observed from different perspectives. Therefore, in the following, I sum up the perspectives which I want to use to understand this relationship. I will look at the relationship between the parliamentary and electoral arenas in three ways: by examining *casualty, congruence* and *distortion.*

2.2.1 **Casualty**

The *casual linkage* between the parliamentary and electoral arenas should mean that there is an *independent variable* and a *dependent* one. It suggests that the linkage is

one-directional coming from either the parliamentary or the electoral arena to the other. If we assume that the electoral arena is the *independent* and the parliamentary is the *dependent* one, one could say that the competition for *votes* causes the competition for *seats*. This idea also suggests that the pure form of inter-party competition takes place in the electorate and it is later transformed (or biased) by the electoral system when it is translated into parliamentary seats. This idea is certainly relevant because the *parliamentary arena* is eventually the implication of the *electoral arena.* During general elections, the electorate can vote and these votes are later transformed into parliamentary seats. Thus, the causal linkage is very important when the electoral arena is the *independent* variable and the *parliamentary* arena is the dependent one. It can help us understand why the patterns of inter-party competition change in the parliamentary arena.

However, if we change the direction of this linkage, we can gain equally important insights. If the parliamentary arena is the *independent* variable and the electoral arena is the *dependent* one, the casual link would suggest that the parliamentary arena can successfully influence the party competition in the electoral arena. This idea suggests, for instance, that, because of the fact that parliamentary parties legislate the electoral system, the *parliamentary arena* can successfully influence the *electoral arena*. (See other researcher like (Colomer, 2005)) Strom (1992) and Strom and Leipart (1989) argue that intra-parliamentary parties have a tendency to collide in order to secure their privileged positions and their comparative advantage against the *outsiders*. For this, they have incentives to manipulate the entry barriers of new parties (contestability) in favour of their own interests. An electoral system change from the *parliamentary arena* to the *electoral arena* can be a practical tool for such manipulation. Bartolini (1999) and Mair (1996) also talk about the potential manipulation of party competition through electoral rules. The psychological importance for party competition is underlined by Duverger (1954), who said that a majoritarian electoral system favours two-party politics whilst mixed or proportional electoral systems incite multi-party politics. The importance of electoral rules for party competition is emphasised by Downs (1957) and Odershook (1997) as well.

In this dissertation, consequently, I argue that both directions are very important; when the *electoral arena* affects the *parliamentary arena*, and vice versa, when the *parliamentary arena* affects the *electoral arena*. During this dissertation, I suppose

that the pluralisation of the *electoral arena* necessitates a similar pluralisation in the *parliamentary arena*. However, given the first-past-the-post electoral system, this pluralisation inside the *parliamentary arena* is rather limited. Nevertheless, there is a causal link between changing patterns in the *electoral arena* and the *parliamentary arena.* The opposite casual direction will also be observed. I argue that the long- path-dependency in the *parliamentary arena* (that we tend to think that British politics has always been about the dichotomy between the Conservative Party and Labour) and the first-past-the-post electoral system, which maintained it, can also change the patterns of interaction in the *electoral arena*. For instance, other parties than the Conservatives or Labour often suffer from the fact that any vote for them would be a wasted vote because they do not have a real chance to win a constituency. Therefore, the *parliamentary arena* can go against the pluralisation in the *electoral arena*. I argue that both directions of this causal link are very important and useful in this dissertation.

2.2.2 **Congruence**

Congruence is another link between the *parliamentary* and the *electoral arenas*. It is intended to evaluate the overlap between the two tiers of the party system. For this, I will compare the party system fragmentation in the parliamentary arena (ENPP) and in the electoral arena (ENEP.) In the theoretical situation where the *electoral arena* completely overlaps with the *parliamentary arena* there is perfect congruence. However, any misfit or difference between the two arenas would suppose a certain degree of incongruence. One could easily think that incongruence is equal with distortion that an electoral system might cause. However, I argue the situation is different from that.

The biggest difference between incongruence and electoral distortion is the *scope of interest*. Incongruence focuses on the patterns of party competition in different arenas of the party system. Hence, it uses fragmentation indices (ENEP/ENPP), which is a fairly common way to operationalise party systems. However, electoral distortion is much more interested in the mechanical calculus between the two arenas. So I argue that incongruence focuses on the patterns of party competition (hence, the party system) whilst electoral distortion focuses rather on the electoral system. So the scope of interest is the *party system* for congruence and it is the *electoral system* for

distortion. Obviously, it is difficult to separate the two from each other. However, this thesis has a central aim to understand the party system and only secondary aim to deal with the electoral system.

Moreover, congruence is a good starting point for further comparison, too. Figure 1 below shows that Britain is one of the most incongruent countries in Western democracies. Moreover, it is a stable trend in opposition to many other countries. For instance, France might have high incongruence from time to time; however, it is also very hectic and volatile. By contrast, Britain's incongruence might be lower sometimes; nevertheless it is much more reliable and stable than in other countries. Therefore, the British incongruence is not only unique, but also stable enough to formulate a reliable theory on it. (Please see more about comparative Western European party systems in Fricz (2001).)

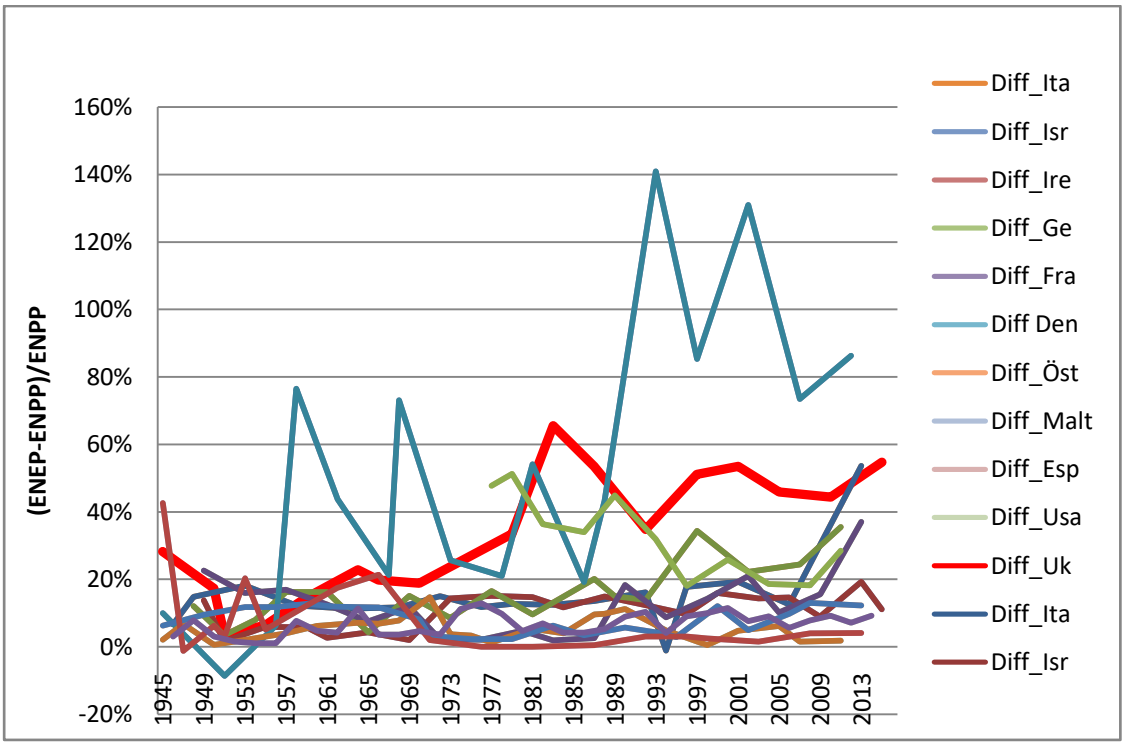

Figure 1 The level of incongruence between the electoral and parliamentary arenas in selected countries
My chart based on data from Gallagher (2017). (The UK is indicated by red.) For further details, please see Annex Data.

Other scholars of British politics also prefer congruence to distortion. (See Webb (2000), Mitchell (2005).) They give primary importance to the ENEP/ENPP difference whereas distortion indices only play a secondary role in their findings. As

Mitchell (2005) and Webb (2000) argued, the British first-past-the-post electoral system "*straitjackets"* or *"keeps the ENPP artificially low."* So they accept that electoral distortion influences British party politics. However, when it comes to understanding the patterns of party competition, they attach more importance to ENEP/ENPP difference than to electoral distortion. I want to follow their good example. I also think that fragmentation indices can be used better to understand the UK party system than electoral distortion. Therefore, I will mainly use ENEP/ENPP differences in this dissertation which will be occasionally complemented by distortion indices as well. In the following, I am explaining which distortion index I want to use.

2.2.3 **Distortion**

The main difference between distortion and congruence is the scope of observation. While congruence is interested in the difference between the patterns of party competition in the electoral and parliamentary arenas, distortion is more interested in the mechanical link between these two arenas. Therefore, congruence focuses mainly on the party system whilst distortion focuses on the electoral system.

There are plenty of distortion indices being used in political science. Most of them are rather controversial because of their respective statistical bias. Nagy (2015a) collected a great deal of distortion indices[1] for analyzing the Canadian general elections and their bias vis-á-vis a 'perfect' proportional representation. He pointed out that each of these indices has their strengths and weaknesses. Similarly, Karpov (2008) measured distortion indices for Russian elections.[2] Both Nagy (2015a) and Karpov (2008) come to the same conclusion; each distortion index has a bias in a certain way. Therefore, there is no perfect index for measuring electoral distortion. Nevertheless, these differences tend to be usually rather marginal. For instance, Karpov (2008: 1435) concludes that "*they are strongly correlated, though they provide different results."*

So if I have to choose an electoral distortion index in this dissertation, I want to follow the good example of some leading British scholars. Gallagher and Mitchell (2008), for instance, favour using one particular distortion index; the *Least Square Index* (LSq or Gallagher Index). This index is the following:

[1] The advantage ratio, Rae's index, the Loosemore-Handby index, the Adjusted Loosemore-Handby index (Grofman's index), Lijphart's index, Gallagher's index, and D'Hondt's index.
[2] In addition to Nagy (2015a), he also used the Monroe index, Gatev index, Ryabtsev index, Szalai index, Aleskerov–Platonov index, Generalized entropy, Sainte-Lague index.

$$LSq = \sqrt{\frac{1}{2}\sum_{i=1}^{n}(\mathrm{V_i} - \mathrm{S_i})^2}$$

where n is the number of all parties, i is a given party, V is its vote share and S is its seat share.

Nagy (2015b) says about this index that it is very sensitive to serious distortions caused by large parties; however, it is less sensitive to serious distortions caused by smaller parties. So it weighs the different distorting effects of parties of different size. The most common criticism about this index is its *relatively low* distortion results. Other indices (Loosemore-Handby, Lijphart, Sainte-Lague and D'Hondt) usually have higher distortion values for the same electoral result than LSq. So it is fair to say that LSq indeed tends to under-evaluate electoral distortions. However, I still think that the LSq index is more beneficial than the others for three reasons: (1) it is a *cautious* distortion index, which means that it does not overestimate electoral distortions. That is, if we measure a hugely disproportionate UK general election with LSq, we can be sure that this general election would have been disproportionate with all the other indices. This is crucial when it comes to the British electoral system. The first-past-the-post electoral system might often have hugely disproportionate result. That is why it is important to use a cool head and not over-dramatize the disproportionateness which it might cause. I think LSq fits this purpose. (2) This may be the reason why *British scholars* of party politics often use this index as well. Some scientists often build their entire research on Gallagher's index. (Please see, for instance: Carey & Hix (2011).) So it is a trusted index by some of the best UK scholars. (3) This index is popular not just among scholars but also among politicians. For instance, the Special Committee on Electoral Reform in the *Canadian House of Commons* uses Gallagher's index as evidence for measuring the disproportionate effect of the Canadian first-past-the-post electoral system. So the LSq index is not just methodologically relevant but it is also popular among many scholars and politicians. Based on these arguments, I think the LSq index is quite straightforward for this dissertation.

The question of distortion gets further importance when it comes to *electoral system change*. If the current first-past-the-post electoral system is disproportionate, an electoral system change might ease the problem. However, electoral system change can be placed on a *long interval* from subtle modification to fundamental alternation. I

argue that subtle modification will not make the British electoral system more proportional. However, a major change might decrease distortion. Therefore, I argue that the following electoral system changes could happen in Britain:

Table 2 The degree of electoral system change

Degree of change	**Status quo**	**Subtle modification**	**Fundamental alternation**
Type of the electoral system	Current majority	Modified majority	Mixed or PR
Name of the electoral system (and its current use)	• First-past-the-post (eg. UK general elections)	• Supplementary Vote (eg. London Assembly elections) • Alternative Vote (eg. Labour leadership elections)	• Single Transferable Vote (eg. Northern Ireland Assembly elections) • Additional Member System (eg. Scottish Parliamentary elections) • Proportional party list (eg. European Parliament elections)

As one can see, an electoral system change from FPTP to mixed (AMS, PR etc.) or proportional (PR party list) can be considered as a major electoral system change which might lead to more proportional general elections. By contrast, subtle modifications which keep the majority electoral rule (SV or AV) will not necessarily lead to more PR general election results. Hence, electoral distortion can likely decline only if there is an electoral system change from the current FPTP to a mixed or PR system. Electoral system change *per se* does not lead to better representation. (Please find a detailed summary of different electoral systems in Török and Gallai (2005).)

2.3 DATA SOURCES

In order to implement the operationalisation, I need UK electoral data. This step seems to be quite easy at first sight. However, it is rather ambiguous when it comes to details. The most important reason for the ambiguity about the UK electoral data derives from the lack of administrative centralisation in the UK. During general elections, the UK votes are counted at the *borough level* in 650 individual constituencies (depending on the number of constituencies at the given general election). This means that every researcher who wants to get authentic electoral results

should visit 650 borough council websites after each and every election. If a researcher carries out a longitudinal research like me, he or she should multiply 650 (or so) with the number of electoral years. In my case, there were 19 general elections between 1945 and 2015. So it means 19x650=12,350 (or so) borough research projects. In addition, if I also use EP, devolved or local council elections, I should do some other similar research, too. (In addition, it is quite difficult to get electoral data at the borough level from the 1950s.) Therefore, I must use instead some aggregated (and secondary) data.

The aggregated data also pose some difficulties. The most reliable data source should be the Electoral Commission's website (www.electoralcommission.org.u). This governmental institution, however, dates back only to 2001. Before 2001, there had not been such an institution as the Electoral Commission. This necessarily suggests that the Electoral Commission's database is not enough to examine all UK electoral data in a longitudinal way. Consequently, I need some other sources, as well.

The two most common aggregated UK electoral data sources are the BBC website, on the one hand, and the UK Parliament website, on the other hand. It is usually the BBC that aggregates the electoral results from all the borough councils during general election nights. So, interestingly, it is not an administrative body but a media platform which aggregates the votes. I think this data source is quite reliable. However, if I want to carry out longitudinal research (1945-2015), the old data are scarcely available on the BBC website. So I need other sources than the BBC website.

The best aggregated data source, in my opinion, is, hence, the UK Parliament website. Their electoral results have both necessary conditions for extensive research: reliability and a long time framework. This is the reason why I preferred using their data. Their most recent electoral data publication is the Commons Briefing Paper (2017) No. CBP-7529 *UK Election Statistics: 1918-2017,* which has both .pdf and .xls versions. Particularly, the .xls version allowed me to calculate and implement the operationalisation. I could calculate fragmentation indices (ENEP/ENPP), electoral volatility (Pedersen Index) and electoral distortion (Ghallager's index) as well. So if I use data in this dissertation, I usually rely on the UK Parliament's data and particularly the .xls version of the CBP-7529 Commons Briefing Paper.

Nevertheless, there was one problem with the aggregated UK Parliament electoral data. This source uses the combined category of 'other parties.' In their interpretation, every party belongs to the category of 'other parties' if they do not belong to the Conservatives, Labour, the Lib Dems, the Scottish National Party or to the Plaid Cymru. However, my dissertation is often about exactly such small emerging parties like UKIP or the Greens, which are dealt with under the same robust 'other parties' category. For instance, in 2015, 'other parties' in the UK Parliament's Website source was 19.6%. So there was 19.6% vote share in 2015 which labelled a rather ambiguous sum category. Therefore, I needed to use additional data to the UK Parliament website.

In order to split the robust 'other parties' category, I used another website.[3] The *Political Science Resources* website (http://www.politicsresources.net/area/uk.htm) provided such detailed information. On this website, smaller parties like UKIP and the Greens are not treated under the collective category of 'other parties.' So I can measure the performance of each small party based on this website. The only question which occurred to me was the reliability of this website. It is a private project by a private person (Richard Kimber), who has started to collect electoral data from the US and the UK. Thus it is obviously less reliable than the authentic UK Parliament website. Nevertheless, in order to test the reliability of *Political Science Resources*, I compared its data with the UK Parliament website. I have found out that there are rather minor differences between the two electoral data sets. So I checked out that the data of *Political Science Resources* can be considered nearly as reliable as the UK Parliament website. Yet, for the sake of authenticity, I preferred using the UK Parliament Website. I only turned to *Political Science Resources* if I needed to split the robust 'other parties' category. This usually happens when I use the electoral data of UKIP and the Greens. Bigger parties like the Conservatives, Labour or Lib Dems are the same in both two databases.

Finally, I must make a remark about the calculations of ENEP/ENPP. In this matter, there is great importance of how we treat the category of 'other parties.' If we follow the methodology of the UK Parliament Website (and there is one single robust 'third

[3] I think the whole problem of the term 'other parties' dates back to the post-war era when pluralisation was almost non-existent with roughly 0.6-1.1% 'other parties' vote share (e.g. in the 1950s.) However, due to pluralisation, 'other parties' already measured 19.6% in 2015. So the way we think of 'other parties' is still rooted in the post-war era to a certain extent.

party' category), our fragmentation indices tend to be *lower*. It is not surprising that fewer party categories with higher vote shares produce *lower* fragmentation values. However, if I split up the 'other parties' category, it means that there are more parties with smaller vote shares and logically *higher* fragmentation values. For instance, the ENEP value calculated from the *UK Parliament Website* data is 3.63 in 2015. For them, 'other parties' measured 19.6%. However, if we split up this number into the subcomponents (UKIP: 12.64%, Green: 3.77%, Democratic Unionist Party: 0.60%, Sinn Féin: 0.57% etc.), we get a different number. The ENEP value with this methodology and the *Political Science Resources* data is 3.93. So there is some difference between the two values. I argue that this second approach is better because it is closer to reality. Smaller parties should not be treated as the sub-components of a big giant 'other parties' category. They should be treated as they are: individual small parties. Therefore, I will usually get higher ENEP values than the UK Parliament website would necessitate. (Please compare the ENEP values in the Annex. In the 1st table, 13th column, ENEP is calculated from the *UK Parliament Website* data. However, in the 5th table, 2nd column, ENEP is calculated from *Political Science Resources*. You can also see there that Gallagher's and my ENEP calculations are very close to each other.)

2.4 INTERVIEWS

During my research in the UK in 2015–16, I made interviews with 6 UK politicians. There were 3 peers (Lords) and 3 MPs. I could make interviews with Lord Beecham (Labour), Lord Balfe (Conservatives) and Lord Wallace (Lib Dems) from the House of Lords. And I could also talk to Kelvin Hopkins, MP (Labour), Douglas Carswell, MP (UKIP) and Paul Monaghan, MP (SNP.) When I made these interviews, I tried to pay attention to the right mixture of political affiliation. Therefore, I wanted to talk with the representatives of all major UK political parties. I also tried to make the interviews in a structured and comparable way. So I asked exactly the same 6 questions to each UK politician: (1) the causes of pluralisation in British party politics, (2) the EU's impact on UK party politics, (3) the possibility of an electoral system change in Britain, (4) the strength of party line in their respective parties, (5) the importance of devolution to pluralisation and (6) the politicians' own perception of anti-establishment sentiment in Britain. By using this method, I could analyze and

compare the political positions of different politicians and their parties. I think these interviews helped me better understand British politics. So I am very grateful to theses politicians. They were all very polite, helpful and informative to me! I would like to express my gratitude here.

Nevertheless, I have decided not to include these interviews in my dissertation. The most important reason why I decided not to do so was to avoid *methodological bias*. I was previously advised by Hungarian researchers whom I respect, trust and appreciate very much that this sample of interviewees is too small for a statistically representative research. Although I did not really want to do statistically representative research and I just wanted to use these interviews as illustrations of my in-depth research, I can understand their concerns. My dissertation is quite holistic and ready even without these interviews. So I think I can omit the interviews from the main body of this dissertation without risking undermining the basic findings. If I do so, I can also avoid unnecessary scientific mistakes.

Nevertheless, I want to make the interviews available for those who might be interested in them. I put them into the *Annex* at the end of this dissertation. By doing so, I want to emphasise that this part of the dissertation does not make an integral part of the main text currently. It just gives some additional information. As far as I know, the difference between *Annex* and *Appendix* is its closeness to the main text. Whereas *Appendix* closely belongs to the main text by illustrating it with extra data or pictures, *Annex* is an independent part which does not belong closely to the main text. It is just what I wanted to suggest. So I will have an *Annex* with less important information such as interviews. And I also have an *Appendix* with more important information such as electoral data. I hope I could explain why I did not include the interviews into the main text. I also hope those who might be interested in reading these interviews will find them valuable. In order to help them, I made general comparison of the interviews. Later, I also included the whole transcripts or summaries of the interviews. (I could record the interviews with the MPs that is why I have their transcripts. I did not record the interviews with the peers that is why I only have their summaries.)

2.5 ELECTORAL MAPS

I used electoral maps in this dissertation apart from the sources mentioned above. My central aim was to illustrate the text with some visual elements. It is particularly important for the electoral years of 1945, 1974, 1997, 2010 and 2015. I used two sources for the electoral maps;

- Dr Benjamin Hennig's website (http://www.viewsoftheworld.net/)
- And *Vision of Britain through Time*'s website (http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/).

It was very easy to use the UK electoral data from the UK Parliament website on condition that I make the correct reference. However, if I use pictures or maps, I have further legal obligations as well. I must have either an *open licence* (usually Creative Commons licence) or the author's explicit *authorisation* to use these materials. Without these requirements, I could not have used them. So I contacted both of these sources.

I received the authorisation of both sources by email. Dr Benjamin Hennig, who is both an Honorary Research Associate at the University of Oxford and an Associate Professor at the University of Iceland, allowed me to use his maps about the 2010 and 2015 general elections. These maps contain both the electoral results and the population density. So this method can intuitively suggest the electoral magnitude of different constituencies in Britain. The colleagues of the *Vision of Britain through Time* website on their part also let me use their UK general election maps. This website is part of the Great Britain Historical Geographical Information System (GBHGIS) project. It is made by the University of Portsmouth. From this project, I will only use their UK general election maps. Please find them here:

http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/atlas/map/R_WINNING_PARTY/CONSTITUENCY/05JUL1945

There you can set the different electoral years to visualize the electoral maps of the respective general election. However, I will also insert the appropriate maps into this dissertation. Although there are other UK maps on the internet as well, however, I think these two sources are very reliable. Therefore, I will nott use other sources than them.

I am very grateful to both Dr Benjamin Hennig and to the colleagues of the Vision of Britain website for granting me permission to use their maps. I think they will give very good illustration for this dissertation.

2.6 HYPOTHESES

As I argued in the introduction, the research question of this dissertation is the following: *Is there a systemic split in the British party system?* This split in a party system can occur when the party competition in different arenas significantly differ from each other (Smith, 1989: 165-166). Previously, I argued that the parliamentary and electoral arenas should be compared. Therefore, if we want to decide if there is a split in the UK party system, we need to observe the difference between the parliamentary and electoral arenas. The following hypotheses try to compare these two arenas in order to evaluate the split in the UK party system.

I want to use three hypotheses to answer the research question. All these hypotheses help us to understand the systemic split in the UK party system. H_1 is a hypothesis about the general long-term trend of pluralisation. H_2 is a hypothesis about the pre-determined nature of the long-term trend of pluralisation. And H_3 is a hypothesis about the necessity of electoral system reform, which pluralisation is likely to trigger. If I test these hypotheses, either verification or falsification helps us to evaluate the systemic split in the British party competition.

2.6.1 Hypothesis 1

The growing incongruence between the parliamentary and electoral arenas was a long-term trend of British party politics between 1945 and 2015.

H_1 states that there was an increasing split in the UK party system between 1945 and 2015. This split appeared in the form of growing incongruence between the UK parliamentary and electoral arenas. The hypothesis supposes two things; first, there has been a long-term trend in the evolution of British party politics. This long-term trend was characterized by a gradual incongruence between the parliamentary and electoral arenas. Second, it also supposes that the post-war patterns of party competition (two-party politics) mainly remained in the parliamentary arena; however, the electoral arena differed from it. Therefore, the split in the UK party system was caused by both a stable parliamentary arena and a pluralising electoral arena.

I think this hypothesis can help us find an answer to the research question. If H_1 is verified, one can state that there is a systemic reason behind changing party competition patterns in Britain. If H_1 is falsified, one can find that the changing patterns of party competition are not supported by systemic factors.

On the whole, H_1 basically tests if there is a pluralisation in British politics. If pluralisation exists, it might have further consequences. These consequences are tested in H_2 and H_3.

2.6.1 **Hypothesis 2**

Although the growing incongruence was a long-term trend of British party politics, there were also certain periods when it temporarily slowed down or reversed.

The hypothesis wants to find out if there was any period in the history of UK party competition when incongruence could have been reversed. In other words, the hypothesis investigates how determined is the pluralisation of British party politics. Was it possible at any time to slow down, stop or decrease the level of pluralisation? So, similarly to H_1, I want to observe a long-term period between 1945 and 2015. However, H_2 is more interested in the short-term fluctuations in this rather long period.

Even if H_2 proves to be wrong, it further confirms H_1. It means that pluralisation is indeed a long-term pattern of British party politics which could not be tempered over time. However, if H_2 is right, the analysis of pluralisation gets further insights. If we found such short-term periods in the long-term trend of pluralisation, we would also need to understand why such short-term set-backs happened. If short-term set-backs are likely, the entire nature of long-term pluralisation is different. Hence, H_2 can serve both tools; to further confirm H_1 by saying that pluralisation is a very stable trend, or to sophisticate H_1 by saying that, though pluralisation is a long-term trend, sometimes short term set-backs can happen. In both two cases, we can understand the patterns of British party competition better.

2.6.1 **Hypothesis 3**

The growing incongruence between the parliamentary and electoral arenas was never large enough to trigger the electoral system change of the UK general elections.

The hypothesis tries to evaluate the potential consequence that a split in the UK party system can lead to. If incongruence is significant, one could think that the UK parliamentary arena is not responsive to the electoral arena. This lack of responsiveness also suggests that the FPTP electoral system can be blamed for such an outcome. However, if the electoral system is changed for a mixed or PR one, the level of incongruence can decline. So the growing incongruence could have generated a demand for electoral system change over time. I want to find correlation between the growing incongruence and the likelihood of electoral system change in Britain between 1945 and 2015.

In order to verify or falsify this hypothesis, I want to overview some previous attempts to change the UK general electoral system. Moreover, I also want to use a counter-variable. The 1993 electoral system change in New Zealand can be put in parallel with similar attempts of changes in Britain. New Zealand was one of the purest models of Westminster democracy until 1993, however, they changed their electoral system for a mixed one after 1993. I want to understand if there was a link between growing incongruence and the need for electoral system change in New Zealand. Thus, H_3 is tested in two ways; I will look at the history of British electoral reform, on the one hand, and the case-study of electoral system reform in New Zealand, on the other hand. Hence I expect from H3 that if it is correct, an electoral system reform could be triggered by growing incongruence. However, if H_3 is wrong, electoral system reform could not be triggered by only growing incongruence. There might be some additional causes as well.

3 THE EVOLUTION OF BRITISH PARTY POLITICS

3.1 THE EVOLUTION OF UK PARTY COMPETITION IN THE LITERATURE

The evolution of British party politics can be divided into separate time periods when one or another pattern of interaction became dominant. Usually, the literature offers explanation after the Second World War because the British party system became truly established in those years. Before the Second World War, there was either some democratic deficit due to the non-universal suffrage (before 1918) or to the ongoing economic and military crisis (1930 economic crisis and the Second World War.) Hence, there is general consensus that 1945 was the first modern general election which can be compared to any of the succeeding ones. As a result, when we talk about the evolution of UK party competition, it encompasses the period from 1945 to today. (About British history, see also: Blair, 2015; Leonard & Mortimore, 2005; Marr, 2009; Rowe, 2004, May, 2014.)

In the literature of party competition classification, there are two important authors whom I want to rely on. Paul Webb (2000), a political scientist, uses quantitative data to measure and identify different time periods in the history of UK party competition. He uses indices like ENEP/ENPP, electoral volatility or CMP data. Vermont Bogdanor (2004), a historian, on the other hand, prefers historical sources for his findings. He uses legal acts, political speeches and historical statements. (Please see Lánczi's (2015) book on the different epistemological choices that different scientists can make). Although they approach the same question from different points of view, there is some overlap between their findings. Both of these two scholars agree that the 1945–70 time period was the 'golden era' of two-party politics. It was characterised by two-party competition, no relevant third parties, single governments and tight electoral results. Later, however, almost all of these criteria were questioned and a certain pluralisation started in British politics. The difference between them appears to

lie in the evaluation of the post-1974 period. While Webb (2000) thinks that the post-1974 pluralisation process is still going on, Bogdanor (2004) argues that the post-1974 one ended in 1997, when a new era began. He thinks that the constitutional changes and the devolution process launched by Tony Blair constitute a completely new category. In this vein, Webb (2000) accepts the importance of the post-1997 devolution; nevertheless, he put it into a sub-category of the post-1974 period.

The most important conclusion of the two scholars is that; (a) the UK party competition has been undergoing evolution since 1945; (b) this evolution means a pluralisation from two-party politics and (c) devolution enhances this process. In the following, I will describe both Webb's and Bogdanor's categorisation in more detail. It serves to understand more clearly the different periods of UK party competition and to prepare the ground for my own categorisation. Finally, once I manage to distinguish the periods of UK party competition in my own interpretation, I can attempt to understand the reasons behind changes. Eventually, this thesis wants to explain *why* British politics is changing.

Table 3 Comparing Webb's and Bogdanor's classification

Webb (2000: 4–15)		**Bogdanor (2004: 724–733)**	
1945–1970	'The era of classic two-party competition.'	**1935–1970**	The 'heyday' of two-party competition
1974–today	The 'emergence of latent moderate pluralism.'	**1974–1992**	The ending of the two-party dominance
	-	**1997–today**	Constitutional reform and devolution.

3.1.1 The 'golden era' of two party competition

Webb (2000) looks for empirical evidence to prove that the 1945–70 period was indeed an era of two-party competition. He quotes, first of all, two indices which underpin his theory; the effective number of parliamentary parties (ENPP) and the effective number of electoral parties (ENEP). He says that in both cases the figures show that Britain had a stable two-party system in that period of time. As he notes,

'While the average ENPP for 1945-70 was 2.05, it increased to 2.18 for the period from 1974 to 1997; the ENEP average shows a more marked increase, from 2.36 (up to 1970) to 3.17 (post-1970). In effect, there is now a two-party system in the national legislative arena, but a multi-party system in the national electoral arena.' (Webb, 2000: 5)

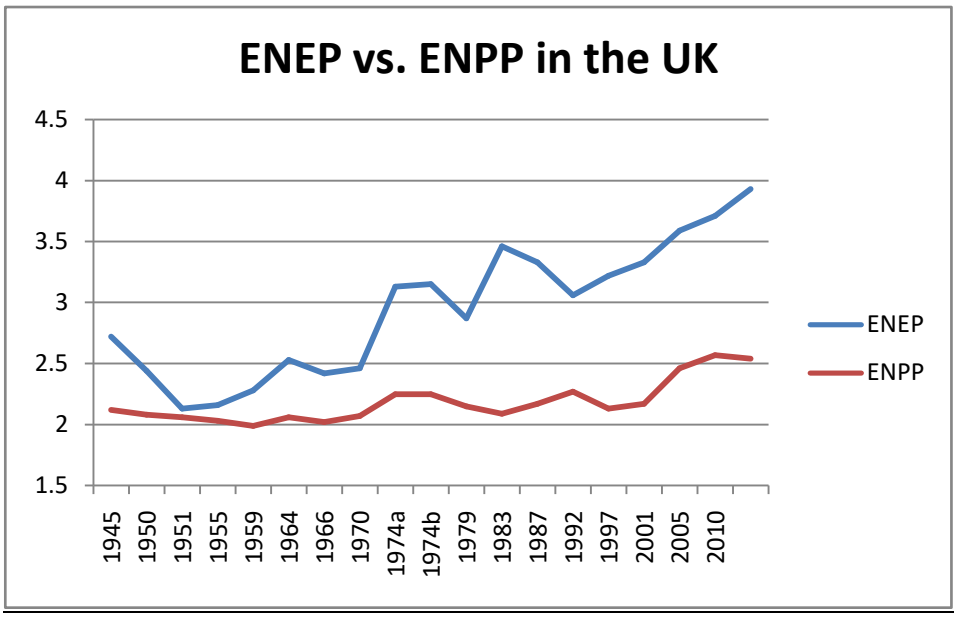

Figure 2 ENEP and ENPP in the UK (1945–2015)

In addition to the two indices of ENPP and ENEP, Webb (2000) relies on the findings of two other scholars to prove that the 1945–70 period was indeed a two-party competition. First, he uses Blondel's (1968) criteria about two-partyism; (a) the combined proportion of Conservative and Labour vote share should be very high (roughly above 90%) and (b) there should be a high degree of electoral balance, which means that the victory of the largest party depends on slight margins. These two criteria logically lead to the conclusion that there is no third party which could make an impact on the rivalry of the two major parties. Webb (2000: 5) argues that both of these criteria were met in Britain during the 1945–70 period. On average, the two-party vote share was 90.3% while the mean margin between the two parties was only 3.9%.

Second, Webb (2000) uses Sartori's (1978) criteria to prove his argument as well. There are three additional criteria to evaluate two-partyism: (1) centripetal party competition, (2) single-majority governments and (3) regular alternation in the

executive. Webb (2000) argues that each of these three criteria were also met because (1) the party competition was characterised by the rivalry for the median voter, (2) there were no coalition governments during that time and (3) there was a regularity in left and right governments without the pre-dominance of one or the other.

Table 4 List of UK governments (1945–2015)

Governments formed following general elections, 1918 to 2015

Date	Party forming government	Prime Minister	Majority
05/07/1945	Labour	Clement Attlee	147
23/02/1950	Labour	Clement Attlee	6
25/10/1951	Conservative	Sir Winston Churchill	16
26/05/1955	Conservative	Sir Anthony Eden	59
08/10/1959	Conservative	Harold Macmillan	99
15/10/1964	Labour	Harold Wilson	5
31/03/1966	Labour	Harold Wilson	97
18/06/1970	Conservative	Edward Heath	31
28/02/1974	Labour	Harold Wilson	None
10/10/1974	Labour	Harold Wilson	4
03/05/1979	Conservative	Margaret Thatcher	44
09/06/1983	Conservative	Margaret Thatcher	144
11/06/1987	Conservative	Margaret Thatcher	101
09/04/1992	Conservative	John Major	21
01/05/1997	Labour	Tony Blair	178
07/06/2001	Labour	Tony Blair	166
05/05/2005	Labour	Tony Blair	65
06/05/2010	Coalition	David Cameron	77
06/05/2015	Conservative	David Cameron	11

Source: Copied and Downloaded from (Commons Briefing Paper, 2017). Original data for the paper are from: Rallings and Thrasher (2007), Joyce (2004)

Putting together the empirical results of ENPP/ENEP, Blondel's two criteria and Sartori's three conditions, Webb (2000) finds enough evidence to prove that the British party competition was a two- party system between 1945 and 1970.

Bogdanor (2004), differently from Webb (2000), qualifies the two-party system from an historical point of view. He starts examining the two-party politics well before the

Second World War, from 1935. Bogdanor (2004: 724) says that the two-party dominance in British politics was only born in 1937 when the Ministers of Crown Act recognised *'for the first time the office of the Leader of the Opposition, and provided a salary for him and for the Opposition chief whip.'* In addition, it was also the first time when a statute explicitly referred to political parties in the House of Commons, which was not even legally codified until 1998. So the 1937 Ministers of the Crown Act started to divide the political spectrum into two distinct groups: the government and the opposition. Before 1937, due to the changing patterns of party politics and the three- party rivalry among the Conservatives, the Liberals and the Labour, it was impossible to distinguish so sharply government and opposition. So Bogdanor (2004) argues that the 'Westminster model,' which is about two-party competition, is a relatively recent phenomenon and is not rooted deeply in 20th century British history.

Furthermore, Bogdanor (2004: 726) suggests that two-partyism is the practical by-product of the evolution of UK party competition in the 20th century. He says that the two-party dominance became obvious when Labour accepted the first-past-the-post electoral system. Between 1906 and 1931 electoral reform and universal franchise were the scope of political debate, particularly for smaller parties like Labour. When Labour eventually overtook the Liberals in the race for the position of the second largest party, Labour gradually started to prefer majority electoral system to proportional one. Moreover, the high vote share of Conservatives and Labour after 1945 provided enough reason to put aside the question of proportional electoral system and hence accept majority rules. As Bogdanor (2004: 727) notes,

> *'With governments being returned on well over 45% of the vote; few worried about any theoretical injustice to the Liberals, the third party. Indeed, the argument for proportional representation during this period could easily be dismissed as special pleading in their part.'*

Bogdanor (2004: 725) argues that this evolutionary two-party system was further confirmed by the BBC Committee on Political Broadcasting, which allocated the broadcasts of political parties. In this organ, the two major parties dominated and distorted media representation to their own interests. This also proves his argument that two-partyism was created after 1935 and it had not been intrinsically present in UK party politics in the 20th century.

3.1.2 **The growing multi-party competition**

Webb (2000: 10) identifies the growing pluralism in British politics since the late 1960s. He confirms this process by the very same analytical methods used for the previous two-party period. He notes,

> *'First, the average share of the vote absorbed by the major parties, which stood at 90.3% for the period 1945-70, has fallen to 74.8% for subsequent elections (1974–97). Second, the degree of electoral imbalance between the major parties has grown perceptibly, from a mean difference of 3.9% in their levels of national support up to and including 1970, to 8.2% in the period since. Third, and as a corollary of major-party decline, we have witnessed the emergence of significant 'minor' parties since the 1970s; (...)' Webb (2000: 9)*

As Webb (2000: 5) already mentioned earlier, ENEP and ENPP values also offer evidence for his argument about pluralisation. Whereas '*the average ENPP for 1945–70 was 2.05, it increased to 2.18 for the period from 1974 to 1997; the ENEP average shows a more marked increase, from 2.36 (up to 1970) to 3.17 (post-1970).'* In addition to that, Sartori's two-party conditions were not fulfilled even in this period. Webb argues that the party competition continued to be centripetal. Nevertheless, there were problems with the other two criteria: (1) in February 1974, it was the first time after the Second World War that a minority government was formed and later it was even introduced in practice that the majority government sometimes had 'regular consultations' with smaller parties (like the Liberals and the nationalists for Labour after 1976 and the Ulster Unionist Party for the Conservatives after 1996) and (2) the alternation of succeeding governments became less regular, which led to long periods of single party dominance in the executive (e.g. the Thatcher and the Major Governments between 1979 and 1997.) So the criteria of two-party systems suffered in two ways: the absolute majority of governments became less convincing and the access to power from opposition became more awkward. This resulted in the rise of minor parties which had been present in UK politics for a very long time, but they could not effectively alter party competition. The increased likelihood of hung parliaments and the difficulty of defeating incumbent governments raised their blackmailing capacity and their coalition leverage. This was significantly different vis-á-vis the 1945–1974 period.

For this reason, Webb (2000: 13) recommends using Sartori's 'moderate pluralist' party system category for the post-1974 period. He supports this idea by two facts: (a) the moderate pluralist system 'gravitates around 3 to 5 relevant parties,' which is closer to political realities than the category of two-party system and (b) the dynamics of party competition continue to be centripetal (eg. for the median voter). Nevertheless, this moderate pluralist party system is only 'latent' because the majority electoral system managed to constrain the effective number of parliamentary parties (ENPP) and hence in Westminster politics it is not automatically reflected. Therefore, the post-1974 party system change is best perceived in the electoral arena and not in the parliamentary (ie. in Westminster). This is the start of incongruence.

Other scholars (King, 1992; Heywood, 1994), as Webb (2000:14) quotes, prefer to use Sartori's 'predominant party system' category for the 1974–97 period. This category is identified if three consecutive elections are won by the same party. This obviously happened in 1979, 1983, 1987 and 1992, when the Tories won four general elections after each other. Nevertheless, Webb rejects the category of predominant party system for this period because the Conservative Party never controlled the whole state and they were even in minority in terms of the whole electorate. He says (2000: 15) that *'it was in fact a surprisingly shallow kind of dominance and proved transient.'*

Bogdanor (2004) describes the 1974–1997 period as a time of two-party erosion. He refers to the February 1974 elections as a dividing line: it was the second time after 1929 that a minority government was formed. Though Labour won the next election in October 1974 with a narrow 3 seats of majority, after this time, the governmental majority was often subject to by-election losses and individual MP defections. In this manner, Labour lost its majority in 1976 and became a minority government till 1979. Later, something very similar happened to the Conservatives in 1996, when they lost their parliamentary majority and finished their incumbency in minority in1997. Bogdanor (2004: 728) argues that, after 1974, even when the governments were formed by a landslide majority, they did not have the corresponding electoral support as earlier. For instance,

> *'(...) the 1983, 1987 and 1997 [elections] were won with landslide majorities. Yet these majorities were secured on just 42%-43% of the vote. A party was*

thus able to win huge majorities in the House of Commons although nearly three-fifths of the voters had voted against it.'

Second, the 1974 general elections meant a dividing line for Bogdanor (2004) because that was the first time the majority electoral system was questioned. The reason for this electoral upset can be found in the under-representation of the third national party (the Liberals), which got 19.3% vote share but only 2.2% seat share, and the under-representation of the SNP, which got 22% vote share in Scotland but only 9.7% seat share from Scotland. The need for electoral reform dates back to this year. From 1974, the disproportion of the general elections and their distorting effects on the distribution of parliamentary seats became part of the political agenda. It also means that the legitimacy of two-party politics and general electoral results has been questioned since then, too.

Third, Bogdanor (2004) says that the question of devolution has also been raised since 1974. There were a number of regional referenda about devolution from the late 1970s. It culminated in 1997 when Labour officially made devolution one of the crucial parts of their manifesto. Moreover, the question of devolution had a feedback to electoral reform because any devolved assembly could have been only imagined with *mixed or proportional electoral system.* As a consequence, this had a spill-over effect on the reform of the national electoral system and remained on the agenda since 1974.

Fourth, the first national referendum, the UK's EC membership was held in 1975. Together with the devolved referenda, direct democracy became a pattern in British politics. Before 1974, there was not any national referendum and the sovereignty of parliamentary democracy was unquestioned.

Fifth, similarly to the 1937 Ministers of the Crown Act, the 'Short money' resolution in 1975 accepted that financial aid should be available to other parties not only to the official Opposition. It was the first de jure reference to a multi-party system which, however, was not regulated by statutory law, only by a parliamentary resolution.

So Bogdanor (2004) states that the patterns of party competition have significantly changed in the UK in four aspects since 1974: (1) erosion of majority governments and the growth of third 'relevant' parties, (2) highly disproportional electoral results,

(3) the need for devolution and (4) the acceptance of referendum as a complementary tool to parliamentary democracy. The problem with the 1974–1997 period is that much of the change did not take place explicitly. On the surface, two-party politics seemed to remain by having either Labour or Conservative governments like before (1945–1971). Nevertheless, under the surface, the above mentioned four key changes started to erode the two-party system. As Bogdanor (2004: 733) summarises it, the post-1974 period of two-party politics was *'due more to the working of the electoral system than to the choices of the voters.'* Hence, the external stability of two party politics was only superficial and it has been internally eroding since 1974.

Table 5 Comparing Webb's and Bogdanor's classifications according to the type of party competitions

Webb (2000)		**Bogdanor (2004)**	
Period	**Type of competition**	**Period**	**Type of competition**
		1906–1914	Imbalance (minority and majority governments) without universal suffrage
		1918–1931	Imbalance (majority, minority and coalition governments) with universal suffrage
1945–1970	Two-party dominance (over 90% of votes), balance between them, no third parties, single governments, regular alternation in power, centripetal competition	**1935–1970**	Two-party stability due to popular support
1974–today	Two-party decline (under 90% of votes), imbalance between the two parties (long periods of incumbency), rise of third parties, alternation in power is less frequent, centripetal competition, devolution	**1974–1992**	Superficial two-party stability due to the FPTP electoral system
		1997–today	The appearance of

	devolved party competition

3.2 MY CLASSIFICATION OF UK PARTY COMPETITION PERIODS

After looking at Webb's (2000) and Bogdanor's (2004) classifications, I want to work out my own classification. If I synthesise Table 5, Webb's (2000) and Bogdanor's (2004) categorisation, I think there should be 4 different periods of UK party competition.

1. The 1945–70 period was indeed the 'golden era' of two-party competition. It was characterised by both a two-party system and a two-party competition. Hence, there was high congruence between party system and party competition during that time. In addition, the dynamics of the party competition was centripetal (also known as the 'post-war consensus').
2. Nevertheless, that period ended in 1974 and the pluralisation of UK party competition began. Between 1974 and 1992, there was a two-party system with a moderate multi-party competition. The differences between party system and party competition became important during that time. The dynamics of that period could be best characterised as a centrifugal competition because the former post-war consensus was given up and a polarised competition came instead with policies for and against the welfare state (see Figure 3).
3. In 1997, this centrifugal competition stopped and, again, a centripetal era began under the label of New Labour. The 1997–2010 period is therefore a return to a centripetal two-party system, nevertheless, in the party competition the pluralisation has kept continuing. In this sense, it is different from both the 1945–70 centripetal two-party system (because there was no multi-party competition) and from the 1974–92 two-party system with multi-party competition (because the centrifugal dynamics changed for centripetal.) So the 1997–2010 period was both a return to the traditional two-party system and a continuation of the multi-party competition. This logically suggests that the

unresponsiveness between party system and party competition became dramatic at that time.

4. Finally, the centripetal two-party system and the growing unresponsiveness combined with multi-party competition led to a *legitimacy crisis* from 2010. This period is characterized by record-level unresponsiveness between the electoral and parliamentary arenas and growing anti-establishment sentiment. This anti-establishment sentiment manifests in two ways: (1) the *incongruence* between party system and party competition and (2) the dynamics of party system tend to be centripetal while the party competition is centrifugal. Due to the high incongruence between party system and party competition, the *centripetal two-party system* can co-exist with the *centrifugal multi-party competition.* However, it leads to democratic deficit and legitimacy crisis. The post-2010 period is therefore not similar to any previous ones.

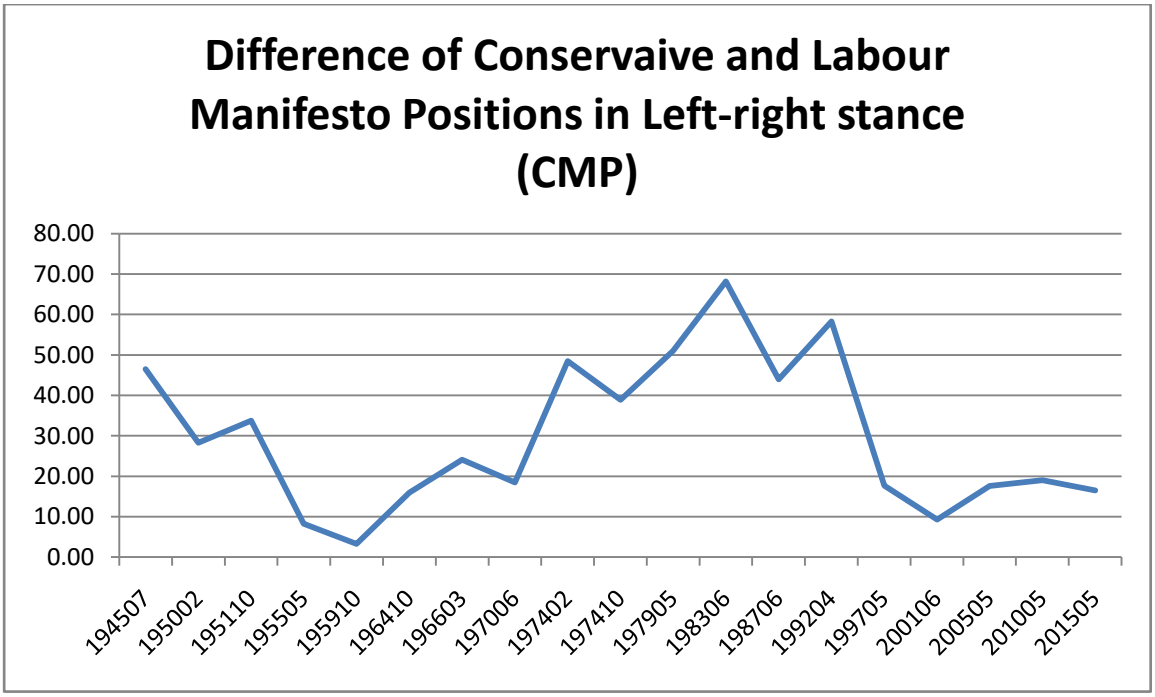

Figure 3 Conservative and Labour manifesto polarisation (CMP data)

I agree with both Webb (2000) and Bogdanor (2004) that the 1945-74 interval was characterised by ‘classical’ two-partyism. Similarly to Webb (2000), I recall a couple of party system indices to prove it. As Figure 17 shows, the UK party competition (ENEP) and Westminster party system (ENPP) were almost identical between 1945

and 1970. Both oscillated between the values of 2.0 and 2.5. It is certainly true that ENEP was slightly higher than ENPP, nevertheless, the difference was marginal as opposed to the post-1974 period. Particularly, Figure 17 demonstrates how sharply ENEP and ENPP diverged after the February 1974 elections. Later, the difference between the two values has kept rising and never returned to the post-war period. In accordance with the divergence of ENEP and ENPP, the distortion of the electoral system has also kept rising. Until 1970, the electoral system had only a disproportion value under 10.0. Nevertheless, after 1974 until today, the disproportion of UK general elections (with Gallagher's index) always surpassed the 10.0 value and sometimes converged to 20.0.

Webb (2000) is also right that this period is characterized by centripetal party competition. As the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) illustrates below, the differences between Conservative and Labour manifestos started to increase after 1974. It was the case until the 1992 elections, after which the two major parties' electoral manifestos became very similar (and the differences sharply declined.) (See Figure 3.) For this reason, I accept Webb's (2000) argument about the 1945–70 period of centripetal competition; however, I reject the theory of moderate pluralism because manifesto positions diverged in a dramatic way between 1974 and 1992. I suggest therefore to classify the 1945–70 period as centripetal, the 1974–92 period as centrifugal and the 1997–today period again as centripetal. In this respect, I can only accept Webb's theory about centripetal moderate pluralism after 1997. The CMP dataset shows that the party system in the UK was rather polarized between 1974 and 1992.

The big difference, however, between the 1945–70 and the 1997–today centripetal competition is the completely different nature of British society in the background. While between 1945–70 the centripetal competition coincided with strong class identification, party alignment and low electoral volatility (the classical example for cleavage-based party politics), from 1997 till today, the 'new' centripetal competition coincided with weak class identification, party de-alignment and high electoral volatility (the perfect example of issue-based party politics.) Therefore, today's centripetal competition has little if any to do with the previous (post-war) centripetal competition.

In addition, the 1945–70 period of centripetal competition was accompanied by relatively low ENEP (electoral competition) figures. It meant indeed that, in the Downsian sense, two major parties ran for the support of the median voter. Third parties were marginal at that time (ENEP was almost always under 2.5.) However, the post-1997 period of centripetal competition has been accompanied by high ENEP values. This means that besides the centripetal two-party system, there is a centrifugal UK party competition.[4]

There is one thing which makes sense if a centripetal competition has growing ENEP values: the median voter for whom the two major parties are contesting has become less powerful than before. Only this can explain why the position of the median voter means less and less support for the winning party and does more and more for the third parties. I do not think that the median voter disappeared from the electoral centre and got into one of the extremities in the UK electorate. If this was the case, third parties would already have performed much better than now. Instead, I argue that the peak of the median voter has been declining since 1997 and particularly since 2010. This theory can reconcile the opposing phenomena of centripetal competition and the rise of ENEP. There is still a median voter in the centre, however, the overall electoral support that it secures for the winning party has kept becoming less convincing. Therefore, it makes sense both to compete for the median voter (centripetal competition) and to compete for more extreme voters (centrifugal) because it pays off more and more. Figure 3 illustrates that according to the available 2015 CMP data, the UK party competition has indeed become somewhat centrifugal. Out of the 11 contesting political parties, there are 4 parties (Greens, PC, SNP, SDLP) which have more left-wing manifestos than Labour. On the other hand, there are two parties (DUP and UUP) which have more right-wing manifestos than the Conservatives. So there are 6 parties which hold more extreme positions than Labour or the Conservatives according to the 2015 CMP data.

[4] Unfortunately, this can be scarcely checked by the CMP database because small parties had not been part of the project till 2010. The first complete manifesto analysis in the UK was carried out at the 2015 general election. Before 2015, there were only manifestos about the three most influential parties (Con, Lab, LibDem).

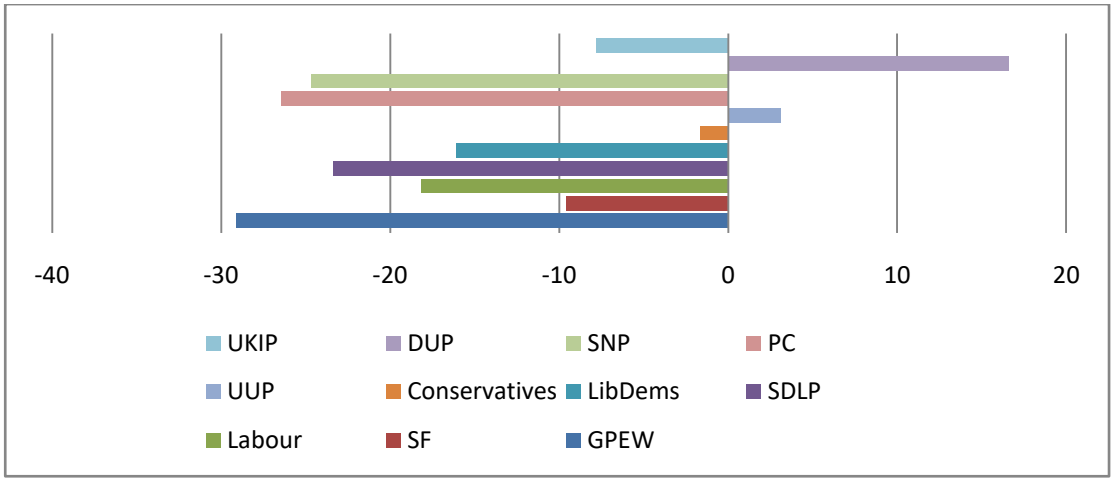

Figure 4 Left-right manifesto positions in 2015 ('rile") Source: CMP data

So, basically I agree with Bogdanor's (2004) and Webb's (2000) classifications, nevertheless, I give crucial importance to the post-2010 period. In fact, the two authors wrote their works much before the 2010 general election. So it makes no sense to criticise them for this omission. Nevertheless, in my opinion, the fourth (post-2010) period should be treated equally to any previous ones.

Table 6 My own classification

Period	Years	ENPP/ENEP difference	Dynamics of competition	UK party competition
1	1945–1974	marginal	centripetal	Two-party system and competition
2	1974–1997	growing	centrifugal	Two-party system and multi-party competition
3	1997–2010	large	centripetal	Two-party system and multi-party competition with devolved assemblies
4	2010–2015	extreme	Centripetal in Westminster and centrifugal outside	Anti-establishment

My classification was partially confirmed by Hungarian scholar Levente Nagy, too. Nagy (2015b: 131-137) argues that there were 3 closed periods in the evolution of UK party competition; (1) two-partyism (1945–1974), (2) increasing pluralism (1974–1997) and (3) high electoral distortion (1997–2010). Nagy (2015b: 136)

emphasizes that the 2010 general election might be considered as the beginning of a new era, too. He notes that the Conservative victory after 13 years of Labour dominance and the new coalition government might change the existing patterns of British party competition. He does not go too much into details about the post-2010 period. He just suggests the potential importance of this general election. Hence, I think that my idea about the importance of the 2010 general election in this dissertation is further confirmed by Nagy (2015b.) The mere fact that both Nagy (2015b) and I suggest the same four periods for the categorisation of British party politics confirms the importance of dealing with the post-2010 era. This is the reason why I give outstanding importance to this period in my dissertation, too.

3.3 CONCLUSION AND CRITICAL JUNCTURES

If I only wanted to identify the different periods in UK party competition, this thesis would be rather descriptive by summarising the existing literature. Nevertheless, since I am looking for the causes of party system change in Britain, I am interested in those events which impacted on a certain time period and started a completely new era. The scientific literature calls them *critical junctures*; these are *pivotal events* when the patterns of interaction fundamentally changed and a new period of *path-dependency* commenced. Hence, if I manage to understand the causes of such a particular critical juncture, I can also understand the whole period which follows it. Instead of observing long and continuous time intervals (as Webb (2000) and Bogdanor (2004) did), I want to focus only on those crucial general elections which proved to be critical junctures in British history. The fact that I identified four periods in the evolution of UK party competition logically means there are 4 critical junctures to observe. These are the general elections of 1945, February/October 1974, 1997 and 2010. I argue that these general elections determined the following years by their path-dependency. So it is enough to understand only these 4 general elections in order to understand the entire period after them. Although it is a bit reductionist, it brings many advantages: the causes of change can be better understood, it is easier to compare the causes by general elections, and the future effects of the long-term pluralisation can be more reliably predicted.

The literature about critical juncture and path dependency provides many different conceptualisations. Lipset and Rokkan (1967) used the term ‘critical juncture’ to find the origins of Western European party systems. Pierson (2000) adapted a micro-economic analytical framework for politics to understand change. Peters et al. (2005) underlined the importance of historical institutionalism and path dependency. Capoccia and Kelemen (2007) add the importance of narratives to critical junctures. Kreuzer (2009) further sophisticates the concept of critical juncture by suggesting a combination of historical, institutional and elite factors. All these authors, however, share one important idea: critical junctures are caused by *decisions*. These decisions are made by politicians and the electorate.

I argue these concepts often overestimate the importance of individual political decisions. Instead, I prefer larger and systematic explanations which might include individual decisions, too. However, critical junctures are usually so contingent periods that the consequences of individual decisions cannot be followed, only the larger systematic patterns. In this respect, Collier and Collier (1991: 27-39) offer a straightforward analytical framework. They approach critical junctures from 10 different perspectives.

1. Identifying Hypothesized Critical Juncture and Variations in how it occurs.
2. How long do critical junctures last?
3. Cleavage or Crisis?
4. Specifying a historical legacy.
5. Duration of the legacy.
6. Comparing the legacy with the antecedent system: assessing continuity and change.
7. Type of explanation: constant causes versus historical causes.
8. Rival explanations: constant causes.
9. The problem of partial explanation
10. Other rival explanations: the example of suppressor variables.

In this thesis, I will use a similar approach to Collier and Collier’s (1991) framework. I also want to understand critical juncture in robust and similar analytics. These are the following;

0. I *identify* the four critical junctures based on earlier works and electoral volatility. (I suppose that a critical juncture usually occurs with a large electoral swing. Therefore, electoral volatility should be high. This is true for 1945, February 1974, 1997. It is not true for 2010, however, it is for 2015. Later I will discuss why 2010 can still be a critical juncture.)
1. I explain the *importance* of each critical juncture. Why is it different from any previous general election and what kind of new pattern was established that year.
2. I demonstrate the importance of the critical juncture with *data*.
3. I try to evaluate the *causes* which generated the critical juncture.
4. I follow the *aftermath* of the critical juncture. What kind of path dependency did it have?
5. I *compare* the given critical juncture with another one to look for similarities and regularities.
6. I draw a *bottom line* to sum up very briefly what political pattern started with the critical juncture.

4 THE 1945 GENERAL ELECTION

4.1 IMPORTANCE[5]

The 1945 general election is generally considered as one of the most important landmarks in modern British party competition. This was the first election when Labour gained absolute majority and became the second party besides the Conservatives. The two-party rivalry has become a major characteristic of British politics since then. Lijphart thought it even so deterministic that he referred to it as the integral part of Westminster democracy. Due to the path-dependency which it generated, the 1945 general election has still significant impact on contemporary British politics. (See also Marsh, Johnston, Hay, & Buller, 1999.)

There are four reasons why the 1945 election should be treated as a turning point in British party competition. Firstly, it was the first time in history when the Labour Party gained an *absolute majority* in the House of Commons. Previously, they had won two general elections in 1924 and in 1929, however, there had not been enough seats to form a majority Labour government, instead they had only minority governments (Commons Briefing Papers SN04951, 2015). Secondly, in 1945, Labour did not just get an absolute majority, but they did it with a *landslide* (146 seats majority against the second placed Conservatives). Such kind of victory was often achieved by the Conservatives earlier, but never by any left-wing parties. (See also McKibbin, 2010.) Thirdly, the 1945 results introduced completely new political rivalry in British politics: the *Conservative–Labour* competition. Before 1945, both Labour and the Liberals tried to become the second party behind the Conservatives, which created either a three-party contest or most often a predominant one (the Conservatives) with two smaller (Lab, Lib) parties. (See also Skidelsky, 1967; Wrigley, 1976.) Now, it became clear that only Labour could be the opposition to the Conservatives. Fourthly, the 1945 election was not only dramatically different from

[5] The modified version of this chapter was published in Kaszap (2016a).

any previous results, but it was also the starting point of a *long-term trend.* After 1945, the Conservative-Labour dichotomy became so stable that electoral volatility almost disappeared for 20 years. So this election was both very different from any other former ones and deterministic for the following ones. The two-party logic has become an integral part of British political thinking. It often happens that two-partyism is considered to be the ever existing pattern of British politics. Any difference from this, as between 1918 and 1945 or after 1974, is often thought to be deviation from normality.

4.2 DATA

The 1945 general election was a landslide victory for Labour and a humiliating loss for the Conservatives. Labour got 47.7% of the votes which translated into 61.4% of the parliamentary seats. At the same time, the Conservatives got 39.7% of the votes and 32.8% of the seats. The Liberals became the third party with 9% of the votes and just 1.9% of the seats. If we compare this result with the previous 1935 general election, the difference is even more shocking. Then, the Conservatives got 429 seats (69.76%), Labour had 154 seats (25.04%) and the Liberals got 21 seats (3.41%). In 1945, the Conservatives had 210 seats (32.81%), Labour had 393 (61.4%) and the Liberals 12 (1.9%). So basically the Conservatives and the Liberals halved their parliamentary seat shares while Labour almost tripled it. Although the majority electoral system played an additional role in Labour's landslide, nevertheless, the 1945 election result was the culmination of a historic trend.

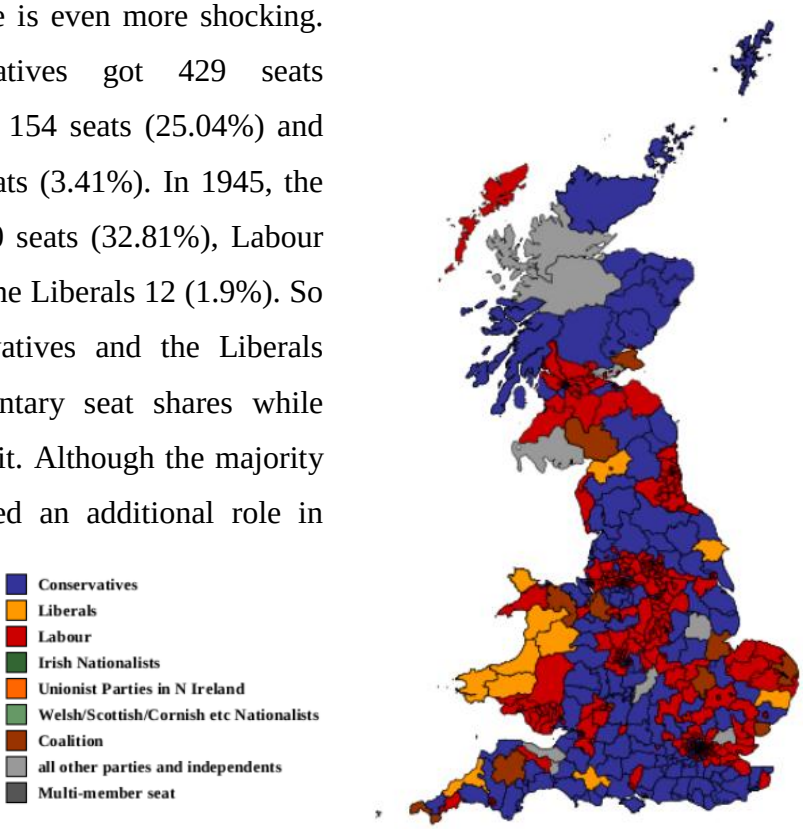

Figure 5 The 1945 general election result on the UK map

Source: Great Britain Historical GIS Project (2017)
With prior permission from the authors. Retrieved from:
http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/atlas/map/R_WINNING_PARTY/CONSTITUENCY/05JUL1945 Downloaded: 12/06/2018

As it can be seen in Figure 6, the vote share for Labour had been rising since 1918. At the same time, the Liberals kept losing votes. The Conservatives had changing patterns but they usually grew. However, Figure 7 shows how disproportionally these results translated into parliamentary seat share. The FPTP electoral system usually favoured very much the Conservatives and disfavoured either Labour or the Liberals or both. For instance, in 1931, Labour got under 10% seat shares whereas their vote share was above 30%. In 1935, they achieved slightly better results but they were still a minor party to the Conservatives. With this previous record, the 1945 election showed a skyrocketing Labour both in votes and particularly in seats. The Conservatives nevertheless became a minor party besides Labour, although they enjoyed a predominant position before the war.

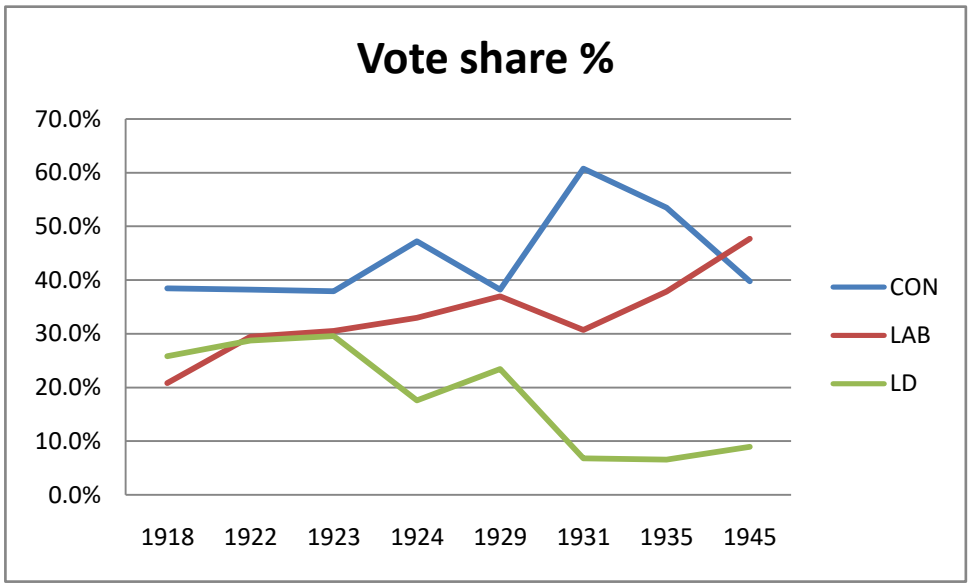

Figure 6 Vote share proportions in the party competition (1918–1945)

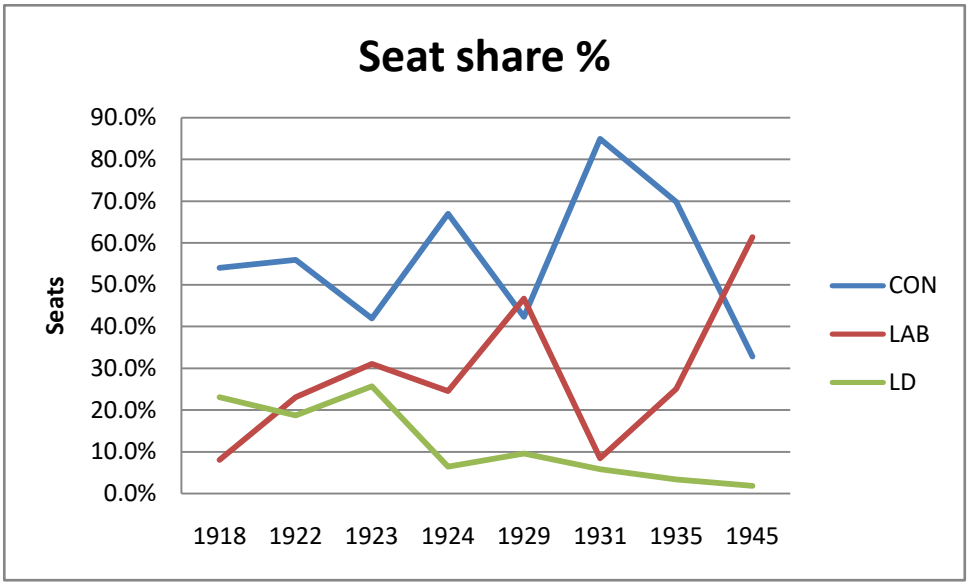

Figure 7 Seat share proportions in the party system (1918–1945)

This sudden change, however, froze after 1945. Instead of further electoral volatility, the two major parties conserved their dominance in British politics. So, even though FPTP is usually considered as the source of two-party competition (Duverger's law), in fact, the very same electoral system could result in fundamentally different outcomes before 1945. Therefore, I reckon instead that the two-party politics was sustained by social changes. This is particularly true if we compare ENEP with ENPP before and after 1945.

As it can be seen in Table 7, both ENPP and ENEP values were very unpredictable between 1918 and 1945. ENPP was sometimes over and sometimes under 2.00, which suggest that in the House of Commons there was either a two-and-a-half (sometimes three-) party system or a predominant party system with one giant party (the Conservatives.) At the same time, the UK electoral party system (ENEP) kept being above 2.00, which suggest a multi-party competition outside Westminster. Therefore, the logical consequence is that the differences between ENPP and ENEP values were sometimes relatively high. (See Table 7.) For example, in 1931, this difference reached 35.95% because ENEP was 2.14 and ENPP only 1.37. It can be interpreted that a predominant parliamentary party system co-existed with a two-(and-a-half) electoral party system. In other words, the House of Commons did not represent well the ongoing party competition in British society (as it was the case after 1974, too.) However, from 1945, ENEP started to decrease and ENPP began to stabilize around

2.00. This convergence resulted in the decline of ENEP-ENPP differences, too. For instance, in 1951 and in 1955, ENPP was respectively 2.05 and 2.08 and ENEP was 2.13 and 2.16. The differences were just 3.69% and 6.30% during these two elections. This means that the post-1945 elections had a trend towards two-partyism both in the parliamentary and electoral arenas. This was indeed the 'heyday' of two-party politics.

Table 7 ENEP and ENPP values (1918–1945)

	ENPP	ENEP	Diff
1918	2.68	3.57	25.08%
1922	2.49	3.16	21.12%
1923	2.95	3.08	4.12%
1924	1.95	2.75	29.32%
1929	2.46	2.96	16.78%
1931	1.37	2.14	35.95%
1935	1.82	2.30	21.21%
1945	2.06	2.53	18.92%
1950	2.08	2.45	15.10%
1951	2.05	2.13	3.69%
1955	2.03	2.16	6.30%
1959	1.99	2.28	12.74%
1964	2.06	2.53	18.75%
1966	2.02	2.42	16.75%
1970	2.07	2.46	16.07%
1974	2.25	3.13	28.10%
1974	2.25	3.15	28.48%
1979	2.15	2.87	24.98%
1983	2.09	3.11	32.78%
1987	2.17	3.07	29.38%
1992	2.27	3.05	25.77%
1997	2.12	3.18	33.28%
2001	2.17	3.28	33.94%
2005	2.46	3.52	30.04%
2010	2.58	3.61	28.61%
2015	2.53	3.63	30.23%

4.3 CAUSES

Labour's landslide victory in 1945 was caused by several factors. In the following, I try to summarise them in a non-exclusive way.

- Paul Adelman (2001) quotes Paul Addison's book 'The Road to 1945,' which states that the year of 1940 had a particularly important role in Labour's success. In 1940, two important events occurred: the *Dunkirk crisis*, which symbolised the complete failure of appeasement politics, which was delivered

by Neville Chamberlain's Conservative government and it was also the first year when a *wartime economic plan* was accepted. Both of these events supported Labour's popularity.

- Paul Adelman (2001) adds that it was also very important to have a 'reconstruction plan' after the Second World War. In this vein, the Conservatives had very poor initiatives since they were more preoccupied with ongoing military acts. At the same time, Labour had already started to elaborate new reconstruction policies for the end of the war. This was supported by the Beveridge Report in 1942 (although William Beveridge was personally a Liberal politician), the White Paper in 1944, the Employment Policy in 1944 and the Butler Education Act in 1944 (Adelman, 2001). At the same time, Winston Churchill was only concerned about international politics.
- During the 10 years of Coalition government (1935–45), Labour gained some reputation as a party in *governmental office* (Adelman, 2001). Previously their lack of office record was a major handicap vis-á-vis the Conservatives. They were often considered as a sectional party, which represented only a small proportion of the entire British nation. However, during the coalition years, they showed how well they could perform in office (particularly in home affairs) and they acted as a responsible party. (See more in M. Roberts, 2001.)
- McCallum and Readman add (1964: 267) that *Labour's monopoly on the left* was also a key factor in their 1945 electoral victory; there were no other significant parties beside Labour. Both the Liberals and other smaller parties (like the Communist Party or the Common Wealth) became extremely marginal at the end of the Second World War.
- Although Churchill was personally the most popular politician in Britain at the end of the Second World War, his party remained much behind his personal reputation. Harold Macmillan writes in his memories that *'it was not Churchill who lost the 1945 election; it was the ghost of Neville Chamberlain'* (McCallum and Readman (1964: 268). Churchill could not get rid of his party's previous negative record.
- During the collation years, there was an *electoral truce* among the Conservatives, the Labour Party and the Liberals. In exchange for their loyalty in the coalition government, they promised not to nominate candidates against

each other at constituency by-elections where an incumbent MP was re-running. This electoral truce was interpreted by the Conservatives as a *political truce* as well. It meant that in addition to the by-election deal, they also stopped party mobilisation. They only re-launched their party machine in February 1945, a couple of months before the 1945 general election. (The last general mobilisation had been in 1935, at the last general election!) At the same time, Labour did not stop constituency life and party mobilisation. So during the 1945 election campaign Labour enjoyed a comparative advantage 'on the ground' (McCallum and Readman, 1964).

- Expanding *secondary education* is considered another comparative advantage for Labour (McCallum and Readman, 1964: 269). The new generation had a more vivid awareness of their rights and duties in the society. So they appreciated more detailed policy proposals in which Labour had a clear win. The *Let Us Face the Future* manifesto in 1945 promised social services, public ownership and equality for all. This was appreciated by the new, more educated generation.
- Alun Wyburn-Powell (2015) says that Lloyd George's memory also had a negative effect on Churchill's personal reputation as a future peacetime prime minister. Although both politicians were war heroes in their time, Lloyed George became a weak and inadequate prime minister after the First World War. The negative experiences about his career also affected Churchill's future chances adversely.
- During the war, the military service mixed all social classes, which facilitated the exchange of ideas and opinions. This crosscutting of class cleavages led to a high electoral volatility in 1945 (Alun Wyburn-Powell (2015).
- The British people wanted to finally end the Second World War. In this sense, a change in government would have meant a ritual rupture with the past, too. Although Churchill was the most popular politician in the country, his name intertwined with belligerence and war. The vast majority of the electorate could only remember the Conservatives as a party under which they experienced anxiety, austerity and humiliation (McCallum and Readman (1964: 268). The British electorate became a bit tired out after the 10 years of continuous Conservative rule.

At the same time, Labour concentrated on post-war issues and the reconstruction plan. So there was obvious discord between Churchill's militaristic charisma on the one hand, and Labour's practical and detailed economic plans on the other hand. In this context, Churchill represented the past and Labour the future.

- Labour aspired at a classless appeal. They were very inclusive and acted like a catch-all party. Clement Attlee said in the run-up to the 1945 election:

  > *"fifty years ago the Labour party might with some justice have been called a class party, representing almost exclusively the wage earners." (...) "It is still based on organised Labour but has steadily become more and more inclusive.... the Labour Party is, in fact, the one Party which most nearly reflects in its representation and composition all the main streams which flow into the great river of our national life*." (McCulloch, 1985: 475)

- Labour had successfully achieved party unity by *suppressing the popular front* (idealists, social revolutionaries, moralists inside the party). Instead the Labour leadership adopted a pragmatist and catch-all strategy which reached out for everyone. Attlee compared this process with the British characteristics of "*the triumph of reasonableness and practicality over doctrinaire impossibilism.*" (McCulloch, 1985:488)

In sum, I argue, the most important cause for Labour's victory lay in three things: the misery of the war, which was mostly associated with the Conservatives, the promise of a new world, which Labour offered as an alternative and the bad shape of the Conservative Party organisation because Churchill cared much more about international politics than about domestic politics. The synergy of the three led to the 1945 Labour landslide. However, it is another question how they could keep their support in the following decades. Next, I will try to answer this question.

4.4 AFTERMATH

The 1945 election had two interwoven impacts for the following 30 years (or even more). First, it established an era of left wing politics in Britain where the two major parties revolved around very same electoral policies: Keynesian economics and the

support for welfare state. Since the two parties had a consensus over these policies, this historical period was characterised by a centripetal political competition where major parties offered very similar manifestos with slight differences (see also Lowe, 1990). Second, the 1945 election established the two-party competition by raising Labour to a dominant position on the left. As Gary McCulloch (1985: 469) notes, Labour became "the only cock on the dunghill". The Conservatives represented the middle class and the entrepreneurs while Labour represented the working class and the employees. These two phenomena (the post-war consensus and two-party competition) mutually reinforced each other.

4.4.1 **Post-war consensus**

The phenomenon of the post-war consensus is usually, although not always, accepted in the literature. Timothy Heppel (2015) collects the arguments for and against the theory of a post-war consensus. He says that the advocates for a post-war consensus agree that both Labour and the Conservatives respected each other's governmental records and they did not try to reverse the other's achievements. Since the era was started in 1945 with Clement Attlee's Labour government, it had to be the Conservative Party that respected their left wing predecessor's achievements. Hence, a kind of left wing politics was carried out by both parties after the Second World War. The policies which both two parties accepted were the following:

- Full employment
- Public ownership
- Keynesian active economic interventionism
- Conciliation with the trade unions
- National Healthcare System (NHS)
- Strongly supporting the Atlantic Alliance (NATO, nuclear weapons, British presence in West Germany)
- Peaceful withdrawal from the British Empire (India, Pakistan, Africa)

Heppel (2015) also collects arguments against the post-war consensus. These are less numerous, nevertheless, he lists:

- There were plenty of issues which divided the two sides (private education, crime and punishment and relations with the European Economic Community.)
- The whole categorisation and interpretation of the post-war era was elaborated after Margaret Thatcher's neoconservative policies. Therefore, talking about a post-war consensus has always been a somewhat retrospective effect which tried to roll back the facts with hindsight.

Eventually, putting together the two opposing arguments, it is fair to say that a post-war consensus *did exist*. The best evidence for this argument is nationalisation, which had been begun by the Labour government and was maintained by the Conservatives. They did not try to privatise sectors of economy as later Margaret Thatcher did after 1979. Full employment and trade unions were the cornerstone for every British government irrespective of Labour or Tory. In economic terms, it is therefore fair to say that a post-war consensus existed.

4.4.2 **Two-party competition**

The second impact after 1945 was the institutionalisation of two-party competition. This idea is supported by two indices: the low electoral volatility and the low ENEP/ENPP differences. First, there is the *electoral volatility* which was recorded low during this period. As Figure 8 demonstrates, the electoral volatility started with a record high level in 1945 (13.73%), which suddenly dropped down to 3.73% for the next election and kept remaining under 8.00% until the February 1974 general election, when it jumped up again to a record high level (14.43%.) It means that there was a one-off huge electoral realignment from 1935 to 1945, which manifested in record high electoral volatility. However, the existing patterns of interaction which were established in 1945 remained for the next seven general elections.

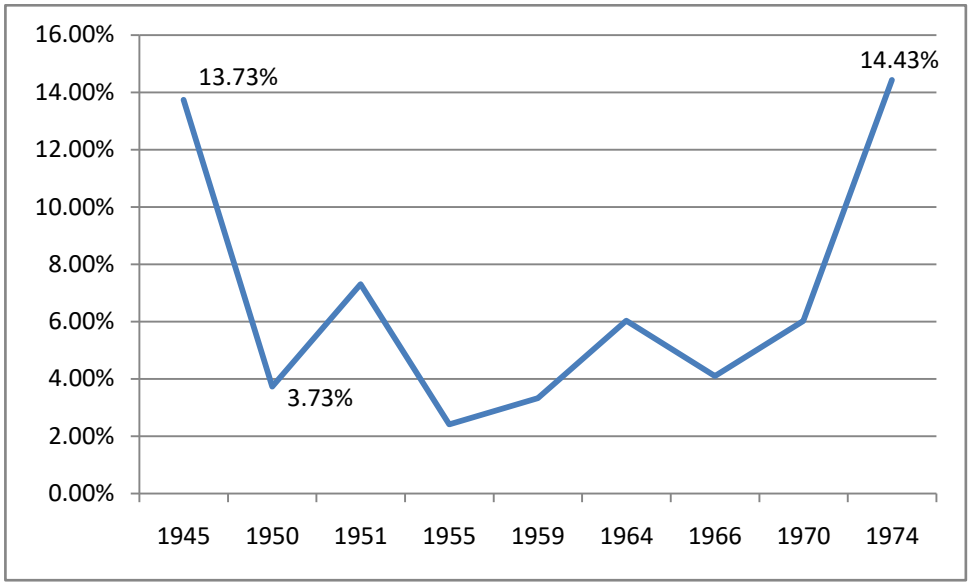

Figure 8 Electoral volatility (Pedersen Index) (1945 – February 1974)

Before 1945, there was a growing political demand for working-class representation; nevertheless, it did not pair with a single political representation (a Labour party.) Instead, the working class was dispersed among three separate parties: Labour, the Liberals and the Conservatives. (See also Cole, 2002.) So, before the Second World War, although the political demand was there for working class representation, there was no political supply for them (a single party.) The record high electoral volatility hence meant that these voters could find their party and later remained loyal to it. This supports the idea of class based politics during that period.

Butler and Stokes (1971: 111–134) give pivotal importance to *parental political affiliation* in this process. They argue that the children of working class families became Labour voters, which favoured the Labour Party in the long term. I argue, there was not any general election between 1935 and 1945, so the manifestation of this additional support was shocking and fast in 1945. This is a bit similar to the 1918 universal suffrage, when Labour Party advanced significantly. At that time, however, it was due to a constitutional change, whereas in 1945 it was rather due to social change. This long term historic trend is certainly one important element of the high electoral volatility in 1945.

The other element of this high electoral volatility was the relevant electoral switch from the Conservatives to Labour. As I argued in Section 4.3, Labour acted as a catch-all party in 1945. They successfully reached out for the whole society and for the non-

working voters as well. In this sense, the record high volatility was caused by both class based politics (the inflow of working class votes) and issue politics (the inflow of non-working class votes.) Later, during the following elections, although much of the non-worker support flowed back to the Conservatives, the working class support remained strong. Therefore, the high electoral volatility in 1945 was not followed by other high electoral volatilities, and the stability of working class support balanced Labour's support. From 1950, a two-party/two-class competition was eventually institutionalised and only a small proportion of the electorate switched preferences (hence a record low electoral volatility.) (See also Goldthorpe & Lockwood, 1963.)

After 1974, however, there was an opposing trend going on, which ended the two-party competition. In February 1974, there was again a record high electoral volatility (14.43%) similarly to 1945. That time, however, it was a major shock to two-partyism because much of the electorate stopped supporting their class based parties. Instead, third parties gained significant support. I argue that in 1974, in opposition to 1945, there was a political supply for the classes (Labour for the working class and the Conservatives for the middle class), however, the political demand started to shrink. This generated a demand for third parties and a collapse of two-party competition. So only the period between 1945 and 1974 served the two-party competition in its pure form. Before 1945, there was a demand without a supply, whereas after 1974, there was a supply with a less powerful demand. The balance between supply and demand was only secured during the 1945–74 period.

The second index which supports the idea of two-party competition is the difference between *ENEP* and *ENPP*. In fact, the British electorate should have been satisfied with the political representation (the supply side) because the differences between ENEP and ENPP remained relatively low. Before and after the 1945–74 period, there was much larger difference between ENEP and ENPP. (See Figure 9.) This was, moreover, the only time in modern British history when the parliamentary arena was almost perfectly congruent with the electoral arena. The balance between ENEP and ENPP suggests that the two-party competition enjoyed quite strong legitimacy in the society.

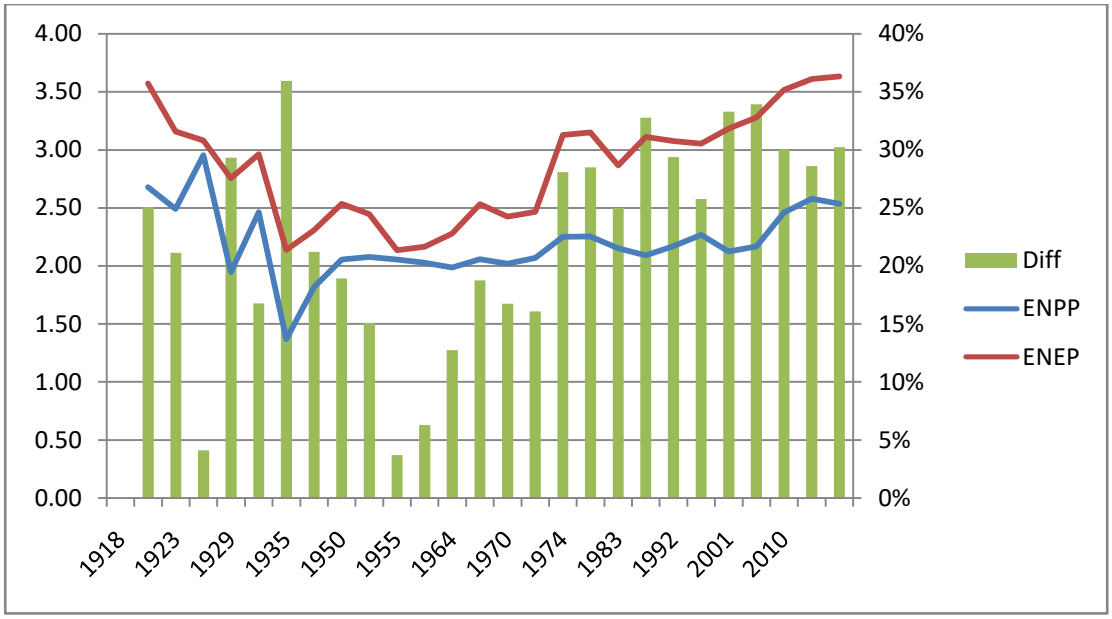

Figure 9 ENPP and ENEP differences (1918-2015)

To understand why the two-party competition enjoyed such legitimacy during the 1945–74 period, I use Paul Webb's (2000: 44) explanation, who offers three factors: party identification, political socialization and a majority electoral system. *Party identification* states that most people in the 1950s and 60s felt affiliated to a particular political party (be it the Conservatives or Labour.) The strength of this attachment was so important that it even changed individual voter preferences. To put it bluntly, voters thought what their parties wanted them to think. The strong party identification was a major element of class politics. Second, *political socialization* happened in families, neighbourhoods and workplaces. Due to the relatively limited social mobility, individuals stuck inside the same social group 'from the cradle to the grave.' Hence, it was not precisely individuals who voted at general elections but, instead, families, friends, neighbours or workplace communities. The individual preference which derived from personal experiences was only complementary but not primary. Third, as Webb (2000) argues, the political choices were refrained by the first-past-the-post *electoral system* because voters did not want to waste their votes on small parties. They only voted for the two major parties with a chance to win. This obviously imposed a high entry barrier for third parties. In sum, these three factors caused altogether the institutionalisation of two-party politics. The electoral competition during this period of time was very tight because a couple of undecided

(not aligned) voters always switched preferences. Most of the electorate stayed loyal to their parties and a marginal few voters decided the outcome.

In sum, the 1945–74 period can be characterised as the era of post-war consensus and two-party competition. This centripetal competition was based on class cleavage where only a handful of people decided the outcome of the given general election. However, the period enjoyed high legitimacy because no third party emerged, electoral volatility was low, turnout was high and the parliamentary arena was congruent with the electoral arena. This idealistic picture broke up in 1974.

4.5 COMPARING 1945 WITH 1997

A great many of similarities can be pointed out between the 1945 and the 1997 Labour landslide victories. Although there are certainly plenty of differences, I find it more interesting to focus on the similarities. In both cases, the landslide victories came from the weakness of the Conservative Party, the dominance of Labour on the left, the party's internal unity and their very promising campaign manifesto. I guess each of these four factors contributed to Labour winning with a landslide in both cases. These factors cannot be separated from each other. Instead, there is significant synergy and reinforcing effect among them. For instance, the Conservatives' weakness suggests incompetence, which is further enhanced by Labour's promising competence (at least based on the campaign manifestos.) Internal unity always meant that the Labour leadership cut back the hard left wing and hence proposed a moderate party profile. This was the case before 1945 as well as before 1997. This party unity facilitated both showing competence to the electorate and dealing with other rival parties on the left. In 1945 the main rivals were the Liberals and in 1997 the Liberal Democrats. In both cases, party unity secured the dominance of Labour on the left. Finally, since the party manifestos were very promising, the electorate could feel both in 1945 and in 1997 that they could change politics. These four factors pulled into the same direction at these two general elections.

In the following Table 8, I compare the 1945 and 1997 elections in more details.

Table 8 Comparing the 1945 and 1997 general elections

	1945	**1997**
Landslide victory	47.7% votes and 61.4% seats for Labour	43.2% votes and 63.43% seats for Labour
Tiring out the Conservatives	• Conservative predominance between 1918 and 1945. • Austerity, anxiety and social challenges • Conservative incompetence (Neville Chamberlain and the appeasement)	• 18 years of Conservatives governments • Conflicting social transformation ('Thatcher's famous bag on the table') • Conservative incompetence (Major's 1992 ERM crisis, the 'sleaze' inside the party, privatisation went too far (railways))
A very promising Labour appeal (issue politics)	*Let Us Face the Future – 1945 manifesto* • Social services (NHS, education, at work benefit, full employment etc.)	*New Life For Britain – 1997 manifesto* • Social-democratic program • Devolution
Classless appeal	National party (good wartime record, patriotic behaviour during the war despite their international agenda – pragmatism)	Neoconservative consensus (withdrawal of clause IV, supporting globalisation and the financial services)
Need for change	Ultimately getting rid of the war Very positive Labour post-war issues	Getting rid of the 'nasty party' Very positive Blair image
Internal party unity **(Defeating the popular movement – moving to elitism)**	The popular front (radicals, idealists, revolutionaries) were taken over by the Leadership (pragmatists.) "Transport House" over "Theoretical Tom and Defeatist Dick and Half-Hearted Harry."[6]	Abolishing block voting (trade union influence)
Left hegemony **(Defeating other left parties)**	The Liberals became 3rd party beside other smaller	Liberal Democrats lose ground, left nationalist

[6] Labour's victory in 1945 seemed to confirm the strength and wisdom of its attitudes and to discredit dissenters. Dalton wasted little time on pointing out the sagacity of the Labour leadership and deriding its critics: "May I be allowed for a moment to recall that in the years gone by there were faint hearts in the Labour Party- Theoretical Tom and Defeatist Dick and Half-Hearted Harry–who doubted whether we could ever win through as an independent Party, fighting alone.... But the wisdom of Transport House prevailed over all this." (McCulloch, 1985) (487–488)

	contestants (e.g. Common Wealth, Communist Party) who were all marginalised	parties (PC, SNP) were marginal

The big difference, however, lays in a superficial similarity. Both the post-1945 and the post-1997 period had centripetal dynamics. After 1945, the Conservatives and Labour had consensus over welfare economics whereas, after 1997, these parties had consensus over the neoliberal values. However, although the 1945–74 centripetal competition was *more* legitimate and supported by the electorate, the 1997–2010 period was *less* legitimate and lead to an anti-establishment sentiment. The 1945–74 period was more legitimate because the turnout at general elections was high (70–85%), and party system was congruent with party competition. Nevertheless, between 1997 and 2010, the turnout was record low (around 60%) and the parliamentary arena was increasingly incongruent with the electoral arena. Therefore, the centripetal competition was more supported after the Second World War than after 1997.

The two centripetal competitions are different not only regarding the legitimacy behind them but also their content. The 1945–74 period was marked by a class based centripetal competition between two mass parties with aligned voters. Nevertheless, after 1997, there was an issue based centripetal competition between two catch-all parties. In the first case, it was a competition about class interests, whereas in the second case, it was a competition about individual preferences. The two different centripetal competitions also manifest in formerly unknown campaign techniques. In 1997 new campaign tools were introduced such as personalisation, political marketing and mass media.

4.6 BOTTOM LINE

The 1945 general election created the most important path dependency in modern British politics; the Conservative–Labour two-party competition. As we have seen, neither before 1945, nor later in the 20th century, was two-partyism as strong as in the 1950s and 1960s. However, we still often think that British politics has always been about the dichotomy between the Conservatives and Labour.

The reason for this very strong path dependency originates from the *institutionalisation* of the post-war party competition. It was the time when parliamentary and electoral arenas perfectly overlapped (they were almost completely congruent.) Therefore, the parliamentary arena managed to conserve the patterns of the electoral arena. Later, however, when gradual change started to happen in the electoral arena, the fossilized parliamentary arena resisted. Any change should have been interpreted as a response to this point of departure. The high congruence of the post-1945 period generated high legitimacy and high institutionalisation. In consequence, it paved the way for the most important path-dependency in British politics: two-party competition between the Conservatives and Labour.

5 THE 1974 GENERAL ELECTIONS

5.1 IMPORTANCE[7]

The 'heyday of two-partyism' ended in February 1974. This was the second time after 1929 (and the first case after the Second World War) that a hung parliament was formed because none of the two major parties had enough seats to have an absolute majority. This result was mainly due to the strikingly good performance of the Liberal Party (14 seats) and other minor parties like the nationalists in Scotland and Wales (9 seats.) However, the most important contribution to the hung parliament came from the equally bad performance of the two major parties (301 seat for Labour and 297 for the Conservatives). Therefore, the February 1974 election was not about the success of third parties but rather about the failure of both major parties.

The February 1974 election meant a dividing line in the evolution of British party politics after the Second World War. Firstly, as it was mentioned in the previous paragraph, a hung parliament was formed without any clear winner party or absolute majority. In the earlier two-party competition, there was one of the two major parties which gained absolute majority. Then, in 1974, they did not get enough support. Secondly, it was also the starting point in British politics of what we have been calling the *de-alignment* of the electorate since then. (See also Denver, Carman, & Johns, 2012.) The UK voters started to detach from the mass-parties (Labour and the Conservatives), which they had previously thought represented their social background and interests. Instead, the February 1974 election was characterized by record high electoral volatility and a sudden swing from traditional parties to smaller ones. Previously, both the electoral volatility and the swing were much lower, stable and predictable. After the last traditional general election in 1970, this kind of new dynamics in British politics marked a completely new phase.

[7] The modified version of this chapter was published in Kaszap (2016b).

Thirdly, the February 1974 election introduced some quite new political concerns. First of all, because of the king-maker position of the Liberals, coalition negotiations started. This created the appearance of the Liberals as the third national party. Also, because of the good performance of the nationalist parties (SNP, PC), the question of regional autonomy and devolution appeared on the political agenda. And in the long term, election campaigns became more dominated by issues and valence politics rather than by traditional class affiliation. In summary, it is fair to say that the first major step towards the pluralisation of British politics started in 1974.

5.2 DATA

The special interest in the February 1974 election lies in its shocking difference from any other election. In 1970, during the closest previous general election, the results provided the best example for Westminster democracy. It can easily be said that all of Lijphart's criteria for a Westminster democracy were fulfilled: the two major parties together obtained 89.4% of the votes and third parties were marginal (only 10.6%), the difference between the two parties was tight (46.4% for the Conservatives and 43% for Labour), and the first-past-the-post electoral system provided a strong majority and a single government (the Tories got 330 seats while only 316 seats were needed for the absolute majority). So the 1970 general election repeated the patterns of the previous 7 general elections after 1945.

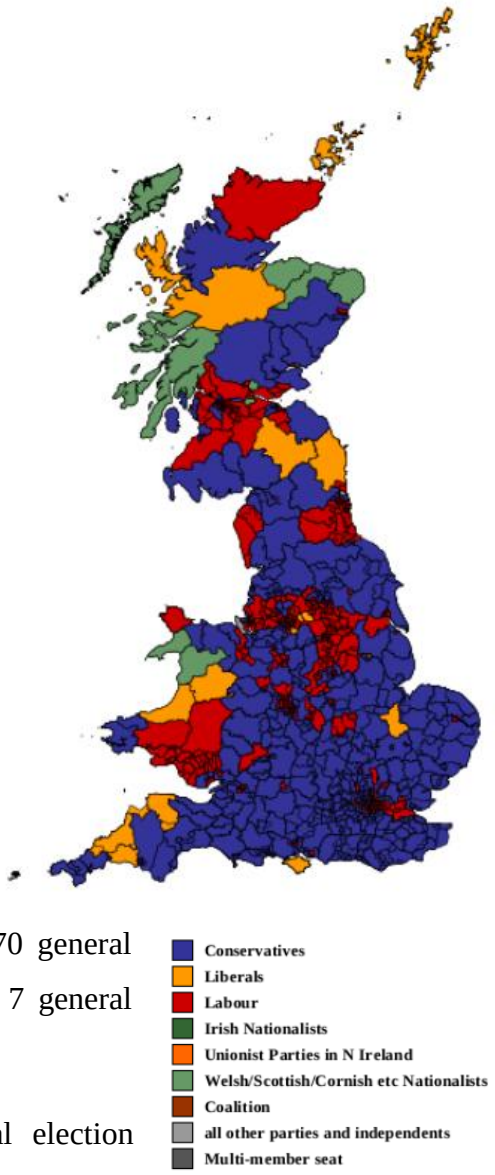

Figure 10 The February 1974 general election result on the UK map

Source: Great Britain Historical GIS Project (2017)
With prior permission from the authors. Retrieved from: http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/atlas/map/R_WINNING_PARTY/CONSTITUENCY/28FEB1974 Downloaded: 12/06/2018

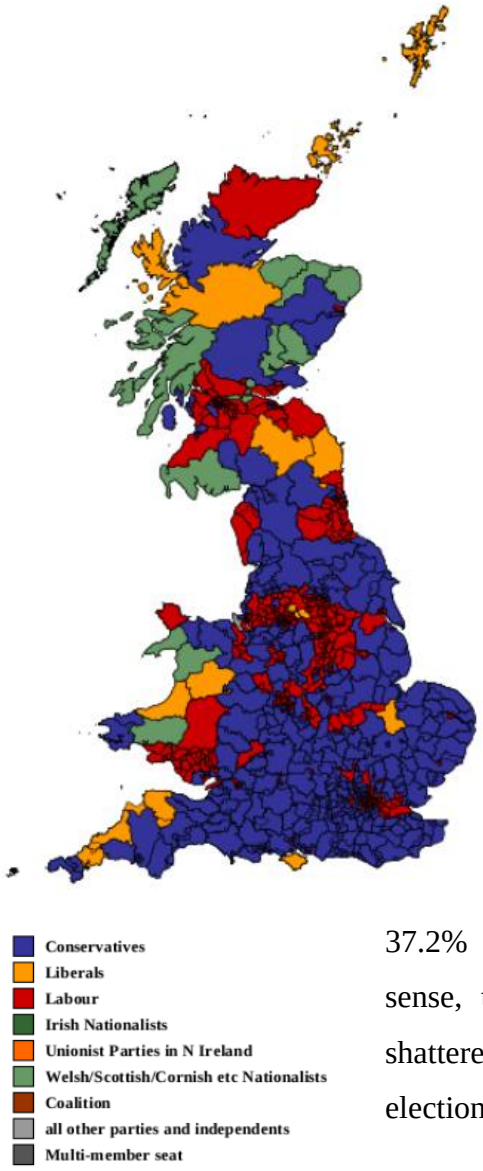

Figure 11 The October 1974 general election result on the UK map

Source: Great Britain Historical GIS Project (2017) With prior permission from the authors. Retrieved from: http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/atlas/map/R_WINNING_PARTY/CONSTITUENCY/10OCT1974 Downloaded: 12/06/2018

Nevertheless, the February 1974 election produced almost a diametrically different outcome than the 1970 election. First, the two-party vote share dropped to 75% from the previous 89.4%. Second, the winner party did not have enough seats for a single government (the Conservatives had only 297 seats whereas 318 were needed for an absolute majority). Only the third criterion, the tight race between the two major parties was met (37.8% for the Conservatives and 37.2% for the Labour.) Therefore, in a Lijphartian sense, the two-party dominated Westminster system shattered severely at the February 1974 general election.

So 1974 meant a sudden and complete change in the patterns of UK party competition. Though de-alignment and the erosion of the two parties had already showed some signs (the Liberals had an upsurge since 1972 at by-elections, the SNP had better and better local election results from 1968 and there was also an increase in the number of contestants during general elections in the whole UK (Denver & Garnett, 2014), it was unlikely that something completely strange would appear in British politics. Even political scientists at that time (Butler and Stokes, 1971) suggested a slow and evolutional change in the class support of major parties and not a sudden turn.

If we compare the February 1974 election with the previous 1970 election by using fragmentation indices and party system categorisation, it is obvious how much change has happened. In 1970, ENEP (electoral arena) was 2.46 and ENPP (parliamentary

arena) was 2.07 which resulted in a two-and-a-half party system in the electoral arena and a two-party system in the parliamentary arena. There was very low volatility of votes following the 1966 election (just 6.02%) and the disproportional effect of the electoral system was also marginal (only 6.59 LSq, which is quite healthy since every electoral system has some disproportional effect.) Nevertheless, in February 1974, all these indices showed a significant change: ENEP rose to 3.13 (to a moderate or limited multi-party system) while ENPP continued to remain 2.25 (a two-and-a half or a two-party system); disproportion jumped to 15.47 % LSq (almost tripled) and volatility had a record high 14.43% level. These results together demonstrate one key fact: it was the first post-war election when the electoral and the parliamentary arenas significantly separated from each other. ENEP, the volatility and the disproportion indices alike attest that the traditional two-party system ceased to represent general UK voter preferences (at least at that time).

5.3 CAUSES

The causes of the 1974 political crisis can be divided into two groups: those which were related to the political performance of major parties, and those which were independent of the decisions of the political actors.

5.3.1 Actor related causes

1. *Economic incompetence and post-war consensus:* As I mentioned earlier, the 1945–74 period was characterised by a two-party competition and a two-party system. The congruence between the electoral and the parliamentary arenas was assured by class politics; the two parties represented two classes. Moreover, there was consensus among the two major parties about the beneficial effects of welfare economics. This consensus was called post-war consensus. The two factors together (congruence and consensus) generated a centripetal competition in which both parties wanted to pursue pretty much the same goals with only one difference; how to attain them.

   From the early 1970s, however, welfare economics became a burden on the two major parties. The economic turmoil of the 1970s could not have been resolved by traditional Keynesian economic measures. Since the

post-war consensus meant a path dependency for both Labour and the Conservatives, one could experience that neither parties could find solutions to the growing economic concerns like high inflation, falling productivity, high unemployment and trade union strikes. Labour was considered to be politically incompetent because they could not fulfill their economic promises about full employment, wage stability and stable relations with trade unions. The Conservatives, on the other hand, were considered to be politically incompetent because they could not break with the 'socialist' post-war consensus. (See also Ball & Seldon, 2013.) In this context, there was growing perception in the electorate that the two traditional parties could not handle the ongoing economic problems. There were regular disruptions in the sectors of electricity, docks, railway and coal mines because of trade union strikes. It disrupted everyday life for many (Denver and Garnett, 2014: 47).

The incompetence of the two major parties caused general disillusionment among the British electorate. This feeling contributed to an already existing phenomenon which was called *de-alignment*. De-alignment meant that class relations between voters and their respective parties became less strong over time. De-alignment and incompetence together caused the record high electoral volatility in February 1974. De-alignment made possible for voters to follow their individual preferences rather than social interests, and incompetence catalysed this process. Hence, a large segment of the electorate was looking for a third party (an alternative for both Labour and the Conservatives.)

Obviously, the only party which could have appeared as a third party was the Liberals. They had contestants at almost all UK constituencies and they had a history. Nevertheless, in Scotland and Wales the nationalist parties also managed to appear as a potential third party. For them, the incompetence of the British governments was also interpreted as the incompetence of the central government. They argued that many of the economic difficulties were caused by the wrong economic policies of London. (This was partly true because the welfare state was rather centralised and most of the services and economic planning was carried out nationally and not regionally.) Consequently, the Liberal Party

appeared as the third party on the national scene while SNP and PC did so at the regional level.

2. *Immigration policy and Enoch Powell:* The political incompetence was not only fuelled by the economic concerns. From the 1960s, immigration to Britain rose rapidly. Enoch Powell, a Conservative politician called attention to the negative consequences of immigration in a speech in 1968. In his 'Rivers of Blood' speech he warned that the cultural homogeneity of the country was at stake with the ongoing immigration pace. His remarks were unanimously rejected by both Labour and the Conservative Party, however, a large part of the electorate agreed with him according to the opinion polls. Hence, Enoch Powell challenged the post-war consensus over immigration, too. The oil crisis questioned the welfare consensus while Enoch Powell challenged the immigration consensus. The centripetal two-party competition was challenged both economically and politically.
3. *Ulster crisis:* In Northern Ireland, following the 1968 student movement, the Irish minority started to demand civic liberty and more freedom. In 1972, during one of such protests in Londonderry, the UK authorities killed 13 protesters on Bloody Sunday. As a reaction, the IRA conducted military operations from 1972. Prior to the 1974 elections, the Ulster Unionist Party broke its traditional alliance with the Conservative Party. There was a feeling that UK governments lost control over the Ulster crisis, too.

5.3.2 **Non-actor related causes:**

There are some other causes which were independent of the incumbent governments. These were mainly international developments but there were some domestic events as well (Denver & Garnett, 2014: 46-52).

4. *The 1973 Oil crisis:* it had a major impact on Britain. Although it hit every Western country, Britain was particularly negatively affected by high inflation, heavy industry decline and trade union unrest. For Britain, the 1973 oil crisis intensified the already existing economic decline of the 1960s. The post-war 'economic miracles of Europe' (West Germany and

France) suffered much less than Britain after the 1973 oil crisis. In consequence, the British economy ultimately became the 'sick man of Europe' (Kavanagh, 2011). The economic incompetence of successive UK governments was partly caused by this external (and structural) problem, too.

5. *Centralised welfare state:* The other difficulty given for any post-war British government was the highly centralised UK state. In fact, the welfare consensus created a need for central planning and regulations. This centralisation was indifferent to any regional differences (like in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland or London.) The unanimous welfare service state prevented any UK governments from initiating regional differentiation. Hence, the central governments inherited a kind of bureaucratic rigidity and unresponsiveness.
6. *EEC membership:* the UK joined the European Economic Community in 1973 (in the same year of the oil crisis). The country became part of the customs union, which limited their trade relations with third countries. It had particularly negative consequences for the trade links with other Commonwealth countries (e.g. New Zealand and the dairy industry.) However, it was difficult to distinguish the negative consequences of the EEC membership from those of the parallel oil crisis. Therefore, the EEC membership as a constraint for the British economy was often confused with the wider economic world trends (eg the decline of heavy industry.)
7. *Scottish oil discovery:* in 1970, British Petroleum found large oil fields in the North Sea at the Scottish shores (BBC, 2007). After 1973, the North Sea oil became very competitive because of the soaring oil prices,
8. *Constituency boundary change:* in 1974, the review of constituency boundaries created 5 additional MP seats in Westminster (an increase from 630 to 635.) This could have an important effect in a tight race (as it happened in February and October 1974. The Labour government had only a 3 MP seat majority after the October 1974 election.)

In sum, the February 1974 political crisis was caused both by the incompetence of the two major parties and by other, external factors. The 1973 oil crisis certainly contributed to the incompetence of the two parties. However, the economic difficulties

already showed their signs much before the oil crisis, from the 1960s. The most important reason behind this incompetence was the post-war consensus over welfare economics. This centripetal party competition was accompanied by further unresponsiveness to regional differences (Scotland and Wales) and to immigration. As a result, voters looked for alternatives to the main two parties.

5.4 AFTERMATH

5.4.1 Short term impact – instability (1974–79)

The February 1974 election resulted in the shortest parliamentary cycle in modern British history; only 224 days (Butler and Kavanagh (1975: 330–356). It was obviously very likely that the minority Labour government would not fulfil the whole parliamentary cycle. So the minority Labour government kept looking at opinion polls and chose October 1974 to hold another general election to get an absolute majority. Eventually, they managed to get a wafer thin majority (with only 3 MPs) at the October 1974 election: Labour increased its support from 37.2% to 39.3%, the Conservatives declined from 37.8% to 35.7% and the Liberals also declined from 19.3% to 18.3%. This meant 18 additional MPs for Labour (from 301 to 319), 20 less MPs for the Conservatives (from 297 to 277) and 1 MP loss for the Liberals (from 14 to 13) (Commons Briefing Papers SN5000, 2016). However, the overall result was pretty much the same as in February 1974.[8]

Political instability became part of British politics after the October 1974 election, too. The three MPs' seat majority soon evaporated because of by-election losses and defections. From 1976, the Labour government therefore became a minority government again. They could only have fulfilled their mandate with the external support of third parties in the House of Commons. The Liberals signed a pact with them in 1976, which secured external support for Labour without a coalition agreement. This was occasionally complemented by the support of other (mainly SNP) MPs. However, the 1976–79 period seemed to be a return to the February 1974

[8] There was a very small constituency swing in comparison with the February 1974 election. Only 28 seats (out of 635) changed their party affiliation. The turnout in October 1974 (72.8%) was 6% under the February 1974 results (78.8%). In opposition to the Liberals, the nationalist parties could maintain and increase their support. Particularly, SNP increased from 21.9% to 30.4% in Scotland. PC, despite their identical vote share with their February 1974 electoral result, they could not send any MPs to Westminster (Butler and Kavanagh (1975: 330-356).

election, which generated a minority Labour government, coalition talks and instability.

5.4.2 **Long-term impact – pluralisation**

The interpretation of the 1974 political crisis became problematic after 1979. In 1979, the Conservative Party won a stable majority and they started an 18-year long predominant cycle. The 1979–97 period was characterised by a gradual return to two-party politics (declining ENPP in Westminster) and a polarised centrifugal competition between the two major parties. (Find more information in Heath et al., 1991; Jackson & Saunders, 2012.) From this perspective, the 1974 crisis and its immediate aftermath until 1979 proved to be rather temporary. In 1992, for instance, one could have thought that Britain usually had two-party politics (between 1945–74 and 1979–92) and the short instability after 1974 had only minor significance. Nevertheless, I argue that the pluralisation process never stopped after 1974. It might have become less apparent and more covered; however, it did not completely disappear. In the next section I list arguments to prove that a long-term pluralisation has been indeed going on since 1974.

5.4.2.1 The Birth of the 'two-and-a-half' party system

The Liberal Party can certainly date its second come-back to British politics (the first one was in the early 20th century) from the 1974 general elections. (See also Lemieux, 1977; McCallum, 1999.) Moreover, the successful electoral performance was not just a temporal upsurge. They have kept their electoral support always over 15% vote share since February 1974. As Table 9 confirms, there is a significant difference between the Liberal vote share from 1945 to 1970 (with a mean 7.06%) and the 1974–2010 interval (with a mean 19.73%). So the Liberals suddenly became the half party in a two-and-a-half party system after 1974 and they managed to keep this position. (They only lost this influence in 2015, when they experienced a catastrophic electoral defeat.) The importance of the Liberal Party hence determined British politics for the next 31 years. (See also Russell, Fieldhouse and MacAllisster, 2002.) They had an impact on both the parliamentary arena (MP seats) and the electoral arena (votes). In the first case, they sometimes became king-makers in the House of Commons (like in 1976 and in 2010) and in the second case, they stole votes from the

major parties at the constituency level, hence indirectly manipulating the rivalry of the two major parties. The sudden rise of the Liberals in 1974 and their later electoral stability shows some similarity with the electoral success of the Labour Party in 1945. Nevertheless, while in 1945 Labour's success was due to a process of electoral alignment (the working class found the Labour Party), in 1974 and later, the Liberal success was fuelled by the opposing trend: de-alignment and protest voting against the two major parties. Therefore, the Liberal's rise and stability has become the symptom of a long-term trend in British politics. I argue that the most important evidence for the pluralisation of UK party competition is the continuous electoral success of the Liberal Party.

Table 9 The Liberal party's results at general elections (1945–2015)

Year		Vote share %	Seats	Seat share %
1945		9.0%	12	1.88%
1950		9.1%	9	1.44%
1951		2.6%	6	0.96%
1955		2.7%	6	0.95%
1959		5.9%	6	0.95%
1964		11.2%	9	1.43%
1966		8.5%	12	1.90%
1970		7.5%	6	0.95%
1974	Feb	19.3%	14	2.20%
1974	Oct	18.3%	13	2.05%
1979		13.8%	11	1.73%
1983		25.4%	23	3.54%
1987		22.6%	22	3.38%
1992		17.8%	20	3.07%
1997		16.8%	46	6.98%
2001		18.3%	52	7.89%
2005		22.0%	62	9.60%
2010		23.0%	57	8.77%
2015		7.9%	8	1.23%

5.4.2.2 Disproportional general elections

The rise of the Liberal Party as the third party had an additional effect on British politics. The February 1974 election demonstrated how disproportional the first-past-the-post electoral system was for the third party. Although the Liberals got 19.3% vote share in February 1974 and 18.3% vote share in October 1974, this was only enough for 14 and 13 MP seats respectively (out of 635.) So the 19.3% vote share was worth 2.2% seat share in February 1974 and the 18.3% vote share was worth 2.1% seat share

in October 1974. This *underrepresentation* has also become a long-term pattern of British politics. The Liberals, as the third party at general elections, always had disproportional representation in the House of Commons. This generated a further political debate about the undemocratic nature of the FPTP electoral system. Consequently, it is not surprising that the Liberals have been keeping electoral system change on the agenda.

5.4.2.3 Nationalist parties and devolution

Beside the Liberal Party, the other important contributors to the pluralisation of British politics were the nationalist parties. The Scottish National Party had a breakthrough both at the February and October 1974 general elections. They got 21.9% and 30.4% vote share in Scotland. Plaid Cymru also did well with their 10.8% vote share at both two elections. However, in opposition to the Liberal Party, the nationalist parties could not keep their electoral support and influence in the 1980s. The SNP only got 17.3% in 1979, 11.8% in 1983 and 14.0% in 1987. The next time when they achieved a similar result to their 1974 performance occurred in 1992 with 21.5% vote share in Scotland. After 1992, they stabilised their electoral vote share around 20% (i.e. 1997 (22.1%), 2001 (20.1%), 2005 (17.7%), 2010 (19.9%).) In 2015, however, they experienced a landslide victory in Scotland with 50% vote share.

The reasons for SNP's rise and decline are ambiguous. Newman (1992) says that the reasons for SNP's rise prior to the 1974 elections were threefold: (1) it was a combination of wider general de-alignment from the two major parties, (2) a lack of appropriate answers to growing economic problems in Scotland and (3) the SNP's cross-class political appeal as an ethno-regional party. The economic problems of the 1960s and 1970s had particularly hit Scotland for the centralised welfare state. Therefore, the British economic failure was interpreted as an English failure which undermined the Scottish prosperity. In addition, major oil fields were found in the North Sea in 1970.

The causes of SNP's decline are threefold, too (Newman, 1992): (1) the failure of the 1979 Scottish referendum on devolution, (2) internal party disunity and (3) the SNP's ideological move to the Left. The failure of the referendum caused the evanescence of the independence issue, which was the central message for SNP. In the House of

Commons and after the failed referendum the party experienced major splits which undermined party unity. And finally, the internal divisions ended by the strengthening of the left wing inside the party. This move to the left automatically lost the ideologically right voters.

The Welsh Plaid Cymru (PC) experienced a similar rise and decline in the 1970s and 1980s as the SNP. However, PC's rise started one election before: as early as in 1970. They got 11.5% vote share in 1970, 10.7% in February 1974, and 10.8% in October 1974. There is mainly one reason behind this rise as Lynch (1995) notes: the de-aligned Labour voters were unsatisfied with Labour governments in the 1960s. They turned to PC, which provided 'decentralist socialism.' In opposition to the SNP's cross-cleavage appeal, PC had a leftist ideology, which limited their electoral appeal to only de-aligned Labour voters. For this reason they never managed to gain so much vote share as SNP. In the 1980s and 90s, PC fell back to 7–8%. The causes behind PC's decline according to Lynch (1995) were very similar to SNP's; a failed referendum in 1979 limited PC's most important political appeal, disunity occurred after the failed referendum and Liberals/Social Democrats became the third party instead of PC in Wales.

For both SNP and PC, the sudden rise in popularity was caused by de-alignment from major parties and a perceived incompetence locally. In response to this sudden rise and Labour's decline in these regions, Wilson's government put devolution on the agenda. However, the failed two referenda in Scotland and Wales brought about a contra-productive effect: the issue of devolution disappeared and nationalist parties lost ground. Devolution remained a marginal issue until the 1990s.

I still consider that the 1974 election had long-term effects on nationalist parties and devolution, too. Although devolution was taken off the agenda for a while, the nationalist parties never declined under their 1966 electoral result. (See Figure 12.) In the 1980s, perhaps the nationalist parties did not do so well as in 1974, nevertheless, they never collapsed. The SNP's worst electoral performance was in 1983 (11.8%) and PC's worst occurred in 1987 (7.3%). Nevertheless these results were still much higher than their previous post-war electoral support. Between 1945 and 1970, SNP had a mean 2.76% vote share and between 1945 and 1966, PC had a mean 2.91%. This mean value was 19.66% for SNP between February 1974 and 2010 and 10.16%

for PC during the same period of time. So the pluralisation process kept going on regionally even if the 1980s meant a temporary setback.

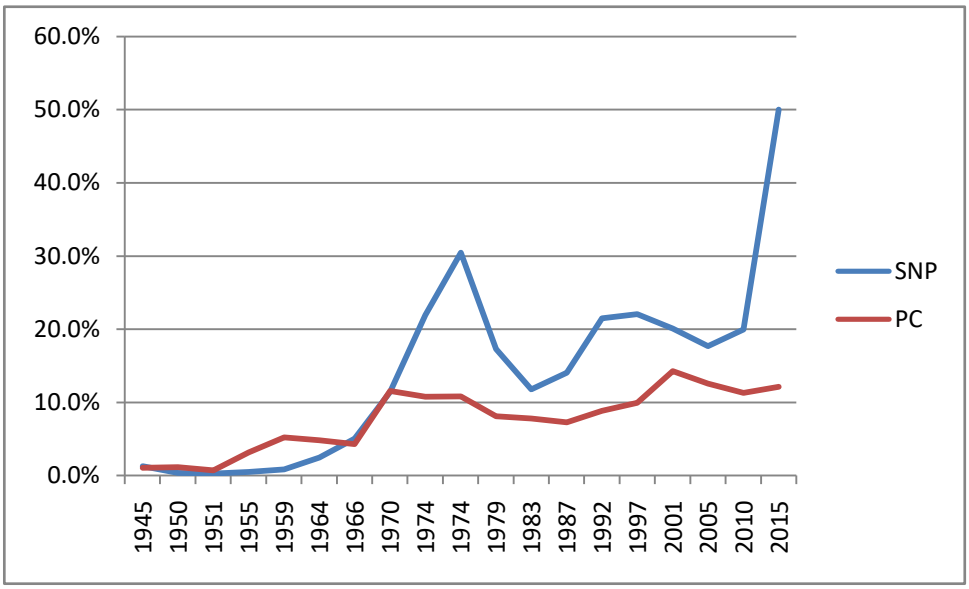

Figure 12 SNP vote share in Scotland and PC vote share in Wales (1945–2015)

5.4.2.4 EP elections

Since 1979, the UK has been holding EP election every five years. Between 1979 and 1994, these elections were held under the FPTP electoral system, while after 1999 the PR party list system was introduced. Obviously, the 1999 PR electoral system change had important consequences for the pluralisation process in the UK. However, the 1979 FPTP electoral system also had some pluralising effects. Apart from the two major parties, the Lib Dems and the Greens did well at EP elections between 1979 and 1994. The Lib Dems usually performed worse at EP elections than at general elections with the same FPTP system. The Green Party, however, could successfully use the EP election in 1989 to make a breakthrough: they got 15% at the 1989 EP election. Since then, the Greens have never been so successful at any elections. The EP elections confirmed the already ongoing national trend (the two-and-a-half party politics).

Table 10 Vote share in Great Britain (without Northern Ireland) at EP elections (1979–1999)

	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999
Conservative	51%	41%	35%	28%	36%
Labour	33%	37%	40%	44%	28%
Liberal Democrats	13%	19%	6%	17%	13%
UKIP				1%	7%
SNP	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%
Plaid Cymru	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Greens	0%	1%	15%	3%	6%
BNP					1%
Other	1%	0%	1%	3%	5%

5.4.2.5 Referenda

The UK held the first nationwide referendum on the EEC membership in 1975. (Find more in Baimbridge, 2007; Baimbridge, Whyman, & Mullen, 2006; Butler & Kitzinger, 1996.) This referendum was followed by other regional ones in Scotland and Wales later, in 1979. Since then, there have been two other national ones (in 2011 on AV vote and in 2016 on EU membership) and several other regional ones (in 1997 on Scottish and Welsh devolution, in 1998 on devolution in London and in Northern Ireland, in 2014 on Scottish independence). Moreover, there have been 58 additional mayoral referenda at local councils in England between 2001 and May 2016. So, it is fair to say that the first referendum in 1975 was followed by the proliferation of referenda in the following decades. (Please see also Putschli, 2007.) Given the fact that a referendum brought political decision outside Westminster, it further enhanced the gap between the electoral and the parliamentary arenas. In this sense, referenda indirectly affected the pluralisation of British politics by turning attention to extra-parliamentary politics (electoral arena.) Therefore, I argue, referenda since 1974 have had an effect on the pluralisation process, too.

5.4.2.6 Issue politics, polarisation and electoral instability

The 1974 elections had major consequences for the long-term patterns of British party competition. As I argued before, the 1945–74 period was characterised by class politics and strong party identification. This period suddenly changed in 1974 with a

record high electoral volatility. Although in 1979 there was a superficial return to traditional two-party politics, the old class politics and post-war consensus never came back again. (See also Evans & Tilley, 2012.)

Instead of cleavage politics, there has been a trend towards *issue politics* since 1974. It means that social interests are less important than individual voter preferences. Moreover, this issue politics coincided with growing differences between Labour and Conservative manifestos (please compare with Kavanagh, 1990). Labour wanted to reform the welfare state in its current form, while Margaret Thatcher wanted to break the post-war consensus. Hence, the policy distance between Labour and the Conservatives became serious after 1979. This phenomenon meant the polarisation of British politics. (See Figure 13.) This centrifugal competition lasted until the end of the 1980s, when Labour gradually gave up its strong links with the trade unions. After 1992, the rivalry between the Conservatives and Labour became, however, centripetal because Tony Blair accepted much of Margaret Thatcher's neoliberal economic measures. As a result, the polarisation of the 1980s was followed by a consensus on free market and neo-liberalism after 1997. In the long term, hence, the 1974 general elections caused a centrifugal competition and it only became centripetal in the late 1990s. However, this centripetal competition was very different from the post-war consensus of welfare politics: it was the opposite consensus on neo-liberal economic politics.

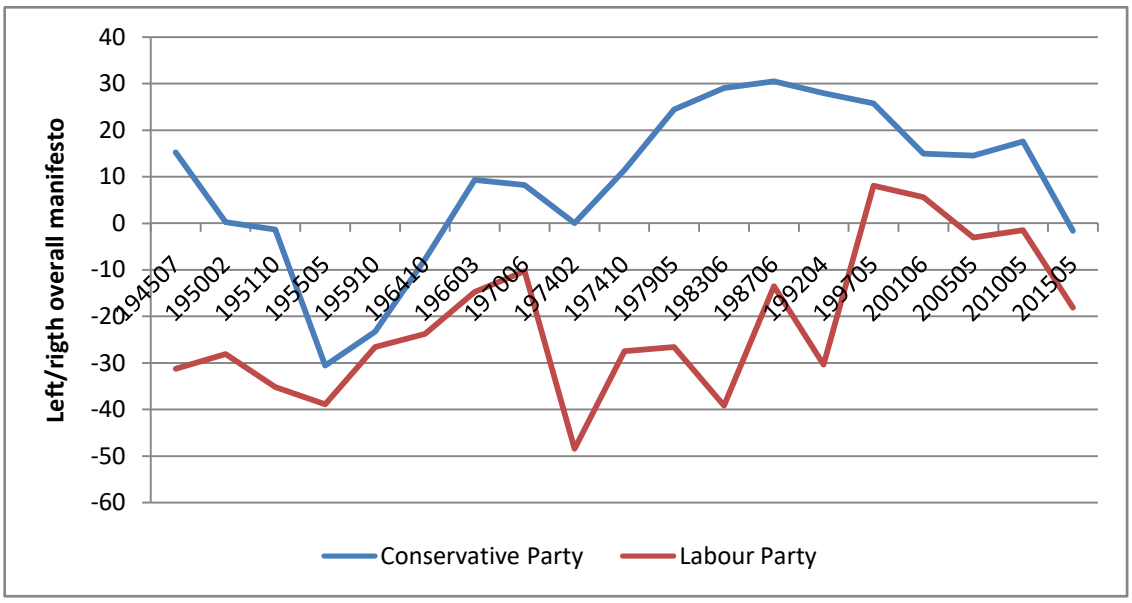

Figure 13 Left/Right manifesto positions at UK general elections (CMP data)

De-alignment, which meant a change from cleavage politics to issue politics was accompanied by electoral instability. (See also Lawrence & Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, 2012.) After 1974, the overall level of UK electoral volatility raised from the post-war 4.71% to 8.02% between 1974 and 2015. The biggest difference, however, was not in the degree of mean volatility but its sudden unpredictable changes. After 1974, it was common that high electoral volatility was followed by very low levels and later by very highs levels again. (See Figure 14.) So, electoral instability has also become part of British politics since 1974.

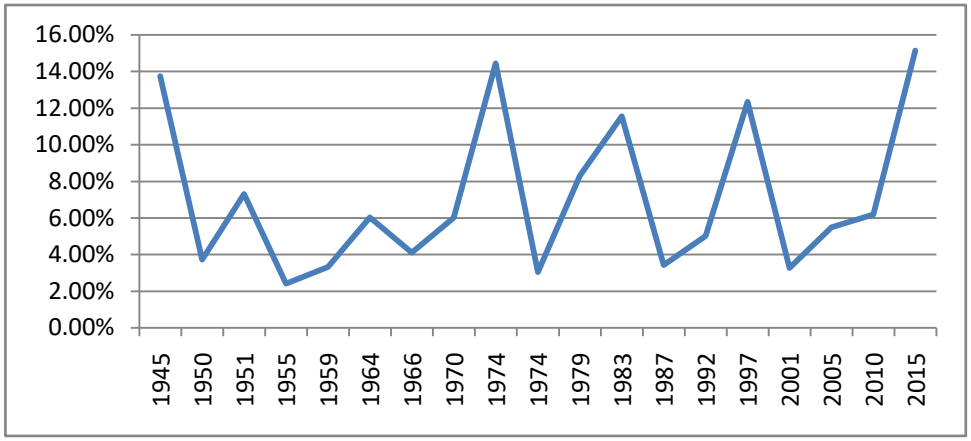

Figure 14 Electoral volatility in the UK at general elections

The incongruence between the electoral and the parliamentary arenas has kept growing since 1974. When Margaret Thatcher was elected with a stable majority in 1979, it seemed there was a return to classic two-party politics. Between 1979 and 1992, ENEP certainly showed temporary decline. In 1979, it dropped significantly from 3.15 (October 1974) to 2.87. In 1983, there was a rise because of the splits inside the Labour Party (the Social Democrats left the party), nevertheless, during 1987 and 1992, ENEP continued declining. (See Figure 15.) It could have been truly interpreted as the pluralisation process reversed. However, in 1997, ENEP grew again and has kept doing so ever since (3.22 (1997), (3.33 (2001), 3.59 (2005), 3.71 (2010), 3.93 (2015)). So, from today's perspective, the 1979–92 period can indeed be seen as a temporary return to two-party politics. In the long term, pluralisation was confirmed.

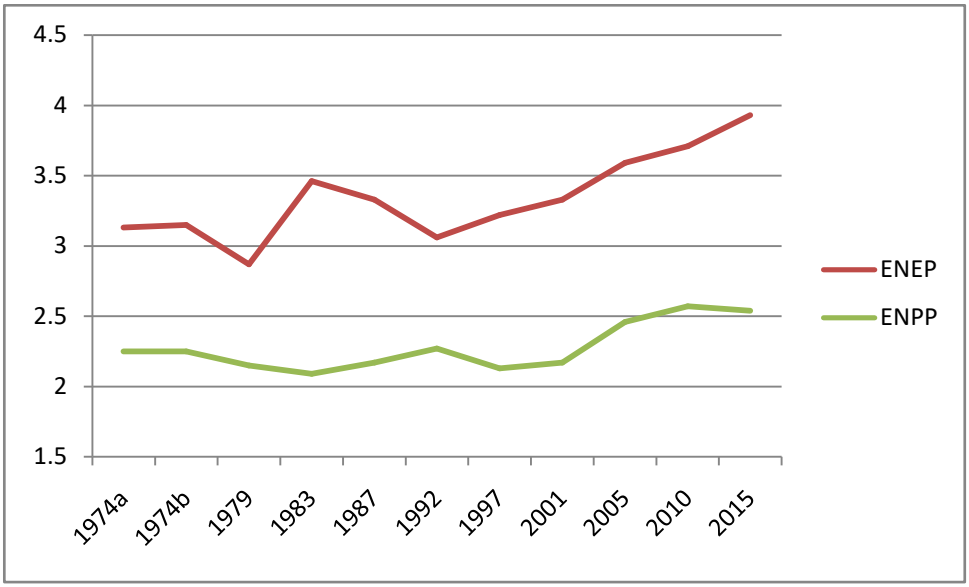

Figure 15 ENEP and ENPP in the UK (Feb 1974 –2015)

5.5 COMPARING 1974 WITH 2010

In 2010, similarly to 1974, a hung parliament was elected because none of the two major parties had an absolute majority. The Conservatives had 306 seats and Labour had 258 out of the total 650. The 326 seats for an absolute majority could have been secured only if the winner Conservative Party had either formed a coalition government with the Lib Dems (by obtaining their 57 extra seats) or if they could have relied on Lib Dem support from outside without any formal coalition agreement (similarly to the 1976-78 Lib Lab pact.) That time, however, the Conservative Party led by David Cameron opted for the formal coalition agreement, which provided the first coalition government since 1929.

The Lib Dems therefore had a king-maker position in 2010 like earlier in 1974. The coalition negotiations in 2010 were also similar to the 1974 negotiations: one of the key liberal demands was electoral reform. This demand was later fulfilled by holding a referendum in 2011 on AV vote.

The question of devolution also appeared on the political agenda. In 2014, the SNP held a referendum on independence. And the question of EU membership also became part of the political debate because David Cameron announced an in-out referendum in 2013 if he were re-elected in 2015 (please see also Copsey & Haughton, 2014). In

1974, the Labour Party similarly committed itself to holding a referendum on the EEC membership in 1975.

Enoch Powell's maverick personality was repeated by Nigel Farage who also campaigned against mass-immigration (from the EU and not from the Commonwealth countries as it was the case for Powell). Farage could play an important role in 'stealing votes' from the Conservatives since his UKIP party got 3.1% vote share. Similarly, Powell also stole votes in his marginal constituency.

Table 11 Comparing the 1974 and 2010 general elections

	1974-	**2010-**
Liberals	Coalition talks with the Conservatives and later Lib Lab pact	Coalition agreement with the Lib Dems
EU relations	1975 EEC referendum From 1979 EP elections	2016 EU referendum 2014 EP victory by UKIP
Conservative vote stealing and immigration	Enoch Powell	Nigel Farage
Referenda	1975 (EEC), 1979 (Scotland), 1979 (Wales)	2011 (AV), 2014 (Scotland), 2016 (EU)
Demands for Electoral reform	PR EP elections and SV general elections	AV general election, elected House of Lords
Liberal retreat	In 1979 (13.8% from 18.3%)	In 2015 (7.9% from 23.0%)

5.6 BOTTOM LINE

In the same way as the 1945 general election, the February 1974 election proved to be a critical juncture in the evolution of British politics. Whereas the 1945 election was a critical juncture which established a long-term path dependency of two-party politics, the 1974 election created a path dependency of pluralisation. It is not controversial that the legacy of the 1945 election could co-exist with the opposing trend of the 1974 elections. I argue that the two parallel and opposing path dependencies generated a growing incongruence between the electoral and the parliamentary arenas.

In sum, the February 1974 general election was the starting point of *pluralisation in* British politics.

6 THE 1997 GENERAL ELECTION

6.1 IMPORTANCE[9]

The 1997 election was the last general election before devolution. The newly elected Labour Party soon started to deliver its political promise to devolve certain political powers to regional and local levels. This process culminated in the referenda and then the elections of the regional assemblies for Scotland, Wales, Northen Ireland and for London, too. So the 1997 election was the last general election without a multi-level political framework. After 1997, the UK general elections have been accompanied by other regional (Scottish, Welsh, Northern Irish and London) elections. Moreover, since 1999 at EP elections there has been a PR electoral system instead of the previous majority system. So, in addition to the mixed regional electoral systems, the EP elections introduced a purely PR electoral system. Consequently, the first-past-the-post general elections became only one type of election system besides many others in a multi-level polity.

The 1997 election was also a historic moment for Labour, which gained a landslide victory. (See more in Jones, 1996; Seyd, 1999; White & Chernatony, 2002.) This result followed no less than 18 years of Conservative dominance. The pendulum swung one extreme to another. As it turned out later, Labour dominated the following decade until 2010. That is, the 1997 election was the starting point of a second predominant period similar to the 1979–97 Conservative period. This predominance was particularly shocking in 1997, when Labour received 63.43% of the total seats (almost two-third majority never seen before.) This landslide victory also meant a record high electoral volatility: the 12.33% vote share change could have been compared only to the February 1974 election when it reached 14.43%. Just to make a reference, the mean electoral volatility between 1945 and 1992 was only 6.06%, and it was 6.26% between October 1974 and 1992, too. Therefore, the 1997 election was a

[9] The modified version of this chapter was published in Kaszap (2018).

clear end of cleavage politics and voting by class affiliation. In contrast, this was the first time when two catch-all parties ran for the median voter and tried to reach as many electors as they could.

The third importance of the 1997 election was the beginning of the neo-liberal economic consensus on the one hand, and the liberal value consensus on the other hand. (Please see Heffernan, 2000; Hindmoor, 2004; Jessop, 2003; Powell, 2000.) Hence, the previously polarised UK party competition became the rivalry of two almost identical catch-all parties. The Labour under New Labour and the Conservatives under Big Society were almost the same in economic and social policies. This convergence and similarity was a perfect example for the Downsian theory of median voter competition. Nevertheless, this (neo)-liberal consensus 'left behind' major parts of the society. In 2010, I argue, these left-behind people re-acted to this two-party convergence when a hung parliament was formed. Nevertheless, the neo-liberal legacy of the 1997 election has been still dominating British politics. So the 1997 election meant an end to the polarisation of British politics and, instead, a period of two-party convergence began.

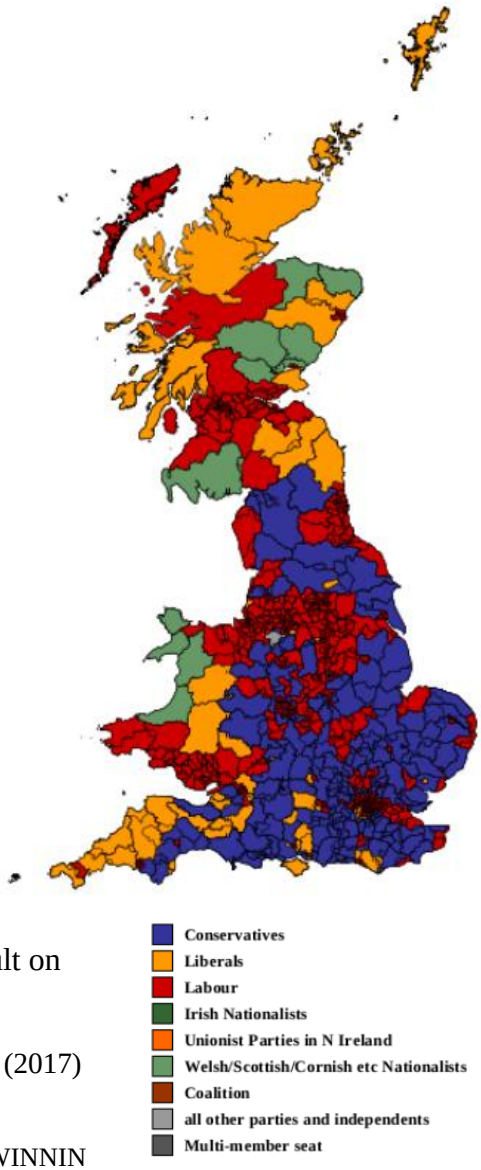

Figure 16 The 1997 general election result on the UK map

Source: Great Britain Historical GIS Project (2017)
With prior permission from the authors.
Retrieved from:
http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/atlas/map/R_WINNING_PARTY/CONSTITUENCY/01MAY1997
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6.2 DATA

The 1997 election was about two opposing trends. On the one hand, because of the landslide victory of Labour, it was a major swing from the Right to the Left. The previous 18 years of Conservative dominance ended and a new Labour dominance started. So it was evidence and justification for the survival and vitality of two-party politics. Eventually, British politics were about either Labour or the Conservatives. On the other hand, however, this landslide victory was not similar to any previous Tory victories in the 1980s. The reason is the emergence of third parties from the beginning of the 1990s (see also Schedler, 1996). In fact, Labour truly achieved a landslide victory; nevertheless, the electorate was increasingly more willing to vote for other parties than Labour and the Conservatives. Therefore, the two-party vote share did not stop declining (in 1997 it was only 73.9%). Whereas in the 1980s the Conservative predominance was accompanied by declining ENEP and the polarisation of British politics, the Labour victory of 1997 happened in the context of increasing ENEP and centripetal competition. So, even though the 18 years of Conservative dominance and the 13 years of Labour hegemony are often treated as the same, the rise of third party vote share and the increasing fragmentation of British politics make important differences.

Table 12 UK vote share (%) at general elections

Year	CON	LAB	LD	PC/SNP	Other	Third parties	CON+LAB
1979	43.9%	36.9%	13.8%	2.0%	3.4%	19.3%	80.7%
1983	42.4%	27.6%	25.4%	1.5%	3.1%	30.0%	70.0%
1987	42.2%	30.8%	22.6%	1.7%	2.7%	26.9%	73.1%
1992	41.9%	34.4%	17.8%	2.3%	3.5%	23.7%	76.3%
1997	30.7%	43.2%	16.8%	2.5%	6.8%	26.1%	73.9%
2001	31.6%	40.7%	18.3%	1.8%	7.7%	27.7%	72.3%
2005	32.4%	35.2%	22.0%	2.2%	8.2%	32.5%	67.5%
2010	36.1%	29.0%	23.0%	2.2%	9.7%	35.0%	65.0%

As Table 13 shows, ENEP grew from 3.06 (1992) to 3.22 (1997) in spite of the landslide Labour victory. In the following years, this trend continued under the second and third Blair governments (3.33 in 2001 and 3.59 in 2005.) This is in sharp contrast with Margaret Thatcher's and John Major's governments, when ENEP gradually

declined (to 3.46 in 1983, 3.33 in 1987 and 3.06 in 1992.)[10] At the same time with the growth of ENEP (electoral arena), the index of ENPP (parliamentary arena) were pretty much the same or they even declined. Following the 1992 Conservative victory and the ENPP of 2.27, the 1997 election provided a decline to 2.13 and the 2001 election with 2.17 did not induce significant change. ENPP started to increase slightly from the 2005 general election, when it reached 2.46 and continued in 2010 (2.57) and levelled in 2015 (2.54). So what we can see is an increase in ENEP and a stagnation or decline in ENPP during the Blair governments. In consequence it suggests that the British electoral arena (ENEP) and the British parliamentary arena (ENPP) began to separate following the 1997 election. In other words, the landslide victory of the Blair governments became less and less responsive to general trends in British competition and towards the electorate. The 1997–2010 period is therefore a time of gradual unresponsiveness between the British parliamentary and electoral arenas. Figure 17 demonstrates this separation. It is easy to recognise how ENEP declined until 1992 and then increased after 1997 until today. In contrast, ENPP has been pretty much the same (always under 2.6.) As a result, the difference between ENEP and ENPP has been growing since 1997.

Table 13 ENEP/ENPP in the UK

Year	LSq	ENEP	ENPP
1979	11.58	2.87	2.15
1983	17.45	3.46	2.09
1987	14.95	3.33	2.17
1992	13.55	3.06	2.27
1997	16.51	3.22	2.13
2001	17.76	3.33	2.17
2005	16.73	3.59	2.46
2010	15.1	3.71	2.57

[10] I do not consider the 1979 to 1983 ENEP jump as a trend rather as a one-off historical moment when the Social Democrats left Labour. So, although ENEP rose from 2.87 (1979) to 3.46 (1983), in sum, this was part of a larger declining period, which was further confirmed by the following two general elections (1987, 1992).

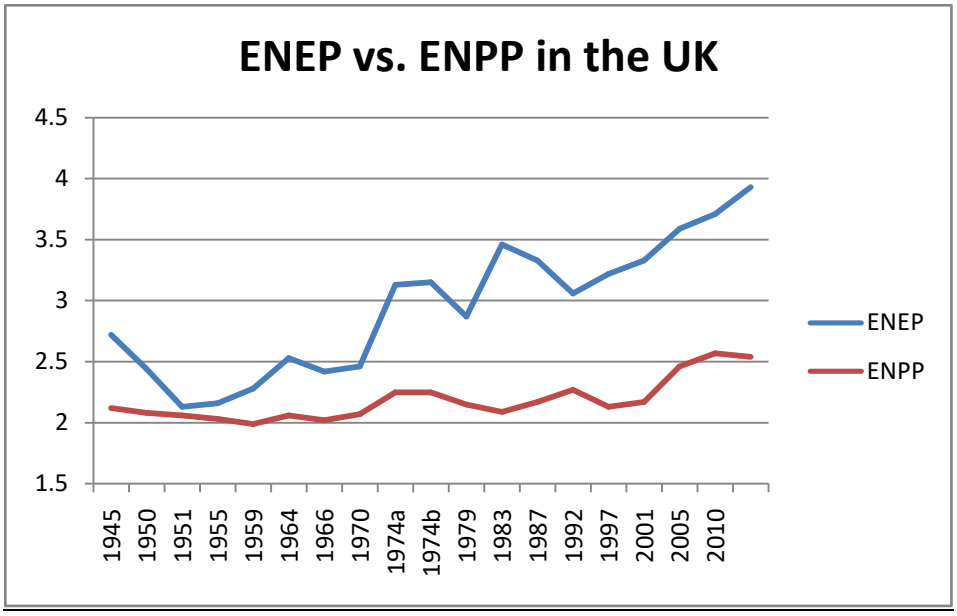

Figure 17 ENEP and ENPP in the UK (1945–2015)

6.3 CAUSES

Labour's landslide victory in 1997 was caused by a similar phenomenon as in 1945. In 1945 a negative Conservative Party represented the past and a positive Labour Party promised a future. This strong antagonism caused a landslide victory for Labour both in 1945 and in 1997. However, the exact causes behind the 1997 election somewhat differed from those in 1945. In the following, I discuss the causes classified in two groups: factors weakening the Conservatives, on one hand, and factors strengthening Labour, on the other hand. I start with the Conservatives.

6.3.1 Negative Conservative Image

The negative image of the Conservatives was maintained by two factors: economic incompetence (valence politics) and internal party divisions. The economic incompetence was in sharp contrast with any previous Conservative records. The Tories under Margaret Thatcher gained much reputation for being the party of economic governance. They managed to restructure the UK economy, balance the books and produce an enduring economic growth. Nevertheless, this reputation gradually disappeared after 1992 and it became rather a weakness. The first economic shock which undermined the Conservatives' reputation occurred on 'Black

Wednesday' (16th September, 1992) when a coordinated speculation against the British pound dramatically devaluated the currency. The exchange rate against other key European currencies dropped so much that the British government had to withdraw from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM). This was a monetary cooperation between the UK and the EU, which had been passionately recommended by John Major as the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1989. (Please see for background: Major, 2013.) After Black Wednesday, however, it was the very same John Major who had to leave the ERM. In addition to this loss of prestige, the British government took some rather ineffective but very expensive measures to deal with the crisis. That is why the 1992 ERM crisis cannot be compared to the 1973 oil crisis. In 1973, the oil crisis was an external shock, which spilled over domestic politics through high inflation, unemployment and trade union unrest. It was an external crisis which had a wide scope of consequences and affected the whole world. Nevertheless, in 1992, the ERM crisis was both external and internal (because the attack came from outside but the wrong internal decisions were made inside), it had a limited scope of impact (only on the financial sector) and it affected only Britain. So, theoretically, the 1992 ERM crisis could have been much better treated than the 1973 oil crisis. This difference further underlines the economic incompetence of the John Major government.

Apart from Black Wednesday, the Conservative government made a couple of other wrong decisions which suggested incompetence. (I refer to Butler and Kavanagh (1997) for this part.)

- They increased some taxes (e.g. VAT), which they previously said would not do during the 1992 election campaign.
- In 1996, the 'mad cow' disease erupted. Although it happened independently of the government (like the ERM crisis), John Major could not handle it effectively. The UK farmers suffered very much from banning them out of the EU market.
- The flagship of Conservative economic policy had also gone wrong. Privatisation seemed to lose control in various sectors (eg. British Rails, mining industry, water supply), nevertheless, the services often became worse than before, under public companies. The 'fat cat' CEOs of these privatised

companies (who got extremely high salaries) and the 'revolving door' effect (when former politicians continued their career at the privatized companies) questioned the legitimacy and the efficiency of privatization.

- The Northern Irish sectarian conflict gained a new momentum under Major. The IRA carried out terrorist attacks in mainland England, too. On 9th February 1996, they exploded a bomb at Canary Wharf (London) and on 15th June 1996, there was another detonation in Manchester. Moreover, the collapse of the Soviet Union threatened to supply the political conflict with an endless amount of new weapons. However, in the House of Commons, the Major government could not be totally impartial on the question because they needed the external support of the Ulster Unionist Party, without whom absolute majority would have been lost.

The second factor beside political incompetence was the internal division inside the Conservative Party. The campaign was already somewhat unimpressive (see also Whiteley, 1997). In addition, further divisions were exacerbated by personal scandals and political conflicts.

- The personal scandals seemed to overwhelm the Conservative Party. There were 9 ministers who had to resign because of different scandals during this period. There were scandals over sexual misbehaviour and over corruption, as well. It was in sharp contrast with John Major's 'Back to Basics' program, which suggested a return to moral politics in 1993. The 'sleaze' which surrounded the Conservative Party caused much irritation inside the British society.
- The other reason for internal division came from Major's weak leading charisma and the ongoing EU negotiations in parallel. There were fierce debates and rebels because of the European issue inside the Conservative Party. Much of the frustration was caused by the Maastricht Treaty, the ban on British beef export (mad cow disease) and the ongoing negotiation about the single currency which was not explicitly rejected by Major. The European issue became so important that even a party was formed to hold a referendum on the UK's EU membership. James Goldsmith and his Referendum Party

threatened to further divide conservative politicians and steal votes from the party at the next general election.

6.3.2 **Positive Labour Image**

At the same time, the Labour Party showed the opposite image, that of a very positive and competent party. (See also White & Chernatony, 2002.) There are two reasons behind it which should be treated as one phenomenon: New Labour and Tony Blair. Although the Labour Party's reform had already begun in the 1980s, New Labour was eventually Tony Blair's invention (Butler and Kavanagh, 1997: 64). Therefore it is not possible to think of New Labour without Tony Blair and *vice versa*. The two reasons hence showed synergy.

In the following, I briefly sum up what New Labour was about.

- From the mid-1980s, Neil Kinnock and John Smith started to reform the Labour Party and distance themselves from the left wing, Old Labour (see more in Kinnock, 1994). It was enforced by *environmental changes*: (1) Thatcher's economic policies fundamentally transformed the British society from a communistic welfare state into an individualistic entrepreneurial society. Hence, the traditionally strong trade union movement lost ground and it endangered Labour's long-term performance. (2) The collapse of the Soviet Union ultimately brought a verdict over the capitalist-socialist debate. After 1990, there were very few people inside the Labour Party who still believed in the viability of socialist economy.
- New Labour offered a completely new approach to economic policies. They kept much of Thatcher's economic policies (privatisation, fight against inflation, individual working rights instead of trade union rights, supporting free market and entrepreneurship, monetarism.) However, they also brought some new political issues from the left (like the NHS, education and environment.)
- At the same time, Tony Blair wanted to demonstrate that he indeed wanted to continue Thatcher's legacy. The symbol of this commitment was the abolishment of Clause IV in the Labour Party's constitution. This prescribed nationalisation and public ownership. In 1995, Clause IV was cancelled and it

marked the historical end of 80-year-long party legacy adopted in 1918 (see also Riddell, 1997). This step, together with the monetarist shadow chancellor (Gordon Brown), showed that the Labour Party's old problem with 'tax and spend' policy was over. They offered economic responsibility and competence instead.

- Labour finally gave up its affiliation with the working class and became a 'party for all the people.' Previously Labour had often been considered as a *sectional party* for their close relationship with the working class. New Labour became instead a catch-all party which wanted to get support based on political issues and not on class affiliation.
- Labour's party organisation was democratised. The trade unions lost their 'block votes' at the National Executive Conferences. Instead, the one member one vote (OMOV) procedure was accepted. This step further marginalised the trade union influence inside the Labour Party. Nevertheless, this democratisation process became somewhat elitist because the party elite (the Parliamentary Labour Party) became the most important initiator inside the party. (Please see M. Russell, 2005.)
- New Labour and Tony Blair finished the debate over Europe inside the party, and they accepted a pro-European policy (see more in Daniels, 1998). So the new European cleavage was born between a Euro-sceptic Right and a Pro-EU Left. Previously, the two parties stood on the opposite sides.
- Devolution and local governance became an important element of left-wing politics. New Labour planned to give momentum to devolution. Although the 1970s had already showed certain attempts at devolution in Scotland and Wales, the Conservative years (1979–1997) marginalised devolution and favoured unitary state instead. The 1997 Labour victory hence brought back devolution onto the political agenda.
- Strong party line: in parallel with Blair's attempts to marginalise the oligopoly of trade unions inside the Labour Party, the party had become highly centralised. It meant that the main beneficiary of the trade union retreat had become the party leadership and not the party on the ground. This sort of centralisation was present at cabinet meetings as well. The ministers often got

pre-decided policies from the party leadership. Hence, personal party member initiatives suffered to a certain extent.

- New communication methods (please find more in White & Chernatony, 2002). The party communication was centralised in the Milbank Tower (run by Peter Mandelson). The constituencies reacted to the Conservatives in accordance with the national party line. (The Excalibur software helped with it.) The tabloid newspapers treated Labour in a friendly way thanks to Alastair Campell's intermediation. The political communication was based on the latest techniques: focus groups, opinion polls, market research and commercial advertisement.
- New Labour could not have been trustworthily delivered with the old faces of the 1980s. Tony Blair's personality in this vein played an undoubtedly crucial role. He was not involved in the internal Labour fights of the 1970s and 80s. Moreover, he showed the sort of leadership and charisma which the Labour Party had lacked during the Thatcher years. Now, it seemed that Labour had a leader similar to Thatcher, however, the Conservatives had a weak and incompetent leader in the person of John Major. However, Blair did not work alone. He was supported by many other young left politicians like Gordon Brown and Peter Mandelson. The 1997 victory was due to perfect team-work rather than to the lonely efforts of Blair.
- Andrew Hindmoor (2004) argues that New Labour meant a completely innovative approach to conventional British party competition. The bottom-line of his argument is the following: New Labour was a successful attempt at moving the Left to the political centre by building up a new *moderate* party image. Hence, Labour managed to introduce itself to the electorate as a centre party between the Conservative Party and Old Labour. Hindmoor says that Down's theory about fixed voter preferences and infinite political space should be questioned. New Labour did not merely move to the centre (to the median voter's position) but also made the electorate believe that Labour was indeed in the median-voter's position. Thus, New Labour managed to re-construct the political space and *'transport'* the median-voter to the Left. In other words, it was not Labour that changed its political position but it was the electorate that changed their preferences.

In sum, New Labour was about economic policy, party organisational reform, new campaign techniques and Tony Blair's personal charisma. It successfully ended the Labour Party's heavy reliance on trade unions and working class votes. However, the new catch-all party program left behind many Old Left supporters. In the short term, this policy generated a landslide victory, however, in the long term; it fostered anti-establishment sentiment inside the British society.

6.4 AFTERMATH

The 1997 general election had a controversial aftermath. On the one hand, it was a return to classic two-party politics with a Labour landslide. During the following general elections this perception was further confirmed because Labour won again in 2001 and in 2005 (more in Geddes & Tonge, 2002). Some scholars even compared the 13 years of Labour dominance (from 1997 to 2010) to the 18-year-long Conservative dominance (from 1979 to 1997). They argued that British politics was still two-party, however, it became more predominant. Nevertheless, third parties were still considered irrelevant during this period. On the other hand, however, the pluralisation process which started in 1974 did not stop. Although the UK party system in Westminster was dominated by two-party politics, the number of new parties and contestants was growing in the electoral arena. Though there was a two-party system on the surface, a multi-party competition was intensifying underneath. Below I want to discuss both the signs of a two-party system and a multi-party competition.

6.4.1 Signs of a two-party system

6.4.1.1 ENPP decline

The signs of a return to two-party system could be detected at the House of Commons. The party system fragmentation index (ENPP) hit a record low level in 1997 (2.13), which could be compared only to the post-war period (1945–74). (See Table 14.) During the following Labour administration from 2001, this index slightly rose to 2.17, which was still very low. This could indeed have suggested that the 1997 election made a return to classic two-partyism. In this sense, the 1974–92 period brought some incertitude, however, British politics was still centered on the Conservative–Labour dichotomy.

Table 14 ENEP, ENPP and LSq values in the UK (1945–2010)

	LSq	ENEP	ENPP
1945	11.62	2.72	2.12
1950	6.91	2.44	2.08
1951	2.61	2.13	2.06
1955	4.13	2.16	2.03
1959	7.3	2.28	1.99
1964	8.88	2.53	2.06
1966	8.44	2.42	2.02
1970	6.59	2.46	2.07
1974a	15.47	3.13	2.25
1974b	14.96	3.15	2.25
1979	11.58	2.87	2.15
1983	17.45	3.46	2.09
1987	14.95	3.33	2.17
1992	13.55	3.06	2.27
1997	16.51	3.22	2.13
2001	17.76	3.33	2.17
2005	16.73	3.59	2.46
2010	15.1	3.71	2.57

6.4.1.2 Centripetal competition

The other reason why two-party politics seemed to persist was the very same electoral dynamics which characterised the post-war era. The two major parties continued a centripetal competition for the median voter. (See Figure 18.) Between 1945 and 1974, the median voter's position generated a welfare economic consensus, whereas from 1997, it generated a neoliberal consensus. This neoliberal consensus was shared by the Conservatives, by Margaret Thatcher, and by New Labour, which gave up their former strong class affiliation. This centripetal competition was, however, different from the post-war era. Earlier the two parties meant two classes as well because the party alignment was very strong. At that time, the median voter meant only a few undecided voters who were not aligned. After 1997, however, there was no strong party alignment anymore and the voters chose parties according to *issues*. Then the median voter meant a huge number of voters who were willing to vote either left or right. So the class-based centripetal competition had completely different causes than the classless centripetal competition. The return to two-party politics and centripetal competition was therefore misleading after 1997. Moreover, this centripetal

competition was not stable like before because the partly alignment was already eroding.

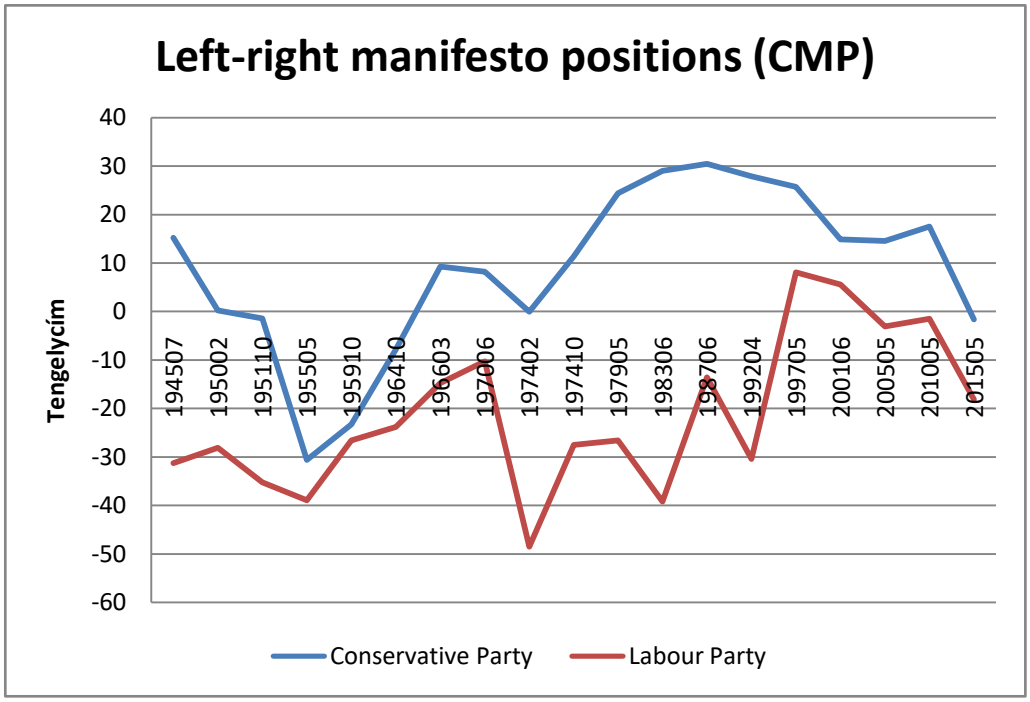

Figure 18 Left/Right manifesto positions in the UK at general elections (1945–2015)

The centripetal competition of the two major parties created an illusion that mainstream politicians agreed on basic political issues. There was mainstream consensus over the benefits of globalisation, financial markets, individualism and liberal values. Those who did not share this mainstream consensus became outsiders or were considered irresponsible politicians. The media in this sense had a crucial role. The mainstream arguments of the mainstream politicians were supported by the mainstream media.

6.4.2 Signs of a multi-party competition

6.4.2.1 Disproportional general elections

The illusion that two-partyism still covered the UK party competition was largely due to the first-past-the-post electoral system. This electoral system was also in use during the 1945–74 period, however, at that time, because of the strong alignment of the electorate with the two major parties, it did not impose any democratic deficit or legitimacy concern. Since 1974 and the gradual pluralisation of British politics, there

was increasing concern about the fairness of the electoral system. The third parties suffered a lot from the majority electoral system and the entry barriers were extremely high for them. Then in 1997, when Labour achieved a landslide victory and a return to two-party politics was on the horizon in Westminster, the electoral system became extremely disproportional. In Table 14 in the LSq column it is obvious that the general elections after 1997 were accompanied by record high electoral disproportions. The 16.51 % value in 1997, the 17.76 % value in 2001 and the 16.73 % value in 2005 could not be compared to the 6.91 % in 1950, the 7.3 % in 1959 or the 8.44 % in 1966. This meant that two-partyism, which was suggested by the similar ENPP values and the centripetal competition was not as legitimate after 1997 as it was during 1945–74. The lack of two-party legitimacy is a major difference between the two periods. In other words, the post-1997 two-partyism was only possible because the FPTP electoral system supported larger parties, otherwise there would not have been two-party dominance and Labour landslide.

6.4.2.2 Growing ENEP/ENPP difference at the national level

The growing multi-partyism behind the artificial two-partyism is proved by the continuously rising ENEP values despite the ENPP decline after 1997. The 1997 Labour landslide victory could not stop the pluralisation trend in the electoral arena which started in 1974. (See Table 14.) This logically means that, if ENPP declines and at the same time the ENEP rises, then the differences between them will increase. This was exactly true for the 1997 and 2001 elections, however, in 2005 (due to the good performance of the Liberal Democrats) the ENPP kept pace with the ENEP rise. This does not mean, though, that the differences declined; they either grew or stagnated after 1997. So, the significant difference between the two-party parliamentary arena on the one hand, and the multi-party electoral arena on the other hand became obvious at the national level after 1997. This *incongruence* was further reflected by the ongoing devolution process which created new multi-party systems at the regional levels, too.

6.4.2.3 Multi-party politics at the regional level

The 1997 general election brought an additional incentive for multi-party competition. The newly formed devolved assemblies were permitted to elect their members with

mixed and more proportionate electoral systems than FPTP (please find more information in R. Deacon, 2012). This multi-level polity immediately opened a way for regional multi-party politics. Table 15 shows how much these devolved party systems differ from the Westminster party system. There have been 5 devolved elections since 1997 in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and London. What we can see is that, on average, Wales has the lowest ENPP (3.07) and Northern Ireland has the highest (4.54.) However, the four devolved assemblies together have a 3.52 mean value, which suggests that in each devolved party system there are 3 and a half equally sized parties. Over time, the ENPP had a declining trend from 3.77 to 3.33. It means that after the formation of the new devolved assemblies, the party systems consolidated and converged to a lower number of parties. It is particularly true in Northern Ireland where the first election had a record 5.37 ENPP figure and it declined to 4.32 in 2016. Other party systems in Wales and Scotland are much more stable in this regard. The bottom-line, however, is that devolved party systems provided significantly higher ENPP than the Westminster party system. Table 16 demonstrates that the average ENPP value in Westminster (2.37) is much lower than the average devolved value (3.52) at the time. Whereas in Westminster there is still a two-and-a-half party system, in the devolved assemblies there are different types of multi-party systems (usually three-and-a-half). It can be either moderate (like in Wales or London) or extreme (like in Northern Ireland.) Nevertheless, the incongruence between national and regional party systems is significant. Hence, devolution further opened the way for the pluralisation of British politics, both at the regional and the national level.

Table 15 ENPP in devolved assemblies[11]

ENPP	**1st election**	**2nd election**	**3rd election**	**4th election**	**5th election**	**Mean**
Wales	3.03	3.00	3.33	2.90	3.11	**3.07**
Scotland	3.34	4.17	3.41	2.61	2.99	**3.30**
NI	5.37	4.54	4.30	4.16	4.32	**4.54**
London	3.34	3.83	3.14	2.68	2.88	**3.18**

[11] Table 15 only uses ENPP because ENEP can be difficulty calculated. Since there are usually two votes at every devolved election (one for a constituency and one for a party list) the fragmentation index derived from votes is more problematic because adding together all the votes would mean that one person votes twice. The ENPP, however, is the same for every devolved assembly because they are calculated from seat share not from vote share. Due to the mixed electoral systems in the devolved assemblies, the difference between ENEP and ENPP should be much lower than at the national level. Therefore, I argue, it is fair to use only the ENPP values at the devolved level.

Mean	**3.77**	**3.89**	**3.55**	**3.09**	**3.33**	**3.52**

Table 16 ENPP in the House of Commons

1997	2001	2005	2010	2015	Mean
2.13	2.17	2.46	2.57	2.54	**2.37**

6.4.2.4 Multi-party politics at the European level

The third sign of the pluralisation process became visible at the European level. Between 1979 and 1999, the UK elected their EP members by the FPTP electoral system similarly to general elections. Nevertheless, since the UK was the last country who used a majority electoral system instead of a PR system for the EP elections, there was a high pressure on the country from Brussels to change its electoral system at EP elections. Therefore in 1999 the UK held its first EP election under the PR electoral system. Although this change was not the result of the 1997 Labour victory and it eventually should have happened under any future administration, the new EP elections fit perfectly into the wider pluralisation process which has been going on since 1997.

Table 17 is very interesting because it shows how spectacularly both the parliamentary arena (ENPP) and the electoral arena (ENEP) shifted from a FPTP electoral system (in 1994) to a PR one (in 1999). The last majority election produced 1.69 ENPP and 3.29 ENEP in 1994. The first PR election, however, generated 3.12 ENPP and 4.26 ENEP in 1999. This shift broke a long-term trend at EP elections as ENPP had always been under 2.0 between 1979 and 1994. This value meant that only two major parties could send MEPs to the EP before 1999. However, in 1999, the ENPP suddenly jumped to 3.12 from 1.69 (due to the positive results of the Lib Dems, SNP, PC, Ukip and the Greens). And after 1999 it continued rising above 4.0 which suggested that 4 equally sized parties could send MEPs to the EP.

Table 17 ENEP and ENPP at EP elections in the UK

	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999	2004	2009	2014
ENEP	2.61	2.96	3.25	3.29	4.26	5.52	5.99	4.74
ENPP	1.56	1.99	1.99	1.69	3.12	4.06	4.34	3.62

The new PR electoral system answered a couple of questions. First, it confirmed by electoral data at the national level that UK politics have become multi-party over time. It is the only evidence for pluralisation at the same level (UK) and in the same respect (EP.) All the other evidence is either derived from other levels or different areas (like devolved elections). The EP elections can only show in a comparable way what UK party system would look like in a PR electoral system. Second, it has also proved that the FPTP electoral system suppresses the pluralisation process and creates instead an artificial two-party system. Third, the FPTP electoral system does not only artificially lower the ENPP (party system) but the ENEP (party competition), too. The ENEP, which should be (more) independent of the electoral system, grew together with the ENPP. It made explicit the already known psychological effect that a majority electoral system biases the electorate's preferences and forces them to abandon smaller parties for bigger ones. Fourth, the EP elections, together with the devolved elections, have proved that the introduction of a new mixed or PR electoral system produces a rapid short-term rise in ENEP and ENPP, which likely goes down after a couple of years. This implies that a stable majority electoral system is followed by a short period of contingency after the introduction of a PR system, which later tempers down to a lower level (which is still higher than the original level.)

6.4.2.5 More referenda

Finally, after 1997 referenda became very common in the UK, which previously only had one national referendum (on the EEC membership in 1975) and three regional referendums (on Northern Irish sovereignty in 1973, Scottish and Welsh devolutions in 1979). After a period of relative silence about referendums, during the 1979–97 Conservative governments, the Labour party re-introduced direct democracy following 1997. It does not mean that the previous governments did not regard referendum as a legitimate political tool (e.g. John Major's pledge to hold a referendum) however, eventually it never materialised. On the contrary, Tony Blair's devolution policy materialised referenda at the regional level. Therefore, between 1997 and 2010, 5 new regional[12] referenda were held on devolution. This was complemented by 39 local mayoral referendums, which wanted to elect city mayors

[12] Greater London Authority referendum (1998), North East England devolution referendum (2004), Northern Ireland Belfast Agreement referendum (1998), Scottish devolution referendum (1997), Welsh devolution referendum (1997)

directly by the electorate and not indirectly by local councils. (More details: Commons Briefing Papers SN05000, 2016.)

The proliferation of referenda hence became a new pattern of British politics. The monopoly of parliamentary sovereignty was questioned by these referenda. It became a legitimate political tool in both parties' repertoire (e.g. Blair promised two referenda, one on the Euro and one on the European Constitutional Treaty, while Cameron pledged one on the Lisbon Treaty.) While the devolved assemblies questioned the sovereignty of Westminster from 'below', and the EP from 'above', the referenda did it from 'sideways'. Soon after 1997, the Westminster party system had to deal with pluralisation pressures from all around. The previously latent incongruence between the Westminster parliamentary arena and the British electoral arena became explicit and clearly recognizable.

6.5 COMPARING 1997 WITH 1974

At first sight there is little in common between the 1974 and 1997 elections. In 1974, a hung parliament was formed and the pluralisation of UK politics began. Nevertheless, in 1997, there was an opposing trend: a landslide Labour victory and a return to two-partyism at least in the parliamentary arena. The interesting thing is, however, that despite the opposing phenomena, some similarity can be noticed as well. If I consider the 1945, 1974, 1997 and 2010 elections 'critical junctures', I also assume that a path-dependency followed each of them. Although critical juncture means that the former path-dependency is altered, some relevance of every former path-dependency still remains. This was the case with the 1997 election and the path dependencies before and after them.

On the one hand, the 1997 critical juncture imposed a wide range of changes in the patterns of UK party politics (for instance, a landslide Labour victory instead of weak minority governments, economic prosperity instead of the 1973 oil crisis and the decline of ENPP instead of increase.) On the other hand, however, there is continuity in the pluralisation process particularly at the regional and European levels. After 1974, similarly to 1997, the question of devolution appeared on the political agenda. The local nationalist parties (SNP, PC, DUP, UUP, SDLP, SF) also enjoyed growing popularity in those times. Both 1974 and 1997 were followed by major changes in the

UK–EU relations: in 1973, the UK joined the EEC and in 1993, they became part of the single market (the Maastricht Treaty.) Later, the European integration penetrated into domestic politics in both 1979 and in 1999: in 1979, the UK first sent MEPs to the European Parliament, which became the first regular alternative national election beside the Westminster general elections, and in 1999, the EP elections became PR which stood in sharp contrast with the Westminster FPTP elections.

The 1997 period is, therefore, both abandonment of the 1974 heritage and the continuation of it. This dual characteristic of the 1997 election makes substantive difference vis-á-vis the 1945 election. If the 1997 election had reproduced the 1945 patterns, the 1974 election would have been indeed a minor pluralist setback in British politics. Nevertheless, it was not the case and the path-dependency of 1974 has proved to be lasting. It demonstrates that the evolution of UK party competition has a long-term trend towards pluralisation. The critical junctures of 1974 and 1997 both had additional roles in this process. In 1997, despite the return to the 1945 results in a certain way, the pluralisation process which started in 1974 continued.

Table 18 Comparing the post-1974 and the post-1997 periods

	Post-1974	**Post-1997**
	Similarities	
Devolution referenda	1979 Scotland, Wales	Scotland, Wales, London, NI
EP elections	1979 FPTP introduction	1999 PR introduction
European relations	After joining the EEC (1973)	After Maastricht (1993)
	Differences	
	Labour minority in Feb 1974 and after 1976	Labour landslide
	1973 oil crisis and stagflation	Economic prosperity
	Pluralisation in the parliamentary and electoral arenas	Pluralisation in the electoral arena and a return in the parliamentary arena

6.6 BOTTOM LINE

The 1997 general election meant both a return to the post-1945 period and a continuation of the post-1974 period. In this sense, it had a controversial impact on the evolution of UK party politics. On one hand, the two-party path dependency in

Westminster was confirmed. This meant a superficial return to the post-1945 era. On the other hand, the multi-party path dependency at national, regional and European level was also reinforced. This meant the continuation of the 1974 pluralisation process. This *contradiction* is the most important impact that the post-1997 era created. The differences between the parliamentary and electoral arenas became obvious.

In sum, the 1997 general election started an era of *latent contradiction* and *incongruence*. It was only a matter of time when it would generate a new turn in the evolution of British party politics.

7 THE 2010 AND 2015 GENERAL ELECTIONS

7.1 IMPORTANCE

Unlike any critical junctures which I observed earlier, the post-2010 critical juncture is a long-continued one between 2010 and 2015. This suggests that both the 2010 and 2015 general elections are interlinked with several interim elections (i.e., the 2011 AV referendum, 2014 Scottish referendum, 2014 EP elections.) The other critical junctures in 1945, 1974 and 1997 were clear-cut and one-off junctures, which symbolised obvious dividing lines in the evolution of British politics. These dividing lines were also confirmed quantitatively by high electoral volatilities. (In 1945 (13.73%), in February 1974 (14.43%), or in 1997 (12.33%).) Nevertheless, the critical juncture developing in 2010 was a different one. It was not a clear-cut and one-off juncture, but a continuous and culminating one. In this long-continuing process, *momentum* played an important role; one political development contributed to the following one. Due to this momentum effect, most of the criteria of a critical juncture showed a little bit belatedly after 2010. For instance, electoral volatility was low in 2010 (only 6.2%), however, it was very high at the 2014 EP election (21%) and also high at the 2015 general election (15.13%).

This long-continuing critical juncture offered further insights. In 2010, the surprising electoral outcome (coalition government) was caused by a mixture of party-related and non-party-related factors (please see also T. Heppell & Seawright, 2012). The party-related factors concerned the party competition among Labour, the Conservatives and the Lib Dems, while the non-party-related factors came from the distorting effect of the FPTP electoral system. Moreover, based on the electoral data, it was confirmed that the electoral system took a significant share in the outcome. So it was not precisely the change in party competition patterns that induced the hung parliament in 2010. It was rather the disproportional effect of the FPTP electoral system.

However, the FPTP electoral system anticipated the patterns of a different party competition which arrived later in 2014 and 2015. In this sense, the 2010 general election had a *self-fulfilling effect*: although the electoral outcome was not supported by significant change in the patterns of UK party competition in 2010, in the following years, the 2010 electoral outcome did generate change in the patterns of UK party competition. In other words, the 2010 hung parliament and the coalition government occurred mainly due to the electoral system, however, the 2014 and 2015 high electoral volatilities manifested already because of the 2010 coalition government. I argue therefore that the 2010 and 2015 general elections are highly interconnected and inseparable.

I also argue that the post-2010 critical juncture made *explicit* the already ongoing *latent pluralisation process*. These explicit signs were the coalition government, the proliferation of referenda, UKIP's EP victory in 2014, record high electoral volatilities, the SNP's landslide victory in 2015 and an increase in party fragmentation index. Since these explicit signs constitute part of the same process, I consider the post-2010 period one continuous critical juncture which had started in 2010 and ended in 2015. Due to its complex nature, I deal with the post-2010 era in a more detailed way than with any other critical junctures.

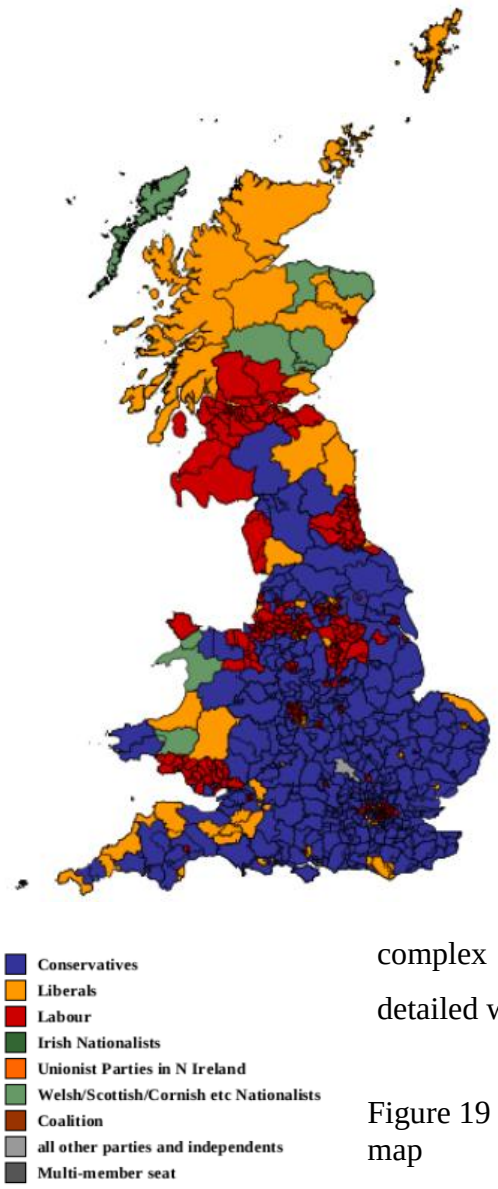

Figure 19 The 2010 general election result on the UK map

Source: Great Britain Historical GIS Project (2017)
With prior permission from the authors. Retrieved from: http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/atlas/map/R_WINNING_PARTY/CONSTITUENCY/06MAY2010
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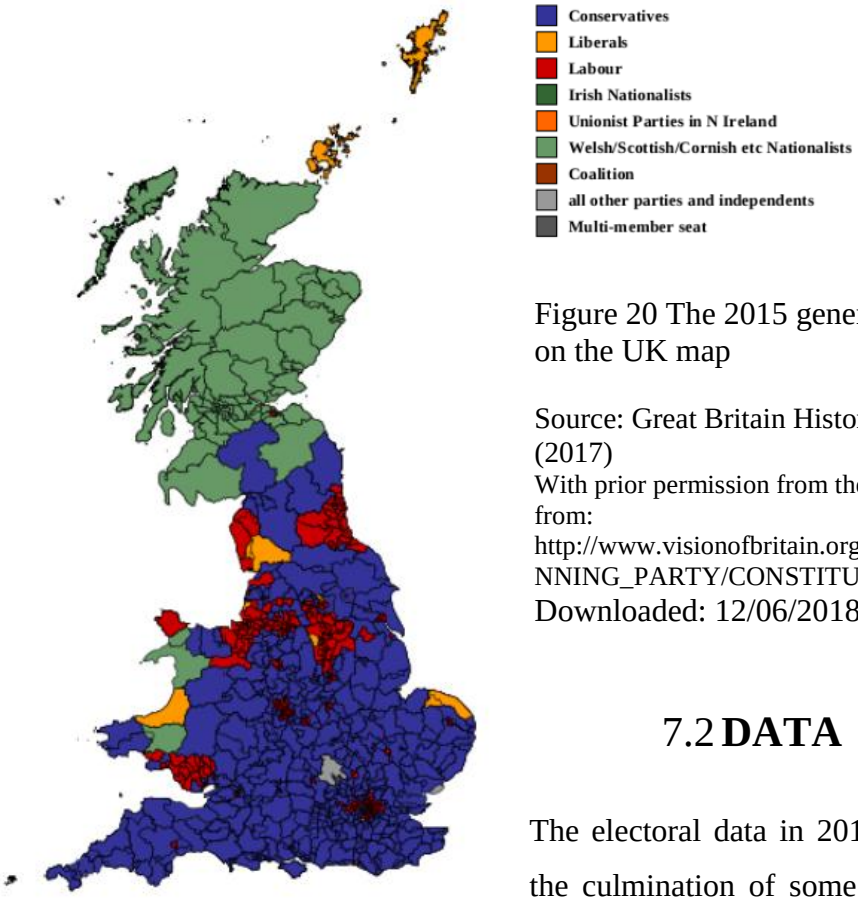

Figure 20 The 2015 general election result on the UK map

Source: Great Britain Historical GIS Project (2017)
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http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/atlas/map/R_WINNING_PARTY/CONSTITUENCY/07MAY2015
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7.2 DATA

The electoral data in 2010 and 2015 show the culmination of some rather distressing phenomena. First, the FPTP electoral system had been producing increasingly disproportional outcomes. It means that vote share and seat share gradually separated from each other and it was very difficult to predict seat share outcome based on national opinion polls on vote shares. Second, the party competition had become record fragmented in 2010 and 2015. It means that the dispersion of vote shares among parties had become less concentrated and smaller parties were increasingly popular. Third, electoral volatility was record high in 2015, which suggested that sudden changes in British politics could easily happen. The predictable two-party rivalry hence was replaced by a less predictable multi-party contest.

Next, I want to focus on these three dimensions in more detail.

7.2.1 The growing disproportionality of the electoral system

There is a somewhat controversial trend in the results of UK general elections. On the one hand, the *vote share difference* has been increasing between the Conservatives and Labour, however, this difference, on the other hand, has been providing less and less *seat share difference*. In other words, if one of the major parties wanted to form a

single majority government (and avoid a hung parliament) it would have to lead more in the vote share than ever before. Figure 21 illustrates this trend between 1945 and 2015; the green columns show the distortion effect of the electoral system (on the left axis) and the two lines demonstrate the differences between the two parties (on the right axis). In the 1950s and 1960s, the difference between Labour and the Conservatives was on average 2.5-3.0 times more in seat share than in vote share. In the 1970s and 1980s, this number dropped to 1.0–2.0. In the 1990s and 2000s, however, the difference kept rising to a record level in 2005 (the seat share difference was 8.6x more than vote share difference; 35.2% vote Lab, 32.4% vote Con, 54.95% seat Lab, 30.65% seat Con). This record high difference in 2005 was followed by an almost record low difference in 2010. The 2010 general election had almost exactly the same seat share and vote share difference. (The seat share difference was only 1.05x more than the vote share difference; Con 36.1% vote, Lab 29.0% vote, Con 47.08% seat, Lab 39.69% seat.) This increasingly volatile difference between seat share and vote share is therefore a new phenomenon of UK general elections. It seems that the FPTP electoral system has recently transformed votes into seats in a less predictable way. So the electoral system has tended to matter more since 1997.

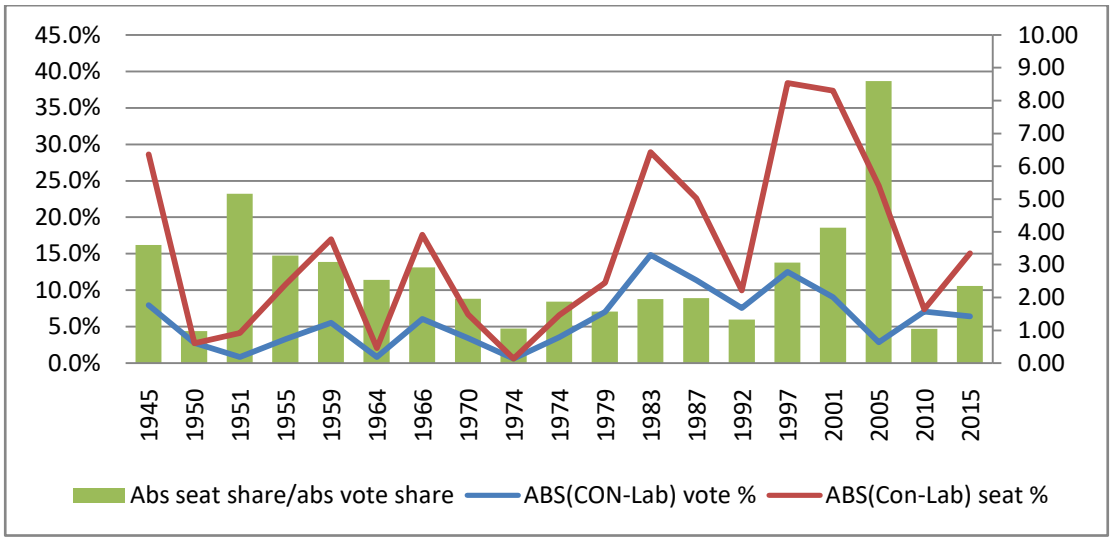


Figure 21 Conservative and Labour differences in vote% and seat%

Both the 2010 and 2015 general elections were affected by this recent trend. In 2010 and 2015, the vote share difference between Labour and the Conservatives were identical (in 2010 Con 36.1%, Lab 29.0%; in 2015 Con 36.8%, Lab 30.4%), however, the very same results in vote share produced a hung parliament in 2010 and an absolute Con majority parliament in 2015.

One could say that the 2010 general election was perhaps the fairest in British history because it had the same seat share for the same vote share. However, the FPTP electoral system is made for *over-representing* the winner party in order to have a stable governing majority. This function of the FPTP electoral system worked relatively well between 1945 and 1992, however, later it produced some extremities: first, from 1997 to 2005, it artificially generated Labour landslide victories in the parliament, second, in 2010 it did not generate any over-representation at all for the Conservatives in the House of Commons. Therefore, the FPTP electoral system has been increasingly responsible for the general election results for the last couple of years and particularly for 2010. Interestingly enough, however, in 2015, when every opinion pollster was expecting a hung parliament (the same result as in 2010), the FPTP electoral system tricked again much of the surveys by generating a stable Con majority. In sum, the electoral system has been producing more extreme and unpredictable outcomes.

The reasons for the unpredictability of the FPTP electoral system are manifold. Curtice et al (2015: 420) suggest three factors why the vote share difference has had less impact on seat share difference in recent elections. First, the number of Con–Lab marginal constituencies has kept declining over time. It means that at constituency level, one of the major parties has often achieved landslide victories. This logically supposes that in geographical terms the two parties are more polarised: there are clear Con and Lab strongholds. It was not so remarkable in the 1950s and 60s. Second, the FPTP electoral system increasingly favours or disfavours one of the two major parties. As a result, the electoral system does not treat the two parties in an 'even-handed' manner. The additional extra vote share generates very different number of extra seat share for Labour and for the Conservatives. (e.g. let's say, +1% vote share for Labour generates +3% seat share, whereas +1% vote share for the Conservatives generates only 2% seat share.) A perfect proof for the 'uneven-handed' treatment of the 2010 general election would have happened in the case of a tie; with the same vote share, Labour would have had 51 more seats than the Conservatives in the House of Commons. (Note that the *even-handed* electoral system has nothing to do with *PR electoral system*. In the first case, it means that the FPTP electoral system does not discriminate between the two parties in over-representation (e.g. +1% vote share for each party should generate +3% seat share respectively.) However, in the second case,

PR election would mean no over-representation at all (e.g. +1% vote share for each party should generate *precisely* +1% seat share.). Third, the electoral system significantly under-represents third parties with basically no or little seat share, even though third party vote share has been on a continuous rise. (See Figure 22.)

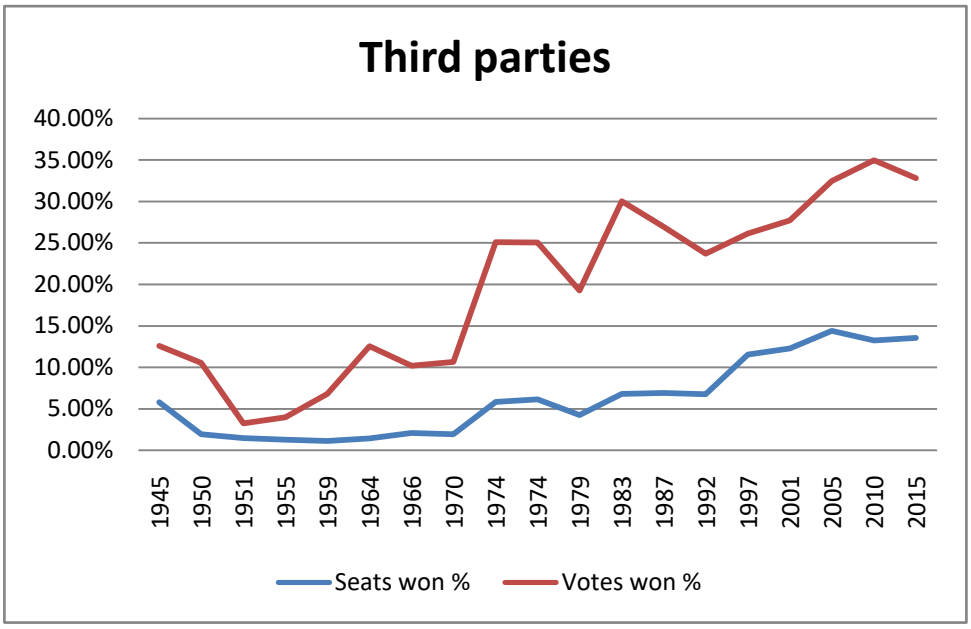


Figure 22 Third party seat and vote share (1945–2015)

In sum, none of the three factors which Curtice at al. (2015) suggest was at play during the last couple of UK general elections: the two-party marginal constituencies have been declining, the electoral system has increasingly distorted the overall results and third parties have been gaining more representation in the parliament although they were under-represented. The change in these factors could generate either a disproportionate landslide victory or no victory at all. Table 19 shows that the first party vote share in 2005 (Labour 35.2%) was lower than in 2010 (Con 36.1%) and in 2015 (Con 36.8%). Nevertheless, this electoral vote share generated more seat share in 2005 (54.95%) than in 2010 (47.08%) or in 2015 (50.77%). So, the almost identical first place vote share created very different seat share outcomes and government majorities. Paradoxically, there was more vote share for the first place party in 2010 than in 2005. However, it was not sufficient for having a single majority government. In 2015, the first place Conservative party basically reproduced its 2010 vote share (with only 0.7% difference), however, this time it was already enough to form an absolute majority. I argue therefore, that the three factors which were identified by Curtice et al (2015) brought *unpredictability* and *incertitude* into British politics.

Instead of stabilising the UK political scene, the FPTP electoral system has been contributing to destabilising it.

Table 19 Vote share and seat share at various UK general elections

	The winning (1st) party's *vote* share	**The winning (1st) party's *seat* share**	**The 2nd party's *vote* share**	**The 2nd party's *seat* share**	**The 3rd party's *vote* share**	**The 3rd party's *seat* share**
2005	35.2% (Lab)	54.95% (Lab)	32.4% (Con)	30.65% (Con)	22.0% (LD)	9.60% (LD)
2010	36.1% (Con)	47.08% (Con)	29.0% (Lab)	39.69 (Lab)%	23.0% (LD)	8.77% (LD)
2015	36.8% (Con)	50.77% (Con)	30.4% (Lab)	35.69% (Lab)	12.64 (Ukip)	8.62 (SNP)

7.2.2 Growing fragmentation

The 2010 and 2015 general elections had record high party system fragmentation values. ENEP was 3.72 in 2010 and 3.93 in 2015 (my own calculations.) It fits perfectly the linear trend starting from 1992 ($y = 0.173x + 2.865$, $R^2 = 0.989$). (See Figure 23.) This trend suggests that every electoral year since 1992, there have been 17.3% more parties in the competition than previously. (In 2001 and 2005 ENEP indicators were 3.33 and 3.59.)

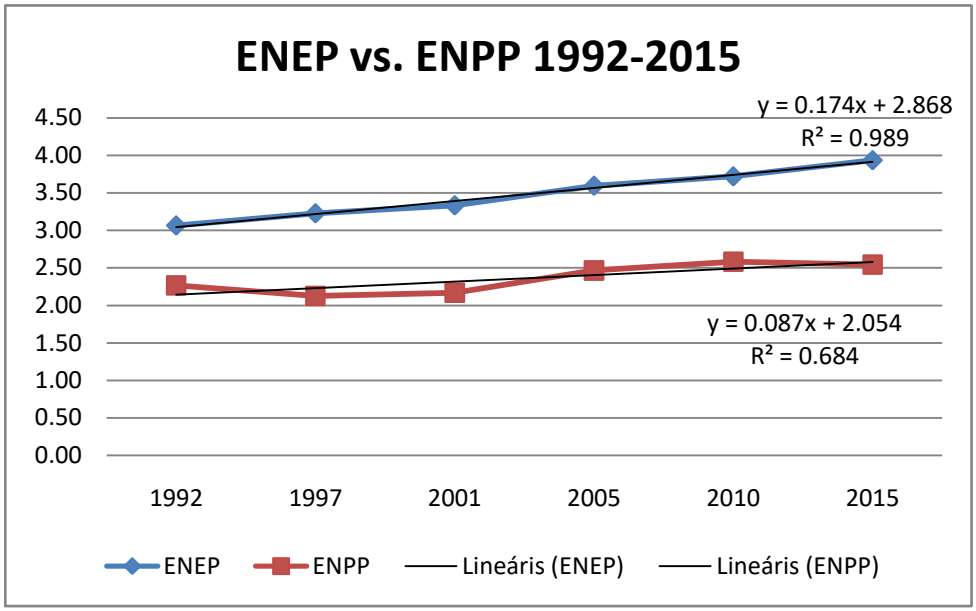


Figure 23 ENEP and ENPP with regressions (1992–2015)

At the same time, ENPP remained artificially low. It was 2.57 in 2010 and 2.54 in 2015. It reflects a stagnating trend from 1992 ($y= 0.087x + 2.054$, $R^2 = 0.684$). (See Figure 23.) It implies that the number of parties in the House of Commons only increased by 8.7% between consecutive general elections. (In 2001 and 2005 they were 2.17 and 2.47.)

So the relevant number of contesting parties outside Westminster grew almost twice as fast (by 17.3%) than the number of parties within Westminster (by only 8.7%). This implies that the incongruence (or misfit) between ENEP and ENPP has been rising and reached a record height in 2015. This is true because in 2015 the difference reached 1.39, which is the highest since the Second World War. The 2015 difference was caused by continuing growth in ENEP and a slight decline in ENPP. The continuing increase of ENEP was caused by the growing number of 'other party' vote share, whilst the decline of ENPP was caused by the increase of the Conservatives' seat share in Westminster.

In sum, the post-2010 period is characterized by growing fragmentation in British politics. This growing fragmentation is mainly caused by the rapid growth of the fragmentation of the electoral arena, which is slowly followed by the fragmentation of the parliamentary arena.

7.2.3 **Increasing electoral volatility**

Electoral volatility is not as stable and predictable as party system fragmentation numbers. There were a couple of occasions after the Second World War when electoral volatility was high (see earlier critical junctures.) However, after the last critical juncture in 1997, electoral volatility remained low. It was so in 1997 (12.33%), in 2001 (3.27%), in 2005 (5.49%) and in 2010 (6.20%). The record high 15.13% in 2015 is in sharp contrast with general elections after 1997.

So we need to understand two things here. First, why the 2015 electoral volatility was so high and second, why the 2010 one remained relatively low in spite of the hung parliament.

The 2010 electoral volatility was low (6.20%) because there was no major difference between the 2005 and 2010 general election vote shares. The Conservatives had 32.4% in 2005 and 36.1% in 2010, Labour had 35.2% in 2005 and 29% in 2010 and

the Lib Dems had 22% in 2005 and 23% in 2010. In addition, the whole composition of third party votes (votes that fall outside of Labour and the Conservatives) was dominated by the Lib Dems. It meant that beside the Lib Dems' 22% vote share in 2005, there was only 10.4% vote share for 'other parties.' In 2010, this third party vote share was still dominated by the Lib Dems (23% for LD vs. 11.9% for all other smaller parties). So, between 2005 and 2010, there was not significant electoral realignment. Instead a slight reorientation took place between Conservative and Labour voters by keeping the Lib Dems at the very same level (in 2005: 22%) and in 2010: 23%). The relatively low electoral volatility in 2010 is hence caused by a high similarity with the 2005 result.

This stability was completely undermined by the record high volatility in 2015. This record high volatility was caused by the realignment of third party votes and not by the realignment of voters between major parties. It is shocking how stable the Conservative and Labour vote share remained. In 2010 the Conservatives got 36.1% whilst Labour had 29%. In 2015, the Conservatives got 36.8% and Labour 30.4%. Therefore, one can state that the electoral volatility was not induced by the major parties. Rather, it was caused by third parties. The Lib Dems collapsed because in 2010 they got 23%, whilst in 2015 (7.9%). At the same time, other parties increased their vote share from 11.9% in 2010 to 24.9% in 2015. This change also meant that the Lib Dems' monopoly over third party votes ended. In 2010, third party votes went at a rate of 65.9% – 34.1% to the Lib Dems (against 'other parties'), however, in 2015, this ratio turned into its opposite; 24.1% for the Lib Dems and 75.9% for 'other parties.' So the record high electoral volatility was caused by the parallel collapse of the Lib Dems and the movement of 'other parties' in their place.

The record high electoral volatility in 2015 was due to realignment among third party support. In more detail, Table 20 shows how UK party vote share changed from 2010 to 2015. Again, the Conservative and Labour vote shares were almost identical in 2010 and 2015 (Con difference: 0.76% point, Lab difference: 1.46% points). Two 'third parties' declined significantly: the Lib Dems by -15.16% points (from 23.03% to 7.87%) and the British National Party by – 1.89% points (from 1.90% to 0.01%). Otherwise, all the 'other parties' increased their vote share: UKIP by +9.55% points (from 3.10% to 12.64%), SNP by +3.08% points (from 1.66% to 4.74%) and the Greens by +2.81% points (from 0.96%to 3.77%). There was just one 'third party'

which did not change; Plaid Cymru achieved 0.56% in 2010 and 0.59% in 2015, which is a similar stagnation to that of the Conservatives or of Labour.

Table 20 Electoral volatility from 2010 to 2015

Party	2010 vote %	2015 vote %	Change %point (2015–2010)
Conservative	36.05%	36.81%	0.76%
Labour	28.99%	30.45%	1.46%
LibDem	23.03%	7.87%	-15.16%
UKIP	3.10%	12.64%	9.55%
BNP	1.90%	0.01%	-1.89%
SNP	1.66%	4.74%	3.08%
Green Party	0.96%	3.77%	2.81%
Plaid Cymru	0.56%	0.59%	0.03%
Sum			0.63%

It would be, however, misleading to say that the realignment of 'third party' votes only affected 'third parties.' The Lib Dem collapse did not mean that those votes automatically went to other 'third parties.' Instead, it often happened that LD voters chose one of the two major parties, while at the same time, some of the 'major party' supporters voted for 'other parties.' In this way, there was a significant 'gateway house' effect in the case of the two major parties. They both benefited from LD's collapse and lost former Conservative and Labour voters. At the end of the day, the net change in their support was not important; however, it does not mean that they were not affected by the record high electoral volatility.

In the following, based on Curtice et al (2015), I try to model how electoral realignment happened in 2015.

- The collapse of LD support went for 4 parties: the Conservatives, Labour, the SNP and the Greens. Part of the Conservatives victory was the fact that they benefited more from LD collapse than Labour. (Please find more about this in Chapter 7.3.2.2.1.)
- Labour got support from former LD supporters and lost voters to UKIP and the SNP.
- The Conservatives got support from former LD voters and lost voters for UKIP.
- There was not a significant swing between the Cons and Lab (only 1%).

- UKIP got support from 4 directions: from former BNP voters, from the Conservatives, from Labour and from new voters. (In England there were +489,632 new voters compared to 2010.)
- The SNP increased their vote share from 3 directions: from Labour, from LD and from new voters. In the SNP's case, new voter mobilisation was quite successful. From their additional 979,320 votes in 2015, it is likely they got 328,428 from disillusioned Labour (net Labour change in Scotland), 245,771 from the Lib Dems (net Lib Dem change in Scotland) and 444,720 from new voters (net turnout change in Scotland).
- The Greens got their additional vote share almost exclusively from disillusioned Lib Dems. They did not get too many from former Labour supporters. In addition, similarly to UKIP, they might have benefited from new voters in England and Wales.
- There were 4 directions of two-party swings, which were low: between UKIP and the SNP, UKIP and the Greens, UKIP and the Lib Dems and the SNP and the Greens. (Figure 24 marks them with red arrows.)

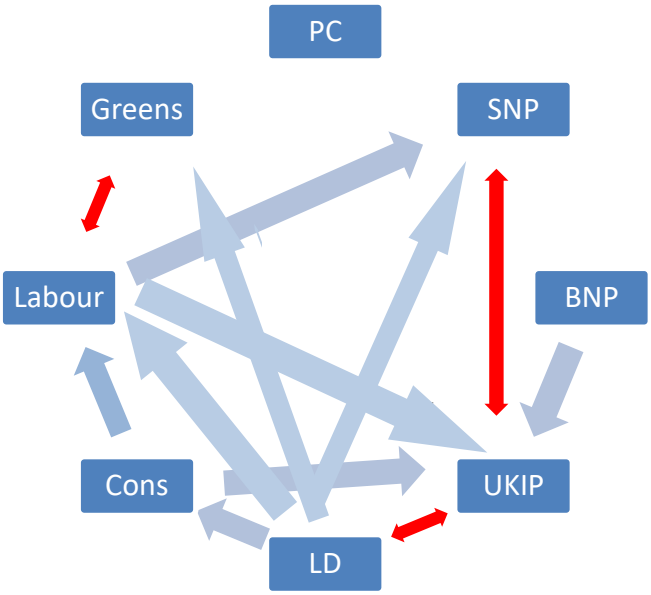


Figure 24 Electoral volatility from 2010 to 2015 (my rough estimation of possible net swing)

In sum, the electoral volatility demonstrates that in 2010 there was a 3-party race among the Conservatives, Labour and the Lib Dems. However, in 2015, there was

already a race among a multitude of parties: the Conservatives, Labour, Lib Dems, the SNP, UKIP and the Greens. It is interesting that the Con–Lab electoral swing was very low in 2015, which suggests that electoral competition transformed from two-party rivalry to a multi-party contest in Britain.

7.2.4 Summary of the data

Electoral data in 2010 and 2015 have one major bottom-line: the dynamics of UK party competition has become very unpredictable. At the same time, the parliamentary arena remains stable, although mostly in quantitative terms and not qualitatively. Quantitatively, there is still a two-and-a-half party system in Westminster, however, qualitatively, it is very different from any of the earlier ones because the 'national half-party', the Lib Dems, were replaced by a 'nationalist half-party' in 2015. Therefore, predictability has suffered both in the electoral and parliamentary arenas. Moreover, from the three above mentioned criteria (disproportion, fragmentation and volatility) two constitute part of a long-term trend (only volatility is a short-term phenomenon.) Hence, unpredictability is likely to become a long-term characteristic of British politics. In other words, we can quite strongly *predict* that *unpredictability* will form part of future UK politics.

7.3 CAUSES

The factors that affected the results of the two general elections of 2010 and 2015 were similar even though the electoral outcomes were fundamentally different (i.e., coalition government in 2010 vs. single majority government in 2015, low electoral volatility in 2010 vs. high volatility in 2015.) The similar consequences in 2010 and in 2015 arose from anti-establishment sentiment. However, there was one major difference in the causes between the two elections; in 2010, the Conservative Party performed badly, while in 2015, they performed well. So, I argue that anti-establishment sentiment linked up the two general elections, although in a different manner, and besides anti-establishment sentiment, it was the Conservative Party's performance that eventually decided the outcome. This distinction underlines the dichotomy of current British politics; anti-establishment sentiment does not mean that the need for traditional party competition no longer exists. Instead, I argue, it means that nowadays there is a three-fold party competition; one is between traditional

parties over competence, one is between traditional parties and third parties over anti-establishment, and one is among third parties themselves about representing anti-establishment vis-á-vis the traditional parties.

In 2010, hence, the causes could be divided into:

- **Anti-establishment sentiment** against the Conservatives and Labour. It was represented by third parties, particularly by the Lib Dems.
- **Negative Conservative performance**: the Conservatives could not win absolute majority due to limited political appeal and negative electoral bias.

In 2015, these causes changed to the following:

- **Anti-establishment sentiment** against the Conservatives, Labour *and* the Liberal Democrats (for becoming part of the establishment.) It was represented by third parties like UKIP, SNP and the Greens.
- **Positive Conservative Performance**: the Conservatives could win absolute majority due to positive political appeal and a neutral or positive electoral bias.

I argue that, during both elections, anti-establishment sentiment and Conservative performance played a crucial role. Although both anti-establishment and Conservative performance varied from 2010 to 2015, they remained the key motives. Anti-establishment first meant a conflict between the two major parties (Lab, Con) and the Lib Dems. Later it changed to a conflict between these previous three parties and all the rest. Conservative performance, however, meant first a rather limited appeal and a negative electoral bias, which later turned to its opposite; quite positive appeal with a positive electoral bias. Hence, during both the 2010 and 2015 elections, we faced similar rationales in an altered way. In the following, I will discuss the causes in more detail.

7.3.1 The causes of the 2010 general election results

The most important outcome of the 2010 general election was the lack of parliamentary majority (hung parliament). Although Labour had been in office for the previous 13 years, and they had suffered an important loss in popularity, the Conservatives could not use this advantage for their own benefit. It was rather the third Lib Dem Party that profited from the situation; instead of a *majority* Conservative or Labour government, the 2010 general election provided a *minority*

victory for the Conservatives. They could only have a majority government by forging a coalition with the third Lib Dems.

The relatively poor performance of the Conservative Party in parallel with the relatively good performance of the Lib Dems raised a couple of questions. Many of the Conservatives were concerned about anti-establishment politics because the Lib Dems had been long portrayed as the alternative party against the two traditional ones. However, I argue that anti-establishment sentiment was not enough for producing such an outcome. The negative performance of the Conservative Party was also needed. These two factors combined are responsible for the 2010 general election outcome. (See also: (H. Clarke, Sanders, Stewart, & Whiteley, 2010.)

In the following, I summarise first the sub-causes underlying the anti-establishment sentiment and then the sub-causes underlying the negative Conservative performance.

7.3.1.1 Anti-establishment sentiment

(1) In 2009, an *expenses scandal* affected both major parties. Both Labour and Conservative MPs were involved in financial misbehaviour. Theoretically, it could have led to growing anti-establishment sentiments. However, in practice, the expenses scandals did not significantly alter votes for the two main parties (Denver and Garnett, 2014: 164;O. Heath, 2010; Pattie & Johnston, 2012).

(2) The Conservative Party was still labelled as the *'nasty party'* in the late 2000s. They were considered as the inheritors of Margaret Thatcher's legacy, which was equal with austerity, monetarism, individualism and 'big business' interest. (See also Bochel, 2011.) Although David Cameron's idea about *'Big Society'* wanted to get rid of this negative perception, this modernisation was not finished in 2010 (Dommett, 2015). So, the Conservative Party remained somewhat suspicious for many British people.

(3) Labour has become increasingly unpopular in the electorate after 2005 (Please compare with Evans & Andersen, 2005). Although they gradually managed to gain back their reputation after the 2003 Iraq war, more new challenges arose on the horizon. First, in 2007, Tony

Blair resigned due to worsening opinion polls. Then, he was followed by Gordon Brown, who had even less charisma and personal appeal. (Find more about British Prime Ministers in Pearce, Pearce, & Goodlad, 2013.) The new prime minister did not enjoy much legitimacy because he was not elected; instead he was nominated by the Labour Party. Third, the 2007–08 financial crises hit the UK in this context: the lack of legitimacy fired back when it came to hard decisions about austerity. Fourth, the Labour Party was caught up by 'sleaze' at the end of their 13-year-long rule. (By the way, it is very similar to the Conservative 'sleaze' in the 1990s, which happened at the end of 16-year-long Conservative rule.) Apart from the 'expenses scandal,' there were other clearly Labour-linked corruptions: 'cash for honours,' 'cash for peerages,' Bernie Ecclestone's Labour donation (in exchange for allowing tobacco advertisements in motor racing, though it happened much earlier, in 1997.) In addition to such corruption scandals, the 2008 banking bailouts were also thought to be high level corruptions.

(4) 2010 was the first general election in the UK when the three party leaders participated in a public TV debate. In this contest, the Liberal Democrat leader performed quite well, whereas David Cameron and Gordon Brown were less convincing. (For more information about the media's impact see D. Deacon & Wring, 2011.) On the one hand, there was 'Cleggmania' (an artificial and sudden media hype around the LD leader) and on the other hand, traditional parties failed to communicate well. Particularly, Gordon Brown made too many mistakes in this sense; he could not smile before the cameras at all and his negative comments against a Labour sympathiser (Mrs Duffy – 'bigoted woman') were also negatively affected.

(5) The sudden rise in LD support evaporated fast. On polling day, the LD party got almost the same vote share (23%) as in 2005 (22%). It was transformed into fewer seats in 2010 (57 MPs) than in 2005 (62 MPs). So the LD party could not benefit from the unpopularity of Labour or the Conservatives. Without a significant rise in their popular support,

their pivotal role in the post-election governmental negotiations was cast by the negative bias of the electoral system for the Conservatives.

(6) Big Society: The Conservative Party felt obliged to construct a new narrative for Conservative modernisation in response to the consecutive electoral losses against Labour. Big Society was intended to serve this goal. (Find more about David Cameron's strategy in Green, 2010.) It wanted to distance the Conservatives from individualism and to favour community initiatives instead. The somewhat leftist ideology shift, however, could not appeal to many new voters and, often, even alienated traditional Conservative supporters. (Please see as well: Catney et al., 2014.) Many party members made Big Society responsible for the bad Conservative electoral results. (See Big Society in more detail in Chapter 8.3.2 Big Society.)

7.3.1.2 Negative Conservative performance

The relatively modest Conservative electoral result was caused by the negative bias of the electoral system.

<u>Negative electoral system bias</u>

(1) The electoral system treated the Conservative Party negatively. Curtice and Robert (2010) highlighted the following reasons for the negative electoral bias against the Conservatives. First, there were and still there are too many Scottish and Welsh MPs in the House of Commons compared with their relative population. Given the fact that these regions are traditionally more pro-Labour, the electoral system gave a ‘Scottish bonus’ to Labour. Second, the Conservative constituencies are on average more populous than Labour’s ones. So, there are usually fewer votes behind a Labour MP than behind a Conservative MP. Third, turnout is usually higher in Conservative constituencies than in Labour ones. So the *electoral efficiency* is much worse for the Conservatives than for Labour; Conservative MPs usually win with high margins while Labour MPs win with only slight differences over the second candidate (Kavanagh and Cowley, 2010: 415). In addition, tactical voting sometimes has also negatively affected the

Conservatives (more about this phenomenon in Johnston & Pattie, 2011).

(2) No uniform swing: The 2010 general election showed that local issues matter a lot. In this way, the national electoral swing did not have uniform electoral swings at constituency level. Instead, there was a high variety of local electoral swings. For instance, in Redcar the Teesside Steelworks closure mattered more than national politics (Denver and Garnett, 2014: 164). Therefore, the Conservatives' national vote share growth was not automatically transformed into constituency victories.

(3) In Scotland, the Labour Party pursued quite a successful local campaign. After losing the 2007 Scottish devolved election against the SNP, the Labour Party came back as the first party at the 2010 general election. If Labour had not come back in Scotland as the dominant party, the Conservatives could have had enough seats for a single majority government. Nevertheless, the difference between the 2007 devolved campaign and the 2010 national campaign anticipated the conflict between the Scottish Labour Party and the UK Labour Party. This conflict became more visible in 2015 when the Scottish Labour Party lost against the SNP in Scotland, whilst the UK Labour Party slightly increased their national vote share.

7.3.2 The causes of the 2015 general election results

The 2015 general election had a rather controversial impact. On the one hand, after 5 years of coalition government, it meant a return to classic single majority government due to the surprising Conservative victory. On the other hand, this election had the highest electoral volatility ever in post-war British politics. So the 2015 election had two opposing characteristics: returning to normality and reflecting abnormality never seen before.

I argue that although the outcomes were very different in 2015 and in 2010, the causes which can be identified behind them remained much the same. In the following, I continue the logic which I used to understand the 2010 general election. Here, I continue the analysis of anti-establishment sentiment and Conservative performance.

7.3.2.1 Anti-establishment sentiment

The electoral volatility is mainly due to realignment among third parties. The collapse of the Lib Dems and the parallel rise of UKIP, the SNP and the Greens were most importantly responsible for this high volatility. I argue that 'third party' vote share realignment was caused by anti-establishment. (See in Section 7.2.3 Increasing electoral volatility.)

7.3.2.1.1 The Liberal Democrat's decline

1) Kavanagh and Cowley (2016: 109) remark that the most important factor for the Lib Dems' decline was *entering coalition* with the Conservatives: *"It was going into coalition with the Conservatives that destroyed the Lib Dems' poll rating, not any particular policy.'* (See also: Quinn, Bara, & Bartle, 2011.) The Lib Dems had long been considered a third (anti-establishment) party against the two major parties. However, their joining the Conservatives to form a coalition government meant for many that they gave up their original anti-establishment stance and became part of the very same establishment. This kind of 'electoral betrayal' is the most likely reason for the Lib Dems' collapse.
2) Particularly, the raise of *university tuition fees* contributed most to this general perception. Although Nick Clegg had campaigned for lowering tuition fees in 2010, soon after gaining power, the Lib Dems made a U-turn and voted for tripling the tuition fees. Later in 2012, by seeing the public unrest around this legislation, Clegg apologised for it during a media interview (Kavanagh and Cowley, 2015).
3) It was generally true that the Lib Dems wanted to prove by their loyalty to the coalition agreement that the UK can successfully live with coalition governments and hung parliaments. For this, they often made compromises (like tuition fees, austerity measures, AV referendum) for the benefit of their coalition partner and to the detriment of their own interests. Hence, the Lib Dems were seen as too *weak in the coalition* government.
4) One of the best examples of such compromise was the *Alternative Vote (AV) referendum* in 2011. (For more about the constitutional background see Bogdanor, 2011.) Though the Lib Dems originally wanted a mixed electoral system instead of the current FPTP, they only managed to negotiate a referendum in the coalition about a half-way-house solution; the AV system. This electoral system was more

proportional than the FPTP, but still very far from any mixed electoral system. (The Lib Dems accepted this transitory electoral system because they hoped for more hung parliaments and more coalition governments in the future.) However, the voters used the AV referendum as a tool for punishing the Lib Dems for their electoral betrayal. There was a relatively low turnout and the NO side won. (Yes: 32.1%, No: 67.9%, Turnout: 42.0%.) Hence the AV referendum further weakened the Lib Dems and strengthened the Conservatives in the coalition.

5) The most important reason behind the Lib Dems' weak coalition position and their tendency for compromise was their *lack of governmental experience.* In contrast, the Conservatives had a long record of governmental experience. So when it came to practical coalition negotiations, the somewhat naive and good-willing Lib Dems had a major handicap vis-á-vis the more experienced coalition partner (Kavanagh and Cowley, 2016). This was particularly true for Nick Clegg's underfinanced and weak Deputy Prime Minister's Office which did not reflect the equality of the members of the coalition government. And the media relations also attested the lack of governmental record because the Lib Dems were shocked how suddenly their media appreciation turned from the positive 'Cleggmania' into a nightmare. (In this process, the relatively modest Lib Dem media portfolio was also responsible.)
6) The Lib Dems shifted from opposition to government. This change affected the *party organisation* as well. Previously, they always did small team work with a relatively democratic decision-making process. However, after 2010, they had to work as part of a large governmental machinery. The everyday work in government brought to surface some personal difficulties as well (between Nick Clegg and Vince Cable.) Moreover, because the Lib Dems needed all hands at the ministries, the party HQ was soon abandoned. Together with the loss of the Short Money (the financial aid for opposition parties), the Lib Dem party organisation became seriously undermined.
7) At the end of the 2010–15 governmental term, the Lib Dems did not own any important political issues. All the important issues which concerned the electorate belonged to other parties (i.e., the economy to the Conservatives, NHS to Labour, immigration to UKIP and the Scottish devolution to the SNP.) The Lib Dems *ideologically emptied out* at the end of their incumbency.

7.3.2.1.2 The SNP's rise

1) The SNP *gradually built up* their local reputation in Scotland. (Please find background information about Scottish politics in Cairney & McGarvey, 2013.)They were first elected to the Scottish government in 2007 (in a minority government), which proved to be pretty successful. In 2011, due to this positive record, the SNP could already gain an absolute majority (Johns, Mitchell, & Carman, 2013; Torrance, 2012). Meanwhile, they also had other positive results at local and EP elections. So the 2015 UK general election found a continuously rising and politically experienced SNP. The landslide victory in 2015 was hence the culmination of a long (8-year-long) process.

2) In this complex process, the most important cause for the 2015 general election victory lay in the *2014 Scottish referendum* on independence. Soon after gaining full absolute majority in 2011, the SNP government had enough parliamentary seats for proposing a referendum on independence. (The SNP's devotion for independence is explicitly stated in their party constitution.) In October 2012 British Prime Minister David Cameron and Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond signed the Edinburgh Agreement on holding a referendum in 2014. The agreement determined that the referendum question should be an 'IN/OUT' rather than a 'MORE DEVOLUTION/OUT' one. (The SNP originally wanted the latter one.) However, 12 days before the referendum a YouGov poll was published which said that the OUT was leading by 51%. Immediately after the poll was published, the two major party leaders (David Cameron and Ed Miliband) travelled to Scotland to campaign for IN. Moreover, both of them agreed that if IN won, there would be further devolution (Kavanagh and Cowley, 2016: 135). Therefore, the Scottish referendum was eventually about MORE DEVOLUTION/OUT, which had been originally rejected by Cameron in 2012. The Daily Record newspaper for instance had its front page on 16th September 2014 with the title; 'Extensive New Powers for the Scottish Parliament if Independence Was Rejected' (Kavanagh and Cowley, 2016: 135). I argue that one reason for the SNP's victory in 2015 was this last-minute referendum campaign.

   Soon after the failed Scottish referendum in 2014, Cameron announced more power for England which has been known as *EVEL* (English Votes for English Laws.) This measure could have endangered the Scottish net beneficiary position

in the UK political union (known as the Barnett formula) because the English MPs could have voted against financial redistribution from England to Scotland. After the failure of the September 2014 independence referendum, instead of the status quo or even more devolution, there was a threat of stepping *back* in devolution. I argue, this was the second most important reason for the SNP's victory in 2015.

I argue that the promise of MORE DEVOLUTION after the failure of independence in 2014 was fundamentally questioned by EVEL. Therefore, the only safeguards for maintaining the Scottish devolution inside the UK political union and against EVEL could have been best guaranteed by the SNP. The threat of having a situation which was even worse than the one before the 2014 independence referendum fuelled support for the SNP. At the same time, other unionist parties like Labour and the Lib Dems seemed to be ineffective at protecting Scottish interests. The SNP seemed to be the only party which was ready to stand up for Scotland.

3) The SNP had very *charismatic leaders* like Alex Salmons and Nicola Sturgeon. After the 2014 independence referendum, Alex Salmond stepped down and the young and energetic Nicola Strugeon followed him. Due to her good communication skills and the TV debates during the 2015 election campaign, Sturgeon became one of the most popular party leaders in the whole UK. (7 leader's TV debate.) (Please see, for instance, The Telegraph, 2015.)

4) The May 2015 general election followed only 8 months after the September 2014 Independence Referendum. There was a clear *momentum* which helped the party's campaign at the general election. As it turned out later, most of the people who voted for OUT in 2014 voted for SNP in 2015. So the SNP managed to keep contact with voters supporting Scotland's independence. Moreover, the short period between September 2014 and May 2015 made it very difficult for any rival parties (Labour or the Lib Dems) to react to such popularity.

7.3.2.1.3 The Green's rise

1) The Green Party's most important appeal beside their environmental policy was their anti-austerity devotion. In this respect, they were much more radical than the Labour party. Although Ed Miliband tried to gradually push back New Labour's neoliberal economic policies, it did not have a far-reaching effect according to

many. Moreover, George Osborne's austerity policy between 2010 and 2012 created a further appeal for anti-austerity parties. In this manner, the Greens benefited from both the Conservative austerity policy and from Labour's lukewarm reaction to it.

2) The *green issue* became a legitimate part of mainstream politics with the introduction of the conservative Big Society. However, David Cameron did not deliver much of his environmental policies after 2010. Moreover, due to the bad shape of UK economy, George Osborne often adopted rather anti-green measures for boosting the economy (Carrington, 2011). Hence, the green issue first became part of the mainstream agenda and later it was almost completely ignored. This phenomenon helped the Green Party.

3) The most important reason for the Greens' electoral success was disillusioned LD voters. Therefore, anti-austerity policy and the green issue could have been rather limited. However, it is likely that those protest voters who wanted to demonstrate their anti-establishment sentiment and remain on the left (instead of UKIP on the right), voted for the Greens. I argue therefore that the most important reason for the Greens' success was due to *left anti-establishment* voters who chose them instead of the Lib Dems.

4) The surge in party membership was particularly massive for the Greens. They even overtook the Lib Dems in party membership and became the third party after Labour and the Conservatives (Commons Briefing Papers SN05125, 2017). This *'Green surge'* could have been also understood as a proof of anti-establishment sentiment (Poletti and Dennison, 2016). Particularly, because it started to skyrocket after the Green Party was banned from a TV debate and a large part of the electorate protested against it.

7.3.2.1.4 The UKIP's rise

1) The most important reason for UKIP's rise was the growing salience of *immigration.* UKIP had originally a Eurosceptic appeal, however, they managed to link the EU issue with immigration (Cutts, Ford, & Goodwin, 2011). The party's anti-immigration stance created a clear issue ownership because no other major parties talked about it. (Please see also Johns, 2010.) In the 2010 Conservative campaign, immigration was not even mentioned as a challenge, and Labour also

ignored its importance until 2014 (when Ed Miliband accepted it as a mistake made by earlier Labour governments.) In the 2nd half of the 2010–15 parliamentary term, the immigration issue became the top concern in the UK before the economy, NHS or environment (Barrett, 2015). (Please see also Blinder and Richards (2018).)

2) *Nigel Farage* played an important role in this aspect. His personal charisma (particularly in contrast to the former UKIP leader, Lord Pearson's personality) became a major source of political attention and media coverage. However, his personality was perceived very differently in different parts of the electorate. On the one hand, those who favoured him tended to forgive his political and communication debacles much easier than those of the other party leaders (like Miliband's or Cameron's.) On the other hand, however, those who opposed him tended to reject him automatically without any consideration. This phenomenon was the so-called *Mr Bean/Sean Bean effect* after the journalist Stephen Bush (Kavanagh and Cowley, 2016: 112). He noted a poll which asked respondents which actor should play Nigel Farage in a future movie; the dominant answers were either Rowan Atkinson (Mr Bean), a 'complete loser,' or Sean Bean, a 'heroic winner.' This distinction reflects very well how differently the two opposing sides perceived Nigel Farage's personality. During the 2015 election campaign, it seemed that the anti-establishment mobilisation and Farage's heroic role in it was more convincing than the views about his incompetence.

3) UKIP gained votes from *both the Conservatives and Labour* (Curtice et al (2016: 406). Whereas the Conservatives realised the UKIP threat as early as 2012, Labour did not care about it until 2014 (and they even expected their electoral advance from UKIP by stealing votes from the Conservatives). The former Conservative voters usually chose UKIP for their more traditional values on social policies (like gay marriage, A-list minority candidates, foreign international aid, PC rhetoric on immigration). Former Labour voters on the other hand chose UKIP because they were felt 'left behind' by their party. The working class people in North England, Wales and other industrial areas suffered from Labour's neoliberal compromise (New Labour.) These disillusioned people supported UKIP mainly because of economic and immigration concerns. UKIP's double vote stealing from the

Conservatives and Labour proves the anti-establishment sentiment behind this realignment.

4) The fourth source of UKIP's electoral rise came from the *collapse of the British National Party* (BNP) (Goodwin, 2014). The BNP did quite well at the 2010 general election achieveing 1.9% vote share (Ford & Goodwin, 2010), however, soon after their good performance the party sank into internal turmoil and party leadership rivalry. In 2015, most of the former BNP voters chose UKIP instead of any other parties due to small ideological distance. However, it is worth noting that some of these BNP voters had been previously Labour supporters during previous elections. Hence, some Labour voters arrived at UKIP via BNP.

5) The 2014 EP election was a historical moment for the party (Treib, 2014). Although during earlier elections there were some good performances (Hayton, 2010b; Lynch & Whitaker, 2013), this was the first time that UKIP or any other party than the Conservatives or Labour managed to win a UK national election since the Second World War. Moreover, the May 22nd EP election was only one year before the May 2015 general election. Hence, the electoral *momentum* which helped the SNP in Scotland had a similar effect for UKIP in England.

7.3.2.1.5 Plaid Cymru's stability

The only significant minor party in Britain which was not affected by the electoral volatility in 2015 was the Welsh nationalist party. They reserved their 2010 results in 2015, too. It seems that their ethnic appeal, which struggles for guaranteeing the use of the Welsh language in Wales has reached its natural limits around 10–14% of the Welsh electorate. Further growth could only occur if they manage to go beyond their ethnic affiliation and shift to a regional one (like the SNP in Scotland.) However, whereas in Scotland the only viable alternative for any mainstream UK parties was the SNP, in Wales, the PC did not have such monopoly. Instead, UKIP performed quite well in Wales, which questioned PC's regional anti-establishment monopoly. Otherwise, PC has been somewhat similar to the Democratic Unionist Party and Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland; each party has their own glass ceilings for attracting new voters.

7.3.2.2 Positive performance of the Conservative Party

During this time of electoral volatility never seen before, the Conservative Party did surprisingly well. It happened very few times that an incumbent government could increase both its vote and seat shares. Moreover, it never happened before following a coalition government incumbency. The causes behind such an electoral performance are dual; it was due to both the Conservative Party's positive performance and Labour Party's rather negative one. In the following, I analyse both reasons.

7.3.2.2.1 The Conservative Party's competence

1) The Conservative Party managed the UK economy quite successfully in the shadow of the 2008 financial and economic crisis. The UK economy became one of the fastest growing in the EU, inflation remained low and unemployment decreased (Khan, 2015; Monaghan, 2014). The positive economic figures, however, were achieved by harsh austerity policy between 2010 and 2012. From 2012, Finance Minister George Osborne had gradually moved to a more demand stimulating economic policy. Thus, during the 2015 general election the UK economy was already in good shape while many of the austerity measures were over. The Conservative Party hence could appear as an *economically competent party.* (See more in Losonczi, 2017 and Whitley et al., 2015.)

2) The Conservatives finally *gave up the Big Society* agenda in 2012 with Steve Hilton's departure from Downing Street, who was the last advocate for the ideology (Kavanagh and Cowley, 2016: 44). He was followed by Lynton Crosby, who had a more pragmatic and simple agenda: economy and leadership ('competence or chaos' as he noted) (Kavanagh and Cowley, 2016: 63). Crosby had also been Australian PM John Howard's chief advisor for three consecutive terms, so he had some experience about anti-immigration policy since Australia had been facing a similar challenge for years.

3) The Conservatives managed to *react to UKIP's* threat much earlier than Labour. It was certainly due to the fact that UKIP was a right-wing party, which could have posed danger primarily to the Conservatives. The Conservatives reacted to UKIP already after 2012 with a new political agenda (abandoning Big Society) and new economic measures (demand stimulating

policies.). (Further literature on the topic: Ford & Goodwin, 2014; Goodwin, 2011; Lynch & Whitaker, 2013; Lynch, Whitaker, & Loomes, 2012.)

4) The Conservative Party *benefited more from disillusioned Lib Dem voters* than Labour. Curtice et al. (2016: 417) say that '*it is clear that the collapse in support for their junior coalition partners was a crucial foundation of the Conservatives' success.'* There are a couple of reasons why the Conservatives benefited more than Labour (Cutts and Russell, 2015). Perhaps the most important one was the fact that the Lib Dems won 33 constituencies in 2010 from the Conservatives. This also meant that the the Conservative Party remained the second largest party in these constituencies. In addition to this positional Tory advantage, in 2015 the swinging Lib Dem voters helped the Conservative Party both *indirectly* and *directly*. They helped the Conservative Party *indirectly* because those LD supporters who voted for other left parties than the LD (i.e., Labour or the Greens) weakened the first party (Lib Dems) and supported rather minor third and fourth parties (Labour or Greens.) This step *indirectly* helped the second largest, the Conservative Party. However, the LD voters also gave *direct* help to the Conservative Party. It was *direct* help that disillusioned LD voters who had been former Conservative voters flew back to their original party (the Conservatives.) And it was also *direct* help that lots of hesitating LD supporters feared more of a Labour-SNP coalition than of a single Conservative government. The former would have produced chaos and incompetence for many while the latter promised disciplined and good economic expertise. The fear of the Labour-SNP chaos was also particularly emphasized in these constituencies by the Conservative campaign. In this political mood, the LD's strategy of equidistance between the two major parties (Labour and the Conservatives) fired back. They did not have a clear idea about future coalition positions. This also suggested the possibility of an LD–Labour–SNP coalition, which would have been a nightmare for many. Therefore lots of hesitating LD voters opted for the 'least bad' option: for a single Conservative government with good economic expertise and stability.

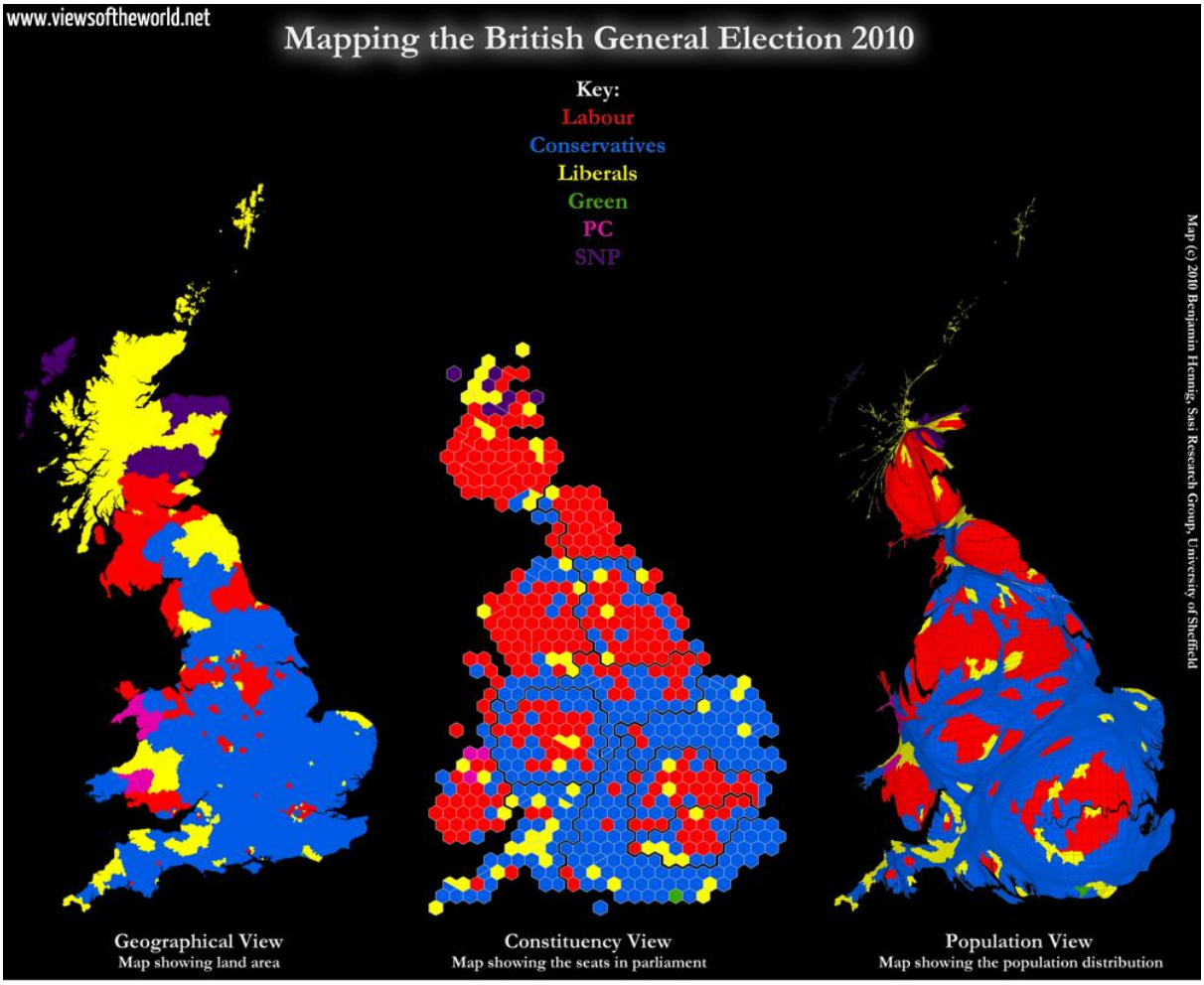
5) The electoral swing between the Conservatives and Labour was relatively small (only 1%) (Curtice et al., 2016: 418). It meant that electoral swing was not important between the two major parties. Instead it was much more

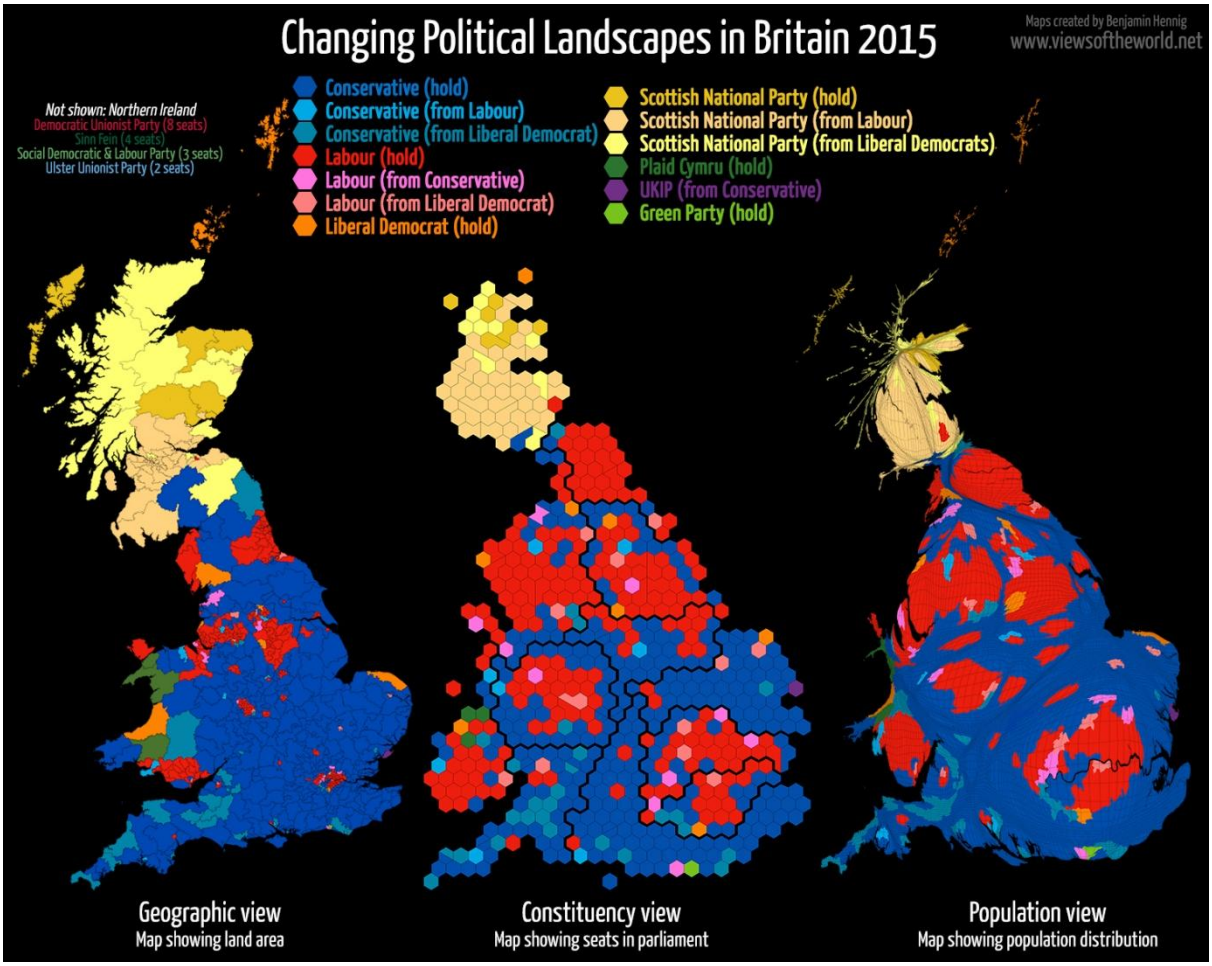
important among third parties, on the one hand, and between the major parties and third parties, on the other hand. The divide between the two clusters of Conservatives and Labour supporters proved to be difficult to bridge.

The electoral system finally treated the Conservative Party even-handedly in 2015. In opposition to their 2010 results, the Tories were not affected negatively by the pro-Labour bias of the FPTP electoral system. The most important reason for this was the SNP's good performance in Scotland, which brought an end to Labour's 'Scottish bonus.' (Please see Figure 25.) It is obvious here that Scotland has many more constituencies than its population would justify. Therefore, the party which controls Scotland truly enjoys a 'constituency bonus.' In other words, the transformation of votes to seats is the most *efficient* in Scotland. It is also true for Northern England, which is a Labour stronghold. In contrast, densely populated Southern England, which belongs to the Conservatives, has a very bad efficiency. Lots of people live there, however, their constancy ratio is relatively moderate. The 2015 general election successfully modified the Conservatives' relatively bad constituency efficiency against Labour. In 2015, Labour lost their most efficient constituencies in Scotland to the SNP. As a result, the Conservative–Labour rivalry became more balanced.

Otherwise, the Conservative MPs newly elected in 2010 defended their seats successfully in 2015, which gave advantage to the incumbent Conservative Party (Curtice et al., 2016: 397.) The electoral system even treated the Conservative Party; a Con–Lab vote share tie would have meant 51 MP Labour lead in 2010, whereas in 2015, it would have meant 46 MP lead for the Conservatives (Curtice et al., 2015: 424).

Figure 25 The geographical view of the 2010─2015 general elections
Source: Dorling and Hennig (2010); Hennig and Dorling, D. (2016) (Prior permission from the authors)





7) The *splits* inside the Conservative Party were handled quite successfully (more information in Hayton, 2014; Heppell, 2013):

   - Same-sex marriage became a marginal issue in the run up to the 2015 general election.
   - The EU issue was frozen by promising an IN/OUT referendum on EU membership after the 2015 general election. The most important endeavour for intra-party rebellion was hence weakened.[13]

7.3.2.2.2 The Labour Party's incompetence

1) The Labour Party's major problem was their *lack of coherent political profile.* They had plenty of popular policies which were appealing to the electorate, (energy price freeze, financial taxation, more devolution in economy: regional banks) however, the overall political profile was rather unimpressive. Kavanagh and Cowley (2016: 81) quote the Economist magazine, which wrote in one of its Bagehot editorials that Labour was '*an increasingly unpopular party with lots of popular policies'* after 2010. I agree with this by adding that Ed Miliband's late 2014 electoral campaign pledges (5 points) about deficit reduction and immigration control further confused the electorate because these issues traditionally belonged to the Conservative Party. This programmatic path searching, on the one hand, and Ed Miliband's uncharismatic personality, on the other hand had a dual effect of suggesting economic and leadership incompetence. This perception of incompetence, by the way, was intentionally prompted by the Tory campaign machinery under Lynton Crosby. As a result, there was a clear choice between competence and incompetence, between the Conservatives and Labour.

2) Labour portrayed themselves as the main opposition party to the Conservatives. This self-image was, however, very detrimental for them as it prevented them from recognising the real danger from other, third parties. The 2015 election turned out to be an election not just for the first place (the

[13] There were three important voting splits: 2011, David Nuttall proposed an in/out ref.; October 2012, Mark Reckless proposed an amendment to reduce the EU budget. May 2013, another amendment regretted that David Cameron left out the EU referendum bill from the Queen's Speech. (Kavanagh and Cowley, 2015: 49– 50) Moreover, there were two defections from the Conservatives to UKIP: Michael Carswell and Mark Reckless. Other rebellions were related to issues like the reform of the House of Lords and the military intervention in Syria.

government) but also for the second place (the official opposition against the Conservatives.) In this sense, *Labour only focused on the first place* and took their second place for granted in the UK. However, UKIP's and the SNP's popularity started to challenge Labour's second place in many constituencies. In Scotland, for instance, following the 2014 Independence Referendum, the SNP became the most important opposition party against the Conservatives locally. UKIP, in turn, did the same in other traditionally Labour dominated areas (like North England and Wales).

So Labour *belatedly reacted to both UKIP's* and the *SNP's rise.* UKIP has long been seen as the Conservative's concern. They only realised that UKIP was stealing votes from Labour after the 2014 EP election. As a reaction, Labour put the immigration issue on its own agenda by accepting the 2004 EU border opening was a mistake. (In this respect, they were 2 years late behind the Conservatives.) The SNP's rise was even more surprising for Labour; Labour politician George Robertson for instance thought earlier that *'devolution will kill nationalism stone dead'* in Scotland (Kavanagh and Cowley, 2015: 127). This general belief existed until December 2014, when the first opinion polls confirmed that SNP's support, instead of declining after a failed referendum, stagnated. Labour hence had only 4 month before the 2015 general election to react to the SNP's rise.

Otherwise, the *Green Party,* which had been earlier considered as a major threat to Labour after 2010, had basically no impact on Labour's vote share in 2015 (Curtice et al, 2016: 409). So the Labour Party entirely *miscalculated* their potential rivals in the 2015 elections; they focused too much on the Conservatives and lost sight of smaller parties like UKIP and the SNP while overestimating the Greens' influence.

7.4 SUMMARY OF THE CAUSES

I argue that the most important characteristic of the post-2010 era in British politics is *threefold party competition.* Firstly, there was competition between the two mainstream parties (Con, Lab) for being more competent than the other for governmental position. This was the competition between the 'established parties.' Secondly, there was party competition between the traditional parties (Lab, Con + LD)

and the other parties. I would call it competition between 'establishment' and 'anti-establishment parties.' And thirdly, there was competition between the 'anti-establishment parties' themselves (as the record high electoral volatility in 2015 was caused by realignment among third parties.) This threefold competition is completely different from any pre-2010 general elections.

The first type of competition (establishment) was won by neither the Conservatives, nor Labour in 2010. However, in 2015, this rivalry was won by the Conservatives and lost by Labour. The second type of competition (establishment – anti-establishment) was won by the Lib Dems in 2010, however, it was won by the Conservatives in 2015. Finally, the third competition (anti-establishment) was won in 2010 by the Lib Dems, however, it was lost by them in 2015 and other parties like UKIP, SNP and the Greens improved instead.

According to this analysis, the most delicate positions were those of the Lib Dems and Labour. The Lib Dems faced the challenge of becoming an establishment party from an anti-establishment one. Labour, nevertheless, had to compete both for the first place (establishment competition) and for the second place (establishment – anti-establishment competition). In this sense, Labour lost in 2010 against the Lib Dems and in 2015 against other anti-establishment parties.

7.5 COMPARING 2015 WITH 1997

The 2015 general election was quite unique in British history. It is therefore very difficult to find any similarities with any earlier general elections. I suggest, however, comparing it with the 1997 general election for two reasons: it was the last general election with such high electoral volatility and the opposition between the parliamentary and electoral arenas was also similar.

The high electoral volatilities of the 1997 and the 2015 general elections are similar in numbers but very different in nature. In 1997, the high electoral volatility was caused by a landslide Labour victory. Labour won from opposition after 18 years of Conservative rule. So the high electoral volatility meant a two-party swing from the Conservatives to Labour. In contrast, the 2015 high electoral volatility was not caused by the victory of an opposition party. Moreover, the general election was won by the incumbent Conservative party after 5 years of coalition. The high electoral volatility

hence was not caused by the two-party swing from Labour to the Conservatives, but by the realignment of third-party voters.

There is another similarity besides the high electoral volatility; both the 1997 and 2015 general elections provided an increase in the fragmentation of the electoral arena and a decline in the fragmentation of the parliamentary arena. This means that the responsiveness between the parliamentary and electoral arenas kept falling in both elections. Usually, ENEP and ENPP has kept growing over time although at a very different pace (ENEP grew fast, ENPP much slower). There have been only two occasion since 1992 when ENPP, instead of keeping pace with ENEP, declined: it happened in 1997 and in 2015. So the similarity between 1997 and 2015 is that both elections meant a return to classic two-(and-a-half) politics while multi-party competition was developing outside Westminster.

An important difference between the 1997 and 2015 electoral volatility is the background. Before 1997, there were not any major elections apart from the general one. There was only the EP election in 1994, way before the 1997 election, and the usual local council and parliamentary by-elections. However, before 2015, there had been a multitude of alternative elections which paved the road for the 2015 record volatility: the AV referendum in 2011, the Scottish independence referendum in 2014, the EP election in 2014 and other local council and parliamentary by-elections. Thus, the 1997 high electoral volatility was a *one-off* sudden electoral realignment without previous electoral signs. The 2015 volatility, however, was a culminating process with previous signs.

In sum, the 1997 and 2015 electoral volatilities are very different in nature although the figures are similar. It underlines again that the 1997 and 2015 general elections belonged to different critical junctures. The 1997 general election was a one-off critical juncture, whilst the 2015 general election was a culminating critical juncture.

Table 21 Comparing the 1997 and the 2015 general elections.

	1997	**2015**
	Similarities	
High volatility	12.33%	15.13%
Increasing ENEP/ENPP difference compared to the previous election	ENEP +0.16 (from 3.06 to 3.22), ENPP -0.14 (from 2.27 to 2.13)	ENEP +0.22 (from 3.71 to 3.93), ENPP -0.03 (from 2.57 to 2.54)

	Differences	
Opposition or incumbency victory	Labour victory after 18 years of opposition	Conservative victory after 5 years of incumbency in coalition
Ideological campaign	Yes (New Labour)	No (giving up Big Society)
Type of swing	Two-party (between Con-Lab)	Multi-party
Other elections before the general election	Few (local council and by-elections, EP in 1994)	Many (AV referendum in 2011, Scottish referendum in 2014, EP election in 2014, local council and by-elections)

7.6 BOTTOM LINE

The 2010 and the 2015 general elections are interlinked similarly to the two general elections of February and October 1974. They belong together because the important signs of a critical juncture showed between the two general elections: referenda, EP election etc. Hence, the new critical junctures meant a rupture with general election monopoly on British politics and instead raised the importance of alternative elections. These alternative elections could bring to surface the latent pluralisation process which has been going on since 1997. If the 1997 general election made pluralisation *implicit*, the post-2010 critical juncture made it *explicit*.

In sum, the 2010 and 2015 general elections started an era of *explicit pluralisation*, which shed light on the existing *incongruence* between the parliamentary and electoral arenas. This *explicit incongruence* is characterised by anti-establishment sentiment.

8 COMPARING THE FOUR CRITICAL JUNCTURES

8.1 TWO TRENDS IN BRITISH POLITICS

The four critical junctures discussed in the previous chapters can help us to find regularities and patterns in the evolution of British politics. For this, I collected the causes behind every critical juncture in Table 22 below.

These causes are usually very different and depend very much on the historical context in which they show. However, there are a few regularities which recur over time and keep defining British politics. I argue that the dynamics of current British party politics is the result of two opposing trends which continuously existed. On the one hand, there is *pluralisation,* which started around the 1970s and means that there are more parties with more political power in the UK party competition, and it leads to higher fragmentation. (The evidence for this trend is the growing ENEP index.) On the other hand, however, there is another trend which somewhat opposes pluralisation and favours two-party politics. *Valence politics* is a continuously existing trend in British politics, which means that UK general elections are often (if not always) decided by the *political competence* of the two major parties. (See also H. Clarke et al., 2011; Green & Jennings, 2012; Johnston, 2011; Pardos-Prado, 2012.) (The evidence for this trend is qualitative; I argue that all the four critical junctures were eventually decided by one of the two major party's competence or incompetence. See the previous chapters about critical junctures and Table 23 below.) *Valence politics* means that political parties compete against each other in tackling an issue better (like economy or NHS.) This rivalry is present both between the two major parties *and* between the major parties and third parties. *Valence politics* usually favours the traditional two parties because they have governmental expertise, knowledge anda record, which is not true for third parties. (Although recently, devolved governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland contributed governmental expertise for smaller parties. e.g. SNP's government in Scotland after 2007.) Therefore, major

parties enjoy a comparative advantage in *competence* vis-á-vis third parties. This second trend can temper the first (*pluralisation*) trend.

	1945	1974	1997	Post-2010	
Brief description	Labour landslide, welfare consensus, two-partyism	Hung parliament, failure of welfare state, pluralisation	Labour landslide, neoliberal consensus, devolution	Hung parliament, anti-establishment, record pluralisation	
Causes	Promising Labour reconstruction plan Labour governmental expertise during the war Wartime planned economy as a precursor of welfare Secondary education favoured Labour's new welfare appeal Conservatives incompetence during appeasement politics Putting an ultimate end to the World War II and austerity politics Poor Conservative party organisation (political truce during the war) 'Lloyd George effect' (a successful wartime PM with bad peacetime record) Labour catch-all strategy (classless appeal) Labour monopoly on the Left Labour internal unity	1973 oil crisis and two-party economic incompetence Two-party economic consensus on welfare state Two-party consensus on immigration policy, Enoch Powell and anti-establishment Two-party incompetence and the Ulster crisis EEC membership Scottish oil discovery Constituency boundary change	Black Wednesday Conservative tax increases (VAT) Mad cow disease Privatisation went too far Conservative 'sleaze' Conservative divisions over Europe Promising Labour economic plan (New Labour) Labour catch-all strategy Labour internal unity Tony Blair's personality New communication techniques Labour's engagement for devolution Ulster crisis: Conservative incompetence and Labour positive appeal (devolution)	**2010** Expenses scandal Conservatives are a 'nasty party' Unpopular Labour (Iraq war, Gordon Brown, 2008 bail outs) 3 party leaders' TV debate caused 'Cleggmania' The failure of Big Society Electoral system bias against the Conservatives	**2015** Lib Dem collapse after the 2010 coalition SNP rise after the 2014 independence referendum UKIP rise after the 2014 EP victory Green rise in the shadow of austerity politics after the 2008 financial crisis Positive Conservative appeal prompting economic competence Limited Labour appeal and Ed Miliband's lack of charisma Electoral system bias against Labour

Table 22 Comparing the four critical junctures

Critical juncture	1945	1974	1997	2010
Valence	Labour competence vs. Conservative incompetence	Two-party incompetence	Labour competence vs. Conservative incompetence	Two-party incompetence
Details	Labour appeal for building a welfare state, Conservative unpopularity for war	The two major parties maintained the 'welfare consensus' which could not handle the 1973 oil crisis	Labour appeal for keeping the economic boom established by the Conservatives, however, they won't be so individualistic.	The two parties maintained the 'neoliberal consensus' which failed during the 2007-08 financial crisis.

Table 23 Critical junctures and competence

The evolution of these two trends (*pluralisation* and *valence*) had two major stages in British politics. The first stage happened due to the *de-alienation* of the UK electorate by gradually giving up class politics in the early 1970s and the 1980s. The end of the traditional class *politics* introduced a new sort of competition known as *issue politics*, which meant that the electorate became more concerned about political issues than about class identification. Issue politics also meant that electoral volatility started to rise and political competence became more important. Therefore, the end of *class politics* and the introduction of *issue politics* in its place contributed to both pluralisation and valence politics.

De-alignment contributed to *pluralisation* because party identification became lower, electoral volatility higher and voters became pickier about political parties. During *class politics*, the party competition was a sort of *supply* driven one because voters had to accommodate to their party's policy. However, during *issue politics*, the competition was, instead, *demand* driven because parties had to accommodate to the electoral preferences of voters instead. During supply driven class politics (1945–70) the two parties were enough to represent the UK electorate. However, in the demand driven issue politics (from 1974 until today) two parties were not enough to represent the broad spectrum of voter preferences. Hence, I argue, *de-alienation* and later issue politics necessarily undermined two-partyism and contributed to the proliferation of third parties in Britain.

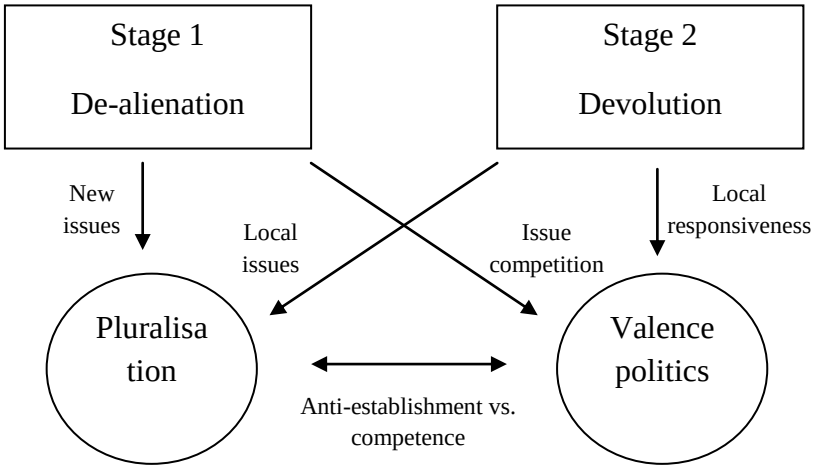
Secondly, de-alignment also contributed to *valence politics* because the erosion of class politics meant that the two major parties have become increasingly similar in social and class terms. Their political support was not limited to their respective classes, but they rather encompassed every segment of the electorate and became catch-all parties. (Please see more about the characteristics of the catch-all parties in Enyedi and Körösényi (2004).) In this vein, workers often voted for the Conservatives and the middle class voted for Labour. Although the social support became similar, the new *issue politics* era distinguished the two parties according to their political competence; which party can manage better the country? So even though de-alienation ended up with two increasingly similar major parties, issue politics served as a benchmark to distinguish between them. In sum, *de-alienation* contributed to both *pluralisation* and *valence politics*.

The second stage in the evolution of these two trends (*pluralisation* and *valence*) came after *devolution* (post-1997). I argue that similarly to *de-alienation*, *devolution* contributed to both *pluralisation* and *valence politics*. The first element is easier to explain; the devolved assemblies provided new political arenas with new electoral systems for local parties. These alternative arenas offered smaller parties the chance to perform better, which automatically led to *pluralisation* in the devolved assemblies. This pluralisation was not only limited to devolved level but it also spilled over to national level (e.g. SNP's general elections victory in 2015.) Thus, *pluralisation* was caused by two stages: *de-alienation* of the electorate and the introduction of issue politics, and later *devolution* and the introduction of new electoral arenas. In addition to *pluralisation, valence politics* was also affected by devolution. I argue that the new political arenas at local level and the transfer of the central administrative power to devolved level created a 'local aspect' of British politics. The 'local aspect' meant in *valence politics* that UK parties and the UK government had to represent better regional electoral preferences. If they had not done so, traditional parties could have been marginalised in devolved assemblies and during general elections in those regions. Therefore, *devolution* similarly to *de-alienation* has contributed to both *pluralisation* and *valence politics.*

These two stages occurred consecutively in British politics at different times: the first stage started in the early 1970s, and the second stage came in the late 1990s. The two trends of *pluralisation* and *valence* were introduced and confirmed in two stages

during the second half of the 20th century. The post-2010 era of anti-establishment sentiment in British politics is hence the result of the two trends of *pluralisation* and *valence politics*. These trends, however, originate from two historical stages: *de-alienation* and *devolution*. Figure 26 below demonstrates the links among *de-alienation, devolution, pluralisation* and *valence politics*.

Figure 26 The link between pluralisation and valence



8.2 THE DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PLURALISATION AND VALANCE POLITICS

In Figure 26, I ended the diagram with a link between *pluralisation* and *valence politics*. It suggests that there is a mutual and reciprocal relationship between the two trends. Now, I want to go further with it.

In addition to the two trends discussed previously (*pluralisation* and *valence*), the dynamics of issue politics needs further explanation. The two-party rivalry during the second half of the 20th century had alternating dynamics of *centripetal* and *centrifugal* competitions. This means that between 1945 and 1970, the UK party competition was characterised by both a *centrifugal* class competition and a *centripetal* issue competition. It was *centrifugal* in class competition because party identification was high and voters usually chose parties according their own social background. It was *centripetal* in issue competition because the two major parties were promoting welfare economics equally.

After de-alienation started and class competition became marginal (following the 1970s), *issue competition* remained the only dimension of party competition. The previously *centripetal* issue competition (welfare consensus), however, was replaced by a *centrifugal* issue competition (New Right vs. Old Left). Therefore, although class distinction and strong party identification disappeared from British politics, the two parties remained distinct from each other because there was still one dimension (issue competition) which provided a clue for the electorate to perceive the two parties differently.

The big challenge started to happen when Labour moved to the centre and provided a centripetal party competition gradually after 1992. Given the fact that the previous *class dimension* had disappeared long before and the only dimension of party competition remained *issue competition*, the centripetal issue competition also meant that there was no clue for the electorate to make difference between the two major parties.

The important thing about this alternation of dynamics (*centripetal* and *centrifugal*) becomes evident when we mix it with *valence politics*. In fact, valence politics says that one party is better than the other because it is more competent politically (please compare with Abney et al., 2013). However, this argument only makes sense if the two major parties are different and can be distinguished. If they are similar, valence politics cannot give a clue how to differentiate between the two parties. Given the fact that I proved that valence politics is a lasting characteristic of British politics, the electoral popularity of the two major parties is closely linked to *difference* and *decidability*. If there is no difference, valence politics turns to its opposite and instead of favouring major parties against third parties, the two parties lose appeal and third parties will emerge. In other words, if the two major parties are similar and there is no way to make difference between them, they will be perceived as the 'establishment' and third parties as 'anti-establishment.' So anti-establishment eventually depends on the *difference* of the two major parties.

The above mentioned dynamics of two-party rivalry demonstrates that until 1997, there had always been some *difference* between the two major parties (Table 24). Between 1945 and 1970, it was the class affiliation. Between 1974 and 1992, it was the polarised issue competition. However, after 1997 there has not been any

significant difference between them; class politics had disappeared long before and issue politics provided a two-party consensus over neo-liberalism. If there is no dissimilarity between the two parties, *valence politics* suggests that no difference can be made between the two major parties, so they are perceived as one giant conglomerate and it necessarily leads to *anti-establishment* sentiment.

		Class difference	
		YES	NO
Issue difference	YES	1945-51 elections	1979-1992
	NO	1951-70	Post-1997

Table 24 Difference between the two major parties

The vanishing difference between the two major parties is problematic not only for *valence politics* (choosing between them) but also for their *legitimacy*. The Westminster party system is based on two-party rivalry and conflict. Even the benches inside Westminster are organised in a way to reflect this antagonistic relationship. While on the Continent the hemispherical benches are used, which suggest cooperation and compromise among MPs, in Britain the opposing two sides of benches reflect conflict between the Government and the Opposition. In such a conflicting political system, the FPTP electoral system serves a very useful and legitimate purpose; it creates a clear winner between the two major parties. However, if the two major parties become similar and the antagonistic conflict fades between them (not in rhetoric but in acts) then the FPTP electoral system loses its legitimacy and becomes a further contributor to anti-establishment sentiment. The electorate can think that it does not serve for differentiating between the two major parties but it is for securing the status quo and defending the 'establishment.' Hence, two-party similarity is not only against *valence politics* but also against the *FPTP electoral system*. To put it briefly, the FPTP electoral system only fits *conflicting* polities (like in Britain or the USA) and it does not do so for *compromising* polities (like in Germany.) If electoral systems were cars, I would say that FPTP is 4x4 and the PR electoral system is a sports car; the 4x4 is good in forest but bad on highways, however, sports cars are good on highways but bad in forests. They have their necessary preconditions to perform well. Otherwise they cannot function properly.

So the post-1997 period provided issue convergence, which both undermined the popularity of traditional parties and the legitimacy of the FPTP electoral system. In

such context, anti-establishment sentiment is on the rise. However, it is worth noting, in order to find further evidence for this correlation, British politics has also showed that a return to conflict and two-party polarisation can temper pluralisation. There are three indicators for this:

1. The 1974 electoral crisis and hung parliament were caused by two-party incompetence and anti-establishment sentiment. It contributed to the Liberals' and the SNP's electoral upsurge. However, this period of incompetence and anti-establishment sentiment was dramatically reversed by Margaret Thatcher's issue polarisation in the 1980s. It made distinction between Labour and the Conservatives possible, valence politics came back again and pluralisation declined until 1992. (I treat the 1983 ENEP peak as one-off increase due to internal struggle in the Labour Party. However, the overall trend in the 1980s was a decline.)
2. The 2010 hung parliament was caused partly by the same phenomenon. The two-party similarity and incompetence aroused anti-establishment sentiment. This provided Lib Dem success in 2010 and other third-party success in 2015. However, David Cameron's pledge on the EU referendum generated an issue polarisation about pro- and anti-EU membership stances. This polarisation further intensified in 2016, following the Leave victory during the Brexit referendum. This issue polarisation, similarly to Margaret Thatcher's neoliberal political polarisation in the 1980s, has provided a return to valence politics and a moderation of pluralisation. The Conservative Party won the 2015 general election, which is a return to traditional single government politics, and the Brexit referendum further strengthened the Conservatives' leading electoral position.
3. The 2017 snap election generated a record high Con-Lab combined vote share (82.4%), which can be compared to that of the 1970s only. I argue that the election campaign was extremely polarised: Theresa May campaigned for Leaving the Single Market whilst Jeremy Corbyn campaigned for remaining part of it. In this rather polarised campaign, the two parties could be easily distinguished. By giving up consensual politics, there was a massive return to the two traditional parties (hence, pluralisation decreased). Party competition

fragmentation fell from 3.92 (2015) to 2.85 (2017.) It is clear evidence that two-party polarisation acts against pluralisation.

So these three events show that the balance between pluralisation and valence politics is not a deterministic and pre-decided outcome. If valence politics does not make difference, anti-establishment sentiment and pluralisation will increase. However, if there is a return to valence politics, it can slow down or reverse the pluralisation trend.

The last thing about the link between pluralisation and valence politics is *temporality*. I argue that in short term two-party convergence does not necessarily lead to pluralisation. The reason for this comes from the diffuse nature of anti-establishment sentiment. It is a mixture of different feelings which take some time to channel into one direction. (See the interviews in the Annex.) However, valence politics needs much shorter time to produce an effect. In times of crisis (such as the Brexit referendum), the political competence can return fast. Hence, in temporal aspect, *valence politics* enjoys a comparative advantage vis-á-vis *pluralisation* (or anti-establishment.) The major difference between these two trends is temporality; since pluralisation is a *continuous* trend which has a long-lasting effect. On the contrary, valence politics is an alternating trend which is either present or not, however, it can disappear or re-appear much faster.

Table 25 below gives quantitative evidence to support my previous argument. I use mean ENEP numbers in the four periods starting with a critical juncture. It shows what kind of party fragmentation existed in each period. In addition, I also provide quantitative evidence for the degree of polarisation. The mean CMP (Comparative Manifesto Project) difference stands for the relative distance of the two major parties from each other during the same four periods. If mean CMP is low, the difference was small between the two parties in the period. If mean CMP difference is high, the difference was considerable between them. So, a *low* mean CMP difference suggests *centripetal* issue competition and *high* CMP difference suggests *centrifugal* issue competition. (See also Dinas & Gemenis (2010) for further methodological information.) It is remarkable how significantly Labour and Conservative manifestos differed from each other between 1974 and 1996 (51.49 % points). It is also very shocking how similar the manifestos became after 1997 (14.87 % points). The mean CMP also gives evidence for the fact that the post-2010 Labour and Conservative

manifestos are quite similar (17.77 % points.). Obviously, the centripetal party competition continued after 2010, too.

	Fragmentation (competition)	**Mean ENEP**	**Dynamics (competition)**	**Mean CMP difference between Con–Lab (% points)**
1945–1973	Two-party	2.39	Centripetal (issue), centrifugal (class)	22.35
1974–1996	Moderate multiparty	3.17	Centrifugal (issue)	51.49
1997–2009	Moderate multiparty	3.38	Centripetal (issue)	14.87
Post-2010	Extreme multiparty	3.82	Centripetal (issue)	17.77

Table 25 Polarisation and fragmentation

Figure 27 below further illustrates the link between ENEP and CMP. I marked the 1945–70 period as the time of *class politics*, which was later followed by *issue politics*. It is easy to recognise that ENEP (pluralisation) is continuously rising while CMP has different periods of ups-and-downs. It is recognisable that, if polarisation was low (i.e. low CMP, centripetal competition), ENEP rose rapidly. However, when polarisation was high (high CMP, centrifugal competition), ENEP either stagnated or fell. From 1979 to 1992, the electoral years of polarized politics coincided with declining ENEP (the 1983 data is an exception because of an internal conflict inside the Labour Party.) Therefore, Figure 27 demonstrates that distinct party position (centrifugal competition) is the only way to prompt competence (valence politics) and consequently lower pluralisation. Otherwise, centripetal competition can be rational in short term (like in 1997), however, it is detrimental in long term for the two large parties because it stimulates further pluralisation. I argue hence that the link between pluralisation and valence politics is supported.

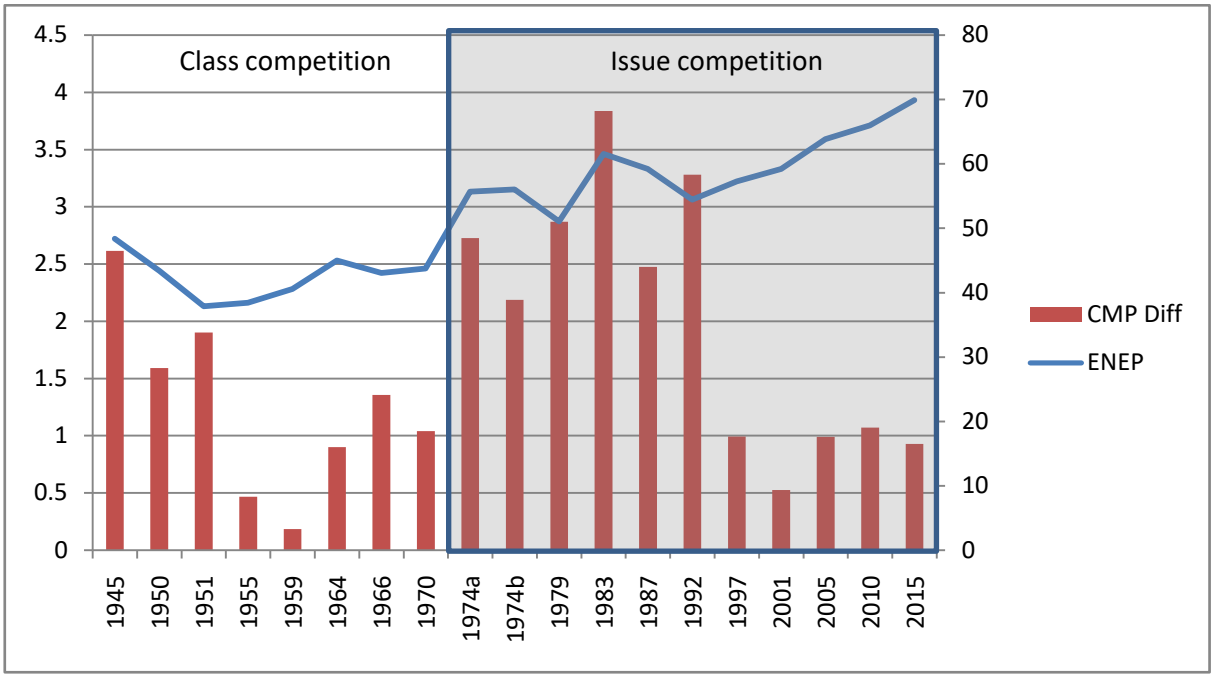


Figure 27 Manifesto polarisation and fragmentation

8.3 EVIDENCE FOR TWO-PARTY CONSENSUS AFTER 1997

In the following, I will discuss consensual politics after 1997, which resulted in very similar party manifestos in 1997 and 2010. I argue that there is a great overlap between the 1997 Labour and the 2010 Conservative manifestos. The two centrist manifestos provide clear evidence for two-party convergence and issue similarities. The difficulty of making distinction between the two parties' platforms generated a feeling of collision and establishment politics (Bartolini, 1999). In response, this convergence caused a growing anti-establishment sentiment. Therefore the root cause of current anti-establishment sentiment must lie in issue similarities in New Labour and Big Society. Here I want to demonstrate that the post-1997 period indeed became an era of converging ideologies and consensual politics.

8.3.1 New Labour

The first major step towards two-party consensus politics was taken by the Labour Party. Following Margaret Thatcher's neoliberal legacy, Labour had to accommodate to the changed political, economic and social context (for more information in Barlow

& Barlow, 2008; Heffernan, 2000). The political aspect emphasized a minimalist state concept with de-regulation, the economic focused on de-industrialisation, privatisation and budgetary discipline and the social aspect challenged trade union privileges and favoured individual work rights. These three aspects caused a *fait accompli* for any succeeding British governments. New Labour or Third Way was an initiative to adapt the Left to such circumstances and find a way to both synchronise action with neoliberal economic ideas and continue the welfare state (Jones, 1996).

The ideology of New Labour often referred to itself as the Third Way between the 'Old Left' and the 'New Right.' Powell (2000) gives a compact overview about these three concepts. He argues that the differences are the following:

- *Old Left* was the Labour Party's post-world war policy, which wanted an egalitarian society, every citizen had their rights to certain social benefits, the economy was managed by the central state through planning and public ownership, the system was rather hierarchical and monopolistic with relatively high welfare expenditures.
- *New Right* was the complete opposite. The key principle was individualism and entrepreneurship, which caused social inequality. The citizens did not receive social benefits based on rights but rather on responsibility. The economy was privatized and deregulated, which stopped the state from intervening in the private sector. The system was horizontal with pluralist actors who competed against each other. Finally, the welfare expenditure was dramatically cut back.
- *Third Way* was a half-way house concept between the 'Old Left' and the 'New Right.' It wanted to achieve an equal society not by rights but by opportunities. The economy was managed in partnership between the state and the private sector. (See also Seyd, 1999). The welfare benefits had to serve the whole nation through economic growth and not only individual gains. Finally, the amount of welfare expenditure was between that of the Old Left and that of the New Right, and it had to be efficient.

In opposition to Old Left or New Right, Powell (2000: 53) argues that New Labour did not have a central *big idea*. It was fundamentally different from any previous ideologies in this respect. Old Left believed in universal welfare and an equal society

whereas New Right passionately enhanced individual entrepreneurship and competition. However, New Labour did not believe in any such *big ideas*. It wanted instead a *pragmatist* ideology which selected certain good policies of the past and change others which were not efficient. This pragmatism is certainly closer to New Right than to Old Left. However, New Labour advocates often said that they wanted to return to the basic ideas of the Labour Movement hence calling them the 'Very Old Left' which was more pragmatic than the later 'Old Left.' (Powell (2000) refers to Brown and Coates, 1996; Levitas, 1998; McKibbin, 1997) This pragmatism makes New Labour so difficult to define since there is no single idea which goes through each area of policy; it is rather a *mixture* of different policies in different areas.

The ideology of New Labour can be summed up by 3 words: work, opportunity and responsibility. It was an ideology which gave pivotal importance to work and efficiency in order to improve the British economy and hence ameliorate the social services. In opposition to 'Old Left,' which only focused on re-distributing the national wealth, New Labour wanted to raise the national wealth in order to re-distribute more later. For this reason, 'workfarism' instead of 'welfarism' was adopted, which helped the citizens to find work easier and to do their work more efficiently. This 'workfarism' was supported by the second central idea: equal opportunity. New Labour wanted to use the welfare system to propagate economic progress. Hence education and training became ubiquitous. The equal opportunity for education meant better chances for better jobs. This characteristic leads to the third idea of responsibility. As Powell (2000: 44) notes, New Labour wanted to move from 'dutiless rights' to 'conditional welfare,' which meant that the welfare system should be used in a wise manner (e.g., education, healthcare) and not in an irresponsible way (e.g. unemployment benefits for those who otherwise would be able to work.) (Please read more about the wider topic of responsibility in politics in Lánczi (2011).)

Those arguments which state that Third Way was not really a half-way house solution between Old Left and New Right underline New Labour's pro-business general view. Jessop (2003) for instance argues that New Labour gave up corporatism and the triangular relationship among state-employees-employers. Instead, they favoured entrepreneurship which clearly benefited the employers. Moreover, New Labour introduced a new bilateral relationship between the state and the employers (or private

sector) known as the public-private partnership (PPP.) It obviously left the employees out of cooperation.

The second proof for the pro-business view is the overall 'managerial attitude,' which affected the public administration. The New Public Management treated public services as private companies. Therefore, efficiency was so important in public as in private initiatives. This attitude was further enhanced by the key role of the Treasury (Gordon Brown) in the whole political machinery. (See Powell 2000: 52.) The departments were sub-ordinate to the Treasury, which set targets and monitored their performance. This managerial and monetarist attitude was much closer to New Right than the supposed half-way position which Third Way prompted.

Jessop (2003: 10) lists the following five main features which link New Labour with New Right: (1) pushing back industrialisation whilst propagating the service sector, (2) anti-trade union measures, (3) rolling back corporatism, (4) de-regulation and (5) welfare to work. Most of these features fit the 'Washington consensus' (liberalization, privatization, de-regulation), which implies that New Labour was a sort of neoliberal ideology. Although it can be argued that it was substantially different from any earlier neoliberal policies, New Labour certainly fell closer to New Right than to Old Left. Hence, I argue, the term Third Way is misleading in this sense. This also suggests that it is scarcely a half-way house between socialism and capitalism in Britain. New Labour obviously belonged to liberal market capitalism.

8.3.2 **Big Society**

Big Society was the name of the Conservative Party's ideological modernisation after 2005. Although its political heritage inside the Conservative Party can be traced back to as far as the 19th century (to Benjamin Disraeli's concept of 'One nation' (please see also Egedy, 2005)), the idea of Big Society has certainly been associated with David Cameron. It was him who both introduced and incorporated Big Society as the framework for modernising the Conservative Party (more about this in Lynch, 2015; McAnulla, 2010; Williams & Scott, 2011).

Following Margaret Thatcher's neo-liberal economic policies, the Conservative Party became the synonym for budgetary discipline, unilateral governmental decisions, disciplinary top-down politics and the propagation of individual self-care. These

ideological stances were summed up by phrases like ‘greed is good’ and ‘there is no such thing as society’. However, this neo-liberal legacy started to impose a heavy burden on the Conservative Party after 1992. The Conservative Party was seen as the ‘nasty party’ for these harsh and often elitist policies. This negative perception also played an important role in New Labour’s popularity and in Tony Blair’s consecutive electoral victories. Between 1992 and 2005, there was not any party leader in the Conservative Party who could genuinely make the electorate believe that Thatcherism was over and there would not be any return to the polarised politics of the 1980s. So New Labour kept attracting the electorate and appeared as a centrist and moderate ideology. It was soon clear in the ranks of the Conservative Party that modernisation was a precondition for electoral appeal and eventual victory.

From the late 1980s, there were plenty of initiatives in the Conservative Party to transcend Thatcher’s neo-liberalism. For instance, Douglas Hurd’s ‘active citizenship’, David Willetts’ ‘civic conservatism’, Ferdinand Mount’s ‘philanthropic voluntarism’, Damian Green’s ‘smarter state’, Oliver Letwin’s ‘neighbourly society’ and Ian Duncan Smith’s ‘social justice’ were many attempts to move from neo-liberalism to a socially more protective ideology (Dorey and Garnett, 2012). This strain of ideas (or platforms) is best known in the Conservative Party as Philip Bond’s ‘Red Toryism.’ He argued in the late 2000s that Old Left and New Right were both responsible for damaging the British society. Old Left (Labour before New Labour) did so by building up a centralised state in which local and community initiatives were pushed down. New Right (neo-liberalism) did so by propagating too much self-interest and individualism, which eventually caused the very same thing as Old Labour: local and community identities were destroyed. Bond recommended to re-build these local and community identities again in order to break the antagonism between private and public in society. For this, he suggested voluntary work as an intermediate means between the public and the private sector (Dorey and Garnett, 2012: 399–401). This type of ‘Red Toryism’ already shows a great degree of similarity with the idea of Big Society.

David Cameron became the leader of the Conservative Party in December 2005. He was a less known, young and new face in British politics. He was regarded as an ideal politician for modernising the Conservative Party after some less energetic party leaders like Michael Howard, William Hague and Ian Duncan Smith. Cameron’s

ideological modernisation, however, delayed till 2009, when he first talked about Big Society in a public lecture. In his speech, he argued for ‘empowering and enabling individuals, families and communities to take control of their lives’ (Cameron, 2009). Later, in March 2010, he continued describing Big Society as a new concept which ‘includes a whole set of unifying approaches – breaking state monopolies, allowing charities, social enterprises and companies to provide public services, devolving power down to neighbourhoods’ (Cameron, 2010). In these two speeches, he centered on the importance of local groups, neighbourhoods and communities in tackling problems arising locally. Similarly to the concept of ‘subsidiarity’, the idea of Big Society was to find solutions to local problems at local levels. For this, Cameron suggested the establishment of the following (Building the Big Society, 2010):

1. Give communities more power,
2. Encourage people to take an active role in their communities,
3. Transfer power from central to local government,
4. Support co-ops, mutuals, charities and social enterprises;
5. Publish government data.

It is fair to say that Cameron’s Big Society was somewhat superficial. There were not too many concrete recommendations or policies in any texts. The few, however, were often watered down or abandoned after all. Initiatives like the ‘Big Society Capital’ or the ‘National Citizen Service’ were delivered; however, they remained much behind previous expectations in efficacy. Other ideas like the Big Society Day (when local communities would celebrate their annual work together) were clearly abandoned. In March 2014, Nick Hurd, the Big Society Minister replied to critics of giving up Big Society Day as "arguably, every day is a big society day" (Letwin, 2014).

Katharine Dommett (2015: 259) argues that Big Society originally emphasised issues like environment, poverty, childcare and flexible working conditions, however, later, in government, they shifted to issues like immigration, bureaucracy, taxation and Europe. Environment was particularly betrayed because the coalition government accepted some anti-green policies to boost the economy (e.g. selling some parts of the national forests, HS2 railway line, the extension of the Heathrow airport).

The coalition government's stance on gay marriage and civic partnership was a particularly good example for giving up traditional values. Whereas Big Society initially thought that *family* should be a central part for modernising the British society, same-sex marriage clearly went against it (Hayton, 2010a). The biggest difference in rhetoric and acts became obvious when David Cameron argued: "Jesus invented the Big Society 2,000 years ago" (Withnall, 2014). This remark could have been difficult to synchronise with gay marriage legalisation. So, Cameron gradually gave up Big Society, however, he refused to acknowledge it (Cameron, 2016). In March 2012, nevertheless, Steve Hilton, who was Cameron's chief strategist, resigned from office. According to the speculations, it was the failure of Big Society that provoked his resignation (Dorey and Garnett, 2012: 410). One thing is sure, in 2015 the Cameron-led Conservative Campaign almost completely laid aside Big Society. Instead, issues like economy, tax, NHS and Europe dominated (Conservative Manifesto, 2015).

Along with the substance of Big Society, its timing also provokes speculations about its sincerity. In fact, Big Society was perfectly timed for the wake of the 2010 general elections. As it was introduced by David Cameron in 2009 and later explained in 2010, Big Society seemed to be a narrative for the general election. However, Dorney and Garnett (2012: 410) argue in their article that Big Society was neither a necessity nor leverage for victory. They conclude that Big Society was an ill-defined response to Tony Blair's Third Way (New Labour). Due to its ambiguity and theoretical complexity, Big Society never managed to attract so much attention as the well-defined and easily understandable New Labour. Moreover, the two authors argue that Big Society was not needed at all for winning the 2010 general election. It would have been enough to sit behind and wait for Gordon Brown's failures in government. Instead, Big Society set up a new ideological framework which even deterred voters due to its ambiguity. There were many people who suspected a hidden agenda of privatisation in the background for encouraging local initiatives against public services. Dorey and Garnett agree that Big Society served only for detoxifying the Conservative Party from Thatcherism, however, it failed to appear anything promising or straightforward. They finish their article by stating that Big Society provided more inconveniences than advantage for the Conservative Party.[14] Eventually, this can be a

[14] They argue;

major explanation why the Conservatives could not win the 2010 general election with an absolute majority even though Labour had been in power for the previous 13 years.

8.3.3 Comparing the 1997 Labour and the 2010 Conservative electoral manifestos

If my theory is correct about consensus politics and centripetal issue competition, the 1997 Labour and 2010 Conservative party manifestos should prove to be very similar texts.

Both the 1997 Labour Manifesto and the 2010 Conservative Manifesto wanted to provide a *consensual policy* framework. New Labour called itself 'Third Way,' which meant a distinction from both Old Left and New Right. In this respect, New Labour portrayed itself as an ideology in the centre which most people could accept or like. Big Society, on the other hand, wanted to distance itself from both New Right and New Labour. In contrast to New Right, it believed in the importance of society and rejected individualism. And it also wanted to overpass New Labour's too centralised state. Thus, both New Labour and Big Society aimed at new *consensual politics* different from any previous ideologies.

For instance, the 1997 Labour Manifesto said (Labour Manifesto, 1997):

> *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. (p.3)*
>
> *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. (p.3)*

At the same time, the 2010 Conservative manifesto states (Conservative Manifesto, 2010):

'thus, when properly digested, the lesson of 'the Big Society' seems to be that the search for a 'narrative' can do little harm to a party that is fairly certain of electoral defeat. But if the party has a realistic chance of winning, it should only try to develop such an overarching theme if the ideas naturally arise from a generally agreed policy programme, and are congruent with the circumstances in which the election will be fought. The belief that a narrative is necessary regardless of such considerations runs the risk of transforming an uncomplicated victory into a defeat – or saddling a party with additional distractions should it win office without an adequate majority.' (Dorey and Garnett, 2012: 414);

> *So we need a new approach: social responsibility, not state control; the Big Society, not big government. (p.35)*

Both New Labour and Big Society believed in *equality of opportunity.* New Labour said;

> *Our values are the same: the equal worth of all, with no one cast aside; fairness and justice within strong communities. (p.2)*

Big Society said about equal opportunity;

> *making opportunity more equal; fighting poverty and inequality; improving the environment and general well-being. (p. ix)*

Although Big Society argued that *voluntary work* would be a new dimension of British politics, the former Labour manifesto had some similar proposals:

> *Citizens' service for a new millennium*
>
> *An independent and creative voluntary sector, committed to voluntary activity as an expression of citizenship, is central to our vision of a stakeholder society. (p.23)*

In this respect, Big Society even repeated the very same word of 'Citizens' service' from the former Labour manifesto. They said;

> *the idea that everyone should play a part in making their communities stronger. That is why we will introduce National Citizen Service. (p.39)*

The two ideologies agreed on *decentralisation,* too. For New Labour, it meant a change from previous Thacherite dirigisme. They said about New Right that *'Our system of government is centralised, inefficient and bureaucratic.' (p.23).* Big Society, on the other hand, blamed New Labour for too much centralisation. So they suggested:

> *So we will redistribute power from the central state to individuals, families and local communities. (p.35)*
>
> *power should be devolved from politicians to people, from the central to the local. (p.vii)*

New Labour and Big Society both portrayed themselves as *radical solutions* to imminent problems. Hence, they argued that they would treat not only the symptoms but the causes, too. The Labour Manifesto said; *'A new minister for public health will attack the root causes of ill health.'* (p.15) However, the Conservative Manifesto criticized New Labour for superficial treatment only; '*It is the result of a political approach that addresses the symptoms, rather than the underlying causes, of social breakdown (p. 35).*

Both ideologies had very similar views on *Europe.* They supported the UK's EU membership, however, a federalist EU should have been avoided. Therefore, Labour and the Conservatives argued for an EU of sovereign member states.

> *Our vision of Europe is of an alliance of independent nations choosing to co-operate to achieve the goals they cannot achieve alone. We oppose a European federal superstate. (Labour, p.27)*
>
> *We believe Britain's interests are best served by membership of a European Union that is an association of its Member States. We will never allow Britain to slide into a federal Europe. (Conservative, p.113)*

There was further consensus on environment protection. Both New Labour and Big Society called for a *green* agenda;

> *We will put concern for the environment at the heart of policy-making (Labour, p.3)*
>
> *Vote blue, go green. (Conservative, p.89)*

The issue of *immigration* was mentioned rather superficially in both manifestos. Labour said;

> '*Every country must have firm control over immigration and Britain is no exception.' (p.26)*

The Conservatives said on immigration;

> *So we will take steps to take net migration back to the levels of the 1990s – tens of thousands a year, not hundreds of thousands. (p.21)*

(It is worth noting that the Conservative manifesto talked about *immigration* on just one page (p.21), whilst it did so about *environment* on five pages (net, without pictures) (pp.89–103).)

Labour and the Conservatives shared their concern about growing *anti-establishment sentiment.* Labour said;

> *People are cynical about politics and distrustful of political promises. That is hardly surprising. (p.2)*

The Conservatives also accepted the growing unrest against the political elite;

> *Millions of people in this country are at best detached from democracy, at worst angry and disillusioned. (p.63)*

After recognizing the growing anti-establishment sentiment, interestingly, both New Labour and Big Society portrayed themselves as representatives of a new *plebiscite ideology*. They underlined the importance of acting for the benefit of the whole people not just a small fragment of it. Tony Blair, for instance, said in the 1997 Manifesto:

> *I pledge to Britain a government which shares their hopes, which understands their fears, and which will work as partners with and for all our people, not just the privileged few. (p.4)*

Similarly, in 2010 the Conservatives also referred to their ideology as the people's manifesto:

> *In every area of life we need people at the centre. (p.63)*
>
> *We believe in people power. (p.63)*
>
> *Taking power away from the political elite and handing it to the man and woman in the street. (p.63)*

The guarantee for delivering an anti-establishment agenda came from both New Labour's and Big Society's strong commitment to *anti-corruption*. After the Conservative John Major's 'sleaze' government, New Labour promised to clean up Westminster. In this manner, they drew a sharp contrast between the corrupt Conservatives and an exemplary Labour in their fight against corruption:

We will clean up politics. (p.23)

The Conservatives seem opposed to the very idea of democracy. They support hereditary peers, unaccountable quangos and secretive government. (p.23)

We will oblige parties to declare the source of all donations above a minimum figure: Labour does this voluntarily and all parties should do so. Foreign funding will be banned. (p.24)

This argument was very similar to Big Society's strong conviction about condemning Labour's 'sleaze' governments. The Conservative Manifesto in 2010 even used the very same expression for anti-corruption: *Clean up Westminster. (p.65)* They also underlined their exemplary policy on corruption after the 2009 expenses scandal:

The political crisis was triggered by the scandal of MPs' expenses. We were the Party that insisted that MPs' expenses were published online, and we have supported the independent proposals to clean up the House of Commons. (p.56)

Finally, in *foreign policy,* both New Labour and Big Society argued for a liberal approach which would propagate democracy, human rights and liberal values all around the world. New Labour said, for instance:

Britain will be strong in defence; resolute in standing up for its own interests; an advocate of human rights and democracy the world over. (p.27)

Big Society went even further in this respect and used foreign policy to explain their new Conservative ideology. They said that the new ideology in foreign policy was 'liberal conservatism.'

A Conservative government's approach to foreign affairs will be based on liberal Conservative principles. Liberal, because Britain must be open and engaged with the world, supporting human rights and championing the cause of democracy and the rule of law at every opportunity. (p.109)

In sum, the comparison of the two manifestos proves that New Labour and Big Society were indeed *similar ideologies*. Their strong conviction about *consensual politics, fight against corruption, representing the people against the elite, sometimes*

anti-establishment rhetoric, liberal foreign policy, green agenda and *intergovernmental EU relations* prove that there had been a great deal of policy overlap.

The most significant *difference* was in their positions on *electoral system change*. Originally, New Labour wanted to change the FPTP electoral system for a PR one:

> *We are committed to a referendum on the voting system for the House of Commons. An independent commission on voting systems will be appointed early to recommend a proportional alternative to the first-past-the-post system. (p.24)*
>
> (Note: Labour set up the Jenkins Committee to develop alternatives for the FPTP electoral system; however, it did not lead to an electoral system change.)

In contrast, the Conservatives openly supported the current FPTP system. They argued from an anti-establishment point of view in defence of the current system;

> *We support the first-past-the-post system for Westminster elections because it gives voters the chance to kick out a government they are fed up with. (p.67)*

The ultimate difference between New Labour and Big Society should not be looked for in their individual policy proposals, rather, in their *timings*. New Labour offered consensual politics ('Third Way') after rather conflicting and polarized political years (i.e., the 1979–92 Thacher governments). Big Society, in contrast, provided new consensual politics after the former consensual politics of the New Labour years. In the case of Big Society, there was no significant appeal of consensual politics because it was slightly different from the previous period. New Labour, on the contrary, suggested consensual politics after a completely different period. In other words, the centripetal dynamics of New Labour differed from the previous centrifugal dynamics of New Right. Big Society continued centripetal competition after another centripetal competition. Therefore, New Labour could have had a positive appeal of *change* which was lacking from Big Society. Big Society hence could not make the electorate believe that they were different from the previous government and that they could ensure *change* in British politics.

I think this is the ultimate reason why New Labour secured a landslide victory for Labour in 1997 whilst Big Society did not do so for the Conservatives in 2010. The timing of a consensual policy agenda is only effective if it is followed by a polarized period. Otherwise, I argue, consensual politics can only be credibly followed by a polarized competition. This argumentation is proved by the fact that the new polarized competition in 2015 secured an absolute victory for the Conservatives. Hence, after the consensual years between 1997 and 2015, the new Conservative electoral manifesto provided more polarized views on issues like immigration and Europe.

8.4 CONCLUSION

The most important reason for the post-2010 anti-establishment sentiment is two-party similarity between Labour and the Conservatives. Since there is no more class distinction, only issue difference can help delineate the two parties from each other. If issue convergence occurs, as it has happened since 1997, the need for third parties and pluralisation increases. The current record high party competition fragmentation is thus caused by the political consensus after 1997. It was started by New Labour and it was finished by Big Society. Today, the only way to temper the rise of pluralisation is to turn back to polarised party competition where party positions are distinct and clear and valence politics can start to work against pluralisation.

9 HYPOTHESIS 1

The growing incongruence between the parliamentary and electoral arenas was a long- term trend of British party politics between 1945 and 2015.

As I argued before, Hypothesis 1 (H_1) states that there was an increasing split in the UK party system between 1945 and 2015. This split appeared in the form of growing incongruence between the UK parliamentary and electoral arenas. The hypothesis supposes two things; first, there has been a long-term trend in the evolution of British party politics. This long-term trend was characterized by gradual incongruence between the parliamentary and electoral arenas. Second, it also supposes that the post-war patterns of party competition (two-party politics) mainly remained in the parliamentary arena; however, the electoral arena gradually changed. Therefore, the split in the UK party system was caused by both a stable parliamentary arena and a pluralising electoral arena.

9.1 QUANTITATIVE EXPLANATION

The quantitative part of the explanation relies on electoral data between 1945 and 2015. Table 26 confirms that the UK party competition in the *electoral arena* has become more and more fragmented over time. Both Gallagher's and my own calculations underline this trend. At the same time, party system fragmentation in the *parliamentary arena* lagged behind that of the *electoral arena*.

	ENEP (Kaszap)	ENEP (Gallagher)	Diff ENEP (Kaszap-Gallagher)		ENPP (Kaszap)	ENPP (Gallagher)	Diff ENPP (Kaszap-Gallagher)	
Year			Abs	%			Abs	%
1945	2.78	2.72	0.06	2.31%	2.04	2.12	-0.08	-3.85%
1950	2.68	2.44	0.24	9.93%	2.08	2.08	0.00	-0.17%
1951	2.34	2.13	0.21	9.72%	2.05	2.06	-0.01	-0.25%
1955	2.40	2.16	0.24	11.08%	2.03	2.03	0.00	-0.14%
1959	2.50	2.28	0.22	9.64%	1.99	1.99	0.00	-0.19%
1964	2.70	2.53	0.17	6.75%	2.18	2.06	0.12	5.89%
1966	2.54	2.42	0.12	4.91%	2.10	2.02	0.08	3.87%
1970	2.57	2.46	0.11	4.46%	2.13	2.07	0.06	3.00%
1974a	3.14	3.13	0.01	0.26%	2.26	2.25	0.01	0.37%
1974b	3.16	3.15	0.01	0.34%	2.26	2.25	0.01	0.49%
1979	2.88	2.87	0.01	0.19%	2.16	2.15	0.01	0.34%

1983	3.46	3.46	0.00	0.11%	2.09	2.09	0.00	0.20%
1987	3.34	3.33	0.01	0.25%	2.18	2.17	0.01	0.62%
1992	3.06	3.06	0.00	0.10%	2.27	2.27	0.00	-0.09%
1997	3.23	3.22	0.01	0.17%	2.13	2.13	0.00	-0.17%
2001	3.33	3.33	0.00	0.06%	2.17	2.17	0.00	0.00%
2005	3.59	3.59	0.00	0.09%	2.47	2.46	0.01	0.24%
2010	3.72	3.71	0.01	0.24%	2.58	2.57	0.01	0.49%
2015	3.93	3.93	0.00	0.10%	2.54	2.54	0.00	0.19%

Table 26 Comparing Gallagher's and my own calculations

The ENPP, which measures the Westminster parliamentary arena, has a roughly constant value around 2.0 and 2.5. This means that, in the House of Commons, the party system is either a two-party or a two-and-a-half party system according to Sartori's (1976) and Blondel's (1968) typology. However, the ENEP value, which refers to party competition in the electoral arena, kept growing. Until the 1970s it was 2.0 to 2.5, so, similar to the ENPP values. Later however, from the mid 1970s, it surpassed 3.0 and ENEP detached from ENPP. In 2015, the difference was higher than ever: the ENPP measured 2.54 while the ENEP was 3.93. This would suggest that the party system in the House of Commons is a two-and-a-half system while the party system outside Westminster is a four-party system. In other words, the electoral arena had already a moderate (if not extreme) multi-party system in 2015.

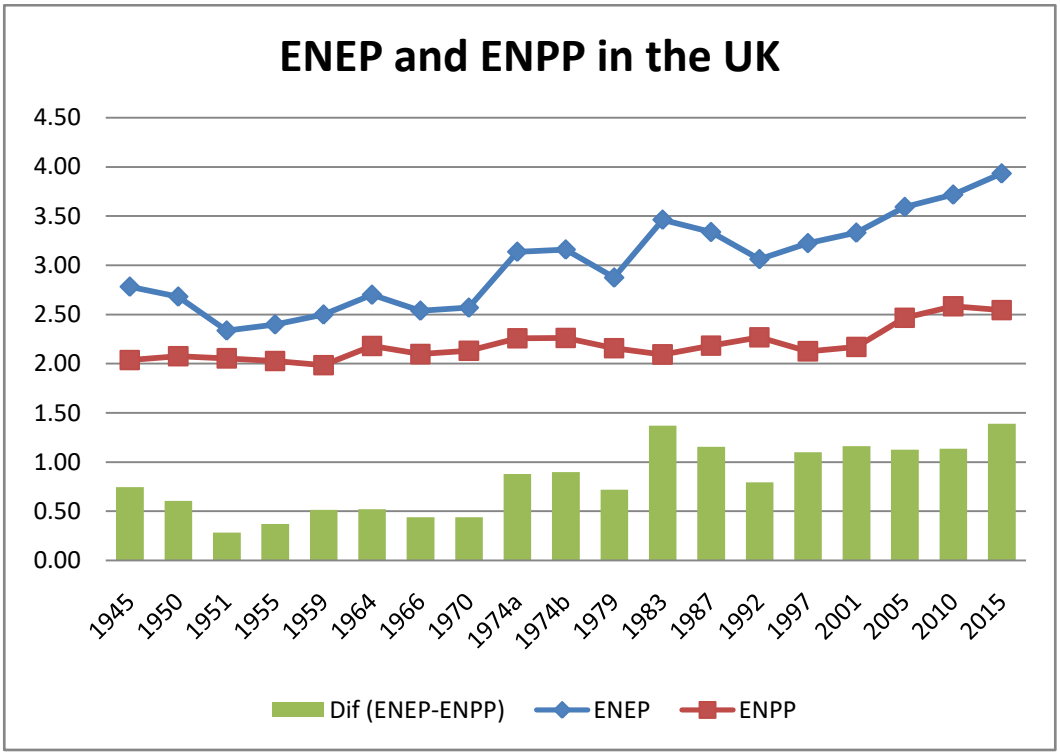


Figure 28 ENEP and ENPP difference in the UK (1945–2015)

Based on these historical ENEP and ENPP values, it is possible to calculate future values, too. I have used two methods for this. First, I calculated the linear trend between 1945 and 2015. Second, I also calculated the linear trend between 1992 and 2015. The reason for this second time interval is supported by the observable fact that this shorter period provided better regressional fit (higher R^2). This better fit, by the way, might provide better future estimations as well. So in Table 27 below there are 4 equations: two different time periods (1945–2015 vs 1992–2015) and two different indices (ENEP and ENPP). (See also Figure 23 in Chapter 7.)

	ENEP	**ENPP**
1945-2015 Linear trend	y=0.073*x+2.281 R^2=0.78	y=0.023*x+1.958 R^2=0.61
1992-2015 Linear trend	y=0.1741*x +2.8682 R^2=0.98	y=0.087*x+2.054 R^2=0.68

Table 27 ENEP and ENPP regressions according to different time bases

The 1992–2015 linear trend fits much better the real ENEP and ENPP values than the 1945–2015 linear trend. The higher R^2 perfectly verifies it. Particularly, the 1992–2015 ENEP trend (electoral arena) has an extremely good probability: R^2=0.98. The 1945–2015 ENEP trend also has a high R^2 value (0.78). Unfortunately, this high predictability is less convincing for ENPP (parliamentary arena) indices. Both the 1945–2015 and the 1992–2015 trends give lower R^2 values than 0.70. Nevertheless, for this thesis, the continuous increase of ENEP has more importance than the stagnation of ENPP. Moreover, ENPP is eventually a derivative index from ENEP after the electoral calculus. Therefore, the high predictability of future ENEP is very useful for us and the low predictability of ENPP is less problematic.

Table 28 Future ENEP and ENPP predictions by different regression models

Year	**ENEP**	**R^2**	**ENPP**	**R^2**	**Dif (ENEP–ENPP)**	
2017	3.74		2.42		1.32	Calculated from 1945 linear trend
2022	3.81	0.78	2.44	0.61	1.37	
2027	3.89		2.46		1.42	
2017	4.09		2.66		1.42	Calculated from 1992 linear trend
2022	4.26	0.98	2.75	0.68	1.51	
2027	4.44		2.84		1.60	

Table 28 calculates future ENEP and ENPP values based on the trends from Table 27. Table 28 predicts that the pluralisation of UK party competition will likely continue in the future. The 1945–2015 linear trend estimates that, if the current dynamics continue, by 2027 there will 3.89 ENEP (a four-party or extreme multi-party system). The 1992–2015 linear trend indicates an even higher number: by 2027 it predicts 4.44 ENEP (a four-and-a-half party or extreme multi-party system.)

At the same time, the other two linear trends of ENPP confirm slow accommodation to the fast growing ENEP. The 1945–2015 linear trend predicts 2.46 ENPP for 2027 and the 1992–2015 linear trend 2.66. So, practically, if everything continues at the same pace, then the Westminster party system will likely become a two-and-a-half or a three-party system in the parliamentary arena. This slow increase in ENPP estimates continuously growing difference between ENEP and ENPP. The record high incongruence of the last couple of elections will likely follow. As Table 28 demonstrates, the absolute differences between ENEP and ENPP (column 7) will reach 1.42 (by the 1945 trend) and 1.60 (by the 1992 trend) in 2027. So it means that the UK electoral arena will consist of one-and-a-half more parties than the Westminster parliamentary arena. Hence, in British politics the democratic deficit and the underrepresentation of smaller parties will become even *more problematic*.

These predictions, of course, may only come true if no major changes occur in British politics. This thesis has a time framework of 1945–2015. However, when I write this thesis, I already know the results of the 2017 general elections. So I can compare the prediction of this regression with reality. In fact, reality contradicted very much the estimated value in 2017. According to the regression model, ENEP should have been 3.74 (or 4.09) and ENPP should have been 2.42 (or 2.66). However, in 2017 in reality ENEP was 2.89 and ENPP was 2.48. This means that the 2017 prediction about ENEP was very highly overestimated. The regression trend estimated a four-party system (3.74 or 4.09) in the electoral arena whereas reality was a moderate three-party system (2.89.) At the same time, the regression trend for ENPP gave almost a perfect prediction. The ENPP should have been 2.42 and in reality it was indeed 2.48, which is an insignificant difference.

The 2017 ENEP/ENPP data call our attention to one very important thing. It is much more difficult to give a solid estimation about the *electoral arena* than about the

parliamentary arena. Although the electoral arena has a fast pluralisation, it is also very fragile and sometimes hectic. It means that future predictions about ENEP should be considered much more cautiously than about ENPP. The parliamentary arena will likely provide very stable values around 2.5. This phenomenon is obviously related to the first-past-the-post electoral system, which narrows down fragmentation to a much lower level in the parliamentary arena.

So numbers support the idea that pluralisation is a long-term characteristic of British politics. However, it is sometimes hectic or unreliable. If we compare pluralisation in the electoral and parliamentary arenas, we can conclude the following things. There is a rapid pluralisation in the electoral arena, however, it is sometimes rather unstable and hectic. The pluralisation in the parliamentary arena is at the same time less dynamic, however, it is much more stable. This has a logical outcome: the incongruence between the electoral and parliamentary arenas kept growing between 1945 and 2015. Meanwhile, however, this incongruence was sometimes more or less intense according to (mainly) the sudden changes in the patterns of the electoral arena (ENEP). In sum, data supports H_1. The further consequences of this hypothesis will be used in H_2 and H_3 as well.

9.2 QUALITATIVE EXPLANATION

The growing adaptational pressure can also be detected in qualitative way. The most important qualitative evidence for the growing dissatisfaction with the Westminster party system is *anti-establishment sentiment*. (See more about the growing discontent in British politics in Clarke et al., 2016; Fischer, 2016; March, 2017; Pabst, 2017; Richards, 2016.) I was told by British politicians that anti-establishment was the most commonly mentioned political justification for the pluralisation of British party politics. Almost every politician with whom I made interviews noted that the electorate is dissatisfied with the current party system in the House of Commons. Therefore, voters either turn away from politics or support smaller 'third parties.'

I argued in Chapter 8 that this anti-establishment sentiment could be the culmination of a long-term trend. After comparing the four critical junctures of post-war British politics, I concluded that two-party decidability and issue convergence played a crucial role in it. I argued that in each of the previous three historical periods there

was some clue (class, issues or both) which helped the electorate to make distinction between the two major parties. However, after 1997 this decidability suffered significantly with the introduction of New Labour on the left and Big Society on the right. Therefore, the post-1997 British party politics is about two increasingly similar political parties (new 'neoliberal' consensual politics), which undermines *valence politics.* Since valence politics cannot work in a homogeneous political context, the electorate automatically start to look for alternative (and decidable) political representation. Anti-establishment sentiment is the result of this converging trend.

I also noted that there can be a trade-off between *pluralisation* and *valence politics*. If one of the two major parties' political manifestos significantly differs from the other's, there is more probability for better decidability and showing more political competence. This sort of *polarisation* can reduce pluralisation and favour traditional parties. During Margaret Thatcher's incumbency the two-party political polarisation coincided with declining ENEP values. This would suggest that the rupture with consensus politics can indeed be effective against pluralisation trends. In contrast, Tony Blair's landslide victory in 1997, which offered new consensus politics (New Labour), could not stop pluralisation. This was also true for David Cameron's 2010 Big Society agenda. Therefore, the experience of the polarised Thatcher years and the consensual Bair and early Cameron years prove that *pluralisation can be only reduced by polarisation.* Because of the fact that in the last 20 years there has been consensual politics instead, general dissatisfaction with the British political elite has been steadily growing. This dissatisfaction appears in the form of anti-establishment sentiment.

Anti-establishment sentiment basically occurs if the electorate (or a growing part of it) do not feel represented by the political elite. (See also Brandenburg & Johns, 2014.) This 'qualitative incongruence' is almost the same as the 'quantitative incongruence' which I demonstrated with ENEP/ENPP differences. The numerical difference between ENEP and ENPP adequately reflect the growing anti-establishment sentiment in the UK. As ENEP continues to rise rapidly and ENPP follows it only slowly, the growing anti-establishment sentiment will likely remain part of British politics. Thus the future prediction in Table 28 does not only say that there will be less overlap between ENEP and ENPP but it also suggests that *anti-establishment sentiment will increase.* Table 28 predicts that in its current form (ceteris paribus) anti-establishment

will prevail in the long run. In other words, anti-establishment is generated by *systematic endeavours* and not by temporal feelings (or popularity).

9.3 COUNTER-VARIABLE

The growing pressure on the Westminster parliamentary arena is further confirmed by cross-national data. Figure 29 below shows that in 11 selected Western democracies there is a broader pluralisation trend. (Data from Gallagher (2017).) Although there are sometimes high deviations, most of the countries follow an upward trend. It is certainly true for Denmark, Greece, Austria, Ireland and Israel. The opposite trend is shown in Italy, France and Spain (however, each started to rise again after 2008). The US and Maltese two-party competition seems to be frozen without significant increase or decline. Therefore, the UK constitutes part of a broader context in which Western democracies tend to pluralise in the electoral arena (ENEP.) There are very few countries (previously France, Italy and Spain) which could return to pluralisation. All other countries have either stagnating or growing ENEP. This cross-national comparison supports the idea that the growing adaptational pressure will remain in British politics.

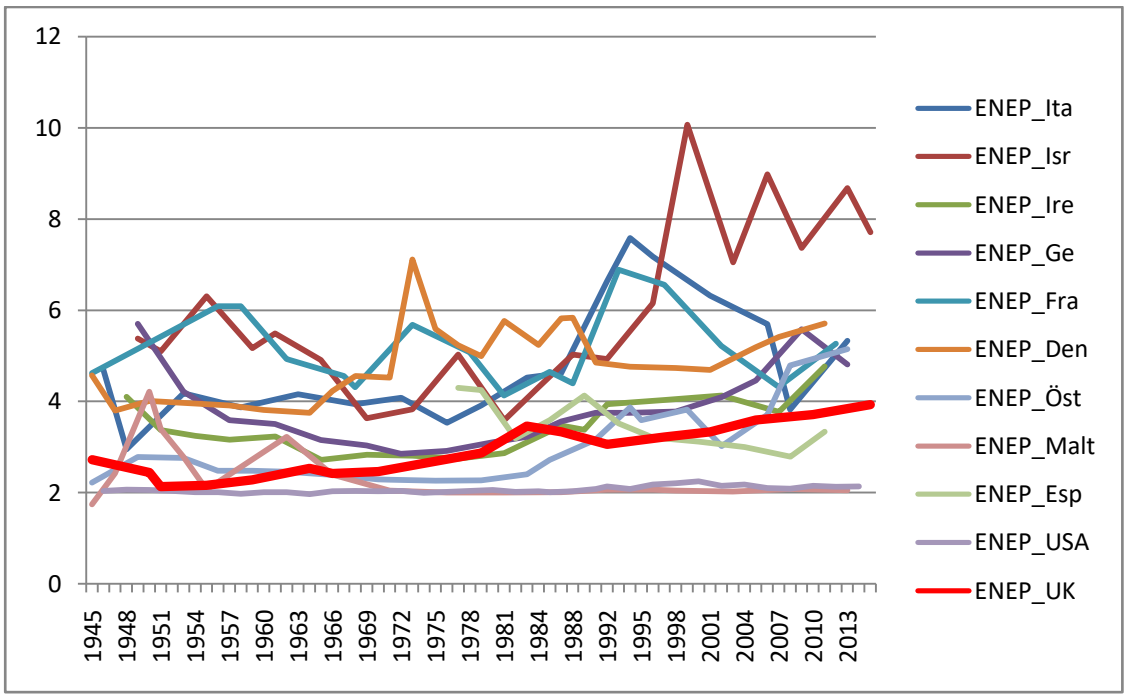


Figure 29 Ghallager's ENEP values over time in 11 Western countries

The big difference between the UK and other Western countries, however, is ENEP/ENPP incongruence. Figure 30 shows that the difference between ENEP and ENPP is one of the highest for the UK from among the 11 countries observed. Only France is higher than Britain but it is rather volatile. In the last couple of years there has been growing incongruence in Italy, too. However, only the French and British cases show long-term systematic incongruence. The only country which has managed to decrease the incongruence significantly was Spain.

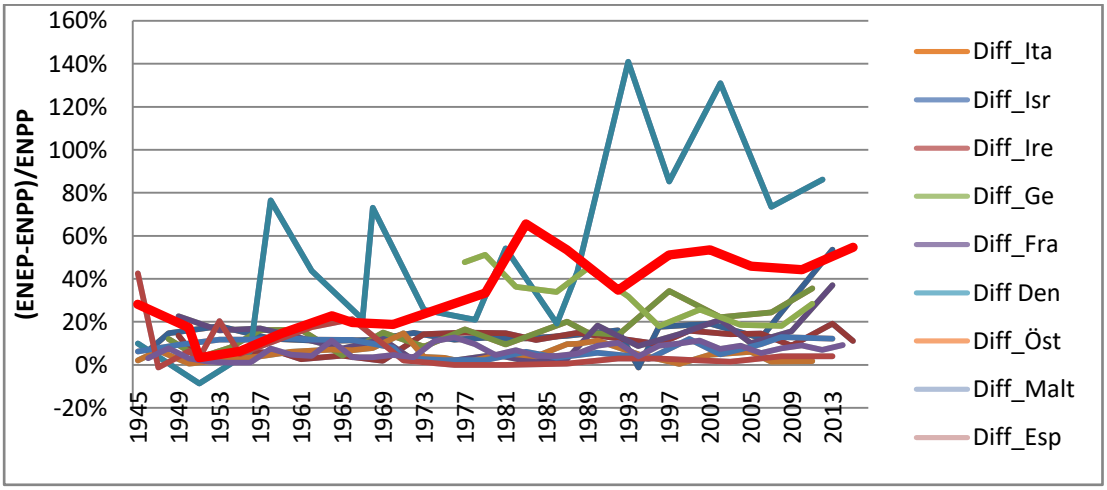


Figure 30 ENEP/ENPP difference in the 11 Western countries

The chart also shows that the PR electoral system has some *disproportion* which is usually less than 20%. Most of the countries which have more PR electoral system than the UK (like Germany, Denmark or Austria) also have differing ENEP and ENPP values. This suggests that perfect congruence cannot exist in practice between the parliamentary and electoral arenas. There will always be a certain degree of incongruence. Nevertheless, based on these empirical results, I argue that the *natural rate of incongruence* cannot surpass 20%. It has been surpassed in recent years in Greece, Ireland, Italy and Spain. However, only France and the UK have established long-term incongruence. The last time when the UK was below the 'natural rate of incongruence' was in 1970. Since then, pluralisation trends have kept growing. In 2015, the ENEP/ENPP incongruence was already 54.72%. (ENEP was 54.74% higher than ENPP.)

9.4 VERIFICATION

Based on the *quantitative*, *qualitative* arguments and the consideration of *counter variables*, I have to accept H_1. It is hence verified that the growing adaptational pressure is a long-term phenomenon in British politics after the Second World War (between 1945 and 2015.) In addition to the verification of this historical trend, we can also say something about the future. This trend will likely continue in the future. Hence, the already high incongruence between UK party competition and the Westminster party system will likely reach record new levels again. The consequences of this growing incongruence are observed in the next hypotheses (H_2 and H_3).

10 HYPOTHESIS 2

Although the growing incongruence was a long-term trend of British party politics, there were also certain periods when it temporarily slowed down or reversed.

The hypothesis wants to detect if there was any period in the history of UK party competition when incongruence could have been reversed. In other words, the hypothesis wonders how determined the pluralisation of British party politics is. Was it possible at any time to slow down, stop or decrease the level of pluralisation? So, similarly to H_1, I want to observe a long-term period between 1945 and 2015. However, H_2 is more interested in the short-term fluctuations in this rather long period.

10.1 POLARISATION

Previously, in Chapter 8.3, I argued that the most important peculiarity of the post-1997 period in British politics was consensual politics. This sort of centripetal party competition dynamics between the two major parties (Lab, Con) ended up with two almost identical party manifestos; both major parties shared neoliberal economic policies and a support of liberal social values. The shifts in political ideologies manifested in New Labour and Big Society. However, this mutual shift towards an identical policy platform created similarity and difficulty in making any distinctions between the two parties. I argued also that in any other periods in the evolution of British politics, there was always some kind of clue for the electorate which could help with making distinction between the two major parties; be it a difference based on class, issue or both. (Table 29)

		Class difference	
		YES	NO
Issue difference	YES	1945–51 elections	1979–1992
	NO	1951–70	Post-1997

Table 29 Difference between the two major parties

So the post-1997 period had very similar two-party policy platforms, which caused growing anti-establishment sentiment and pluralisation. However, H_2 would suggest that this trend is not deterministic. Instead, if two-party consensus politics ends and some sort of polarisation starts, anti-establishment sentiment and pluralisation can be decreased. In order to test this hypothesis, I use previous examples from British political history when such kind of polarisation occurred. In addition, I will also attempt to analyse the most recent 2017 general election. Although it is out of the time framework that I use (1945–2015), it can serve as further evidence for my explanation. So I also want to include this general election in this chapter. Therefore, I will observe the following periods:

1. Margaret Thatcher's polarisation years (1979–1992)
2. The end of Big Society after 2012
3. The 2017 snap election.

10.1.1 **Margaret Thatcher's polarisation years (1979–1992)**

Although I argued that the post-1997 period is different from any earlier period of British politics, here I want to sophisticate this picture. In fact, the pre-1979 period had some very similar characteristics. Due to de-alienation during the post-war period, the 1970s had relatively low party identification (Crewe et al., 1977; Heath et al., 1991), and hence *class difference gradually declined* for Labour and the Conservatives. This resulted in record high electoral volatility during the February 1974 general election. In addition to that, the *post-war consensus* politics still existed until the 1974 general elections. So there were a couple of years (between 1970 and 1974) when both class distinction and issue difference were relatively low. This phenomenon was very similar to the post-1997 period. Therefore, the change for a polarising party competition in 1979 (Margaret Thatcher's years) can be used to test H_2, too. We can model with this case what can happen if consensus politics is given up for a polarized one.

Here, I do not want to deal with assessing Margaret Thatcher's legacy and her impact on British party competition. In the literature, there is wide consensus that Margaret Thatcher's years meant a rupture with the previous welfare consensus policies in favour of market oriented neoliberal policies. This idea is supported by many scholars

(Maor, 2005: 218-240; Dixit and Weibull, 2007; Jessop, 2015; Johnston and Pattie, 1989, Johnston et al., 1993).

The point here is the effect of polarisation on the pluralisation of the British party competition. As I argued in previous chapters (see Figure 31 below), the growing polarisation during the Thatcher governments (1979–1992) coincided with decreasing ENEP values. The only difference from this trend was the 1983 general election. This general election produced a high ENEP because of the internal turmoil inside the Labour Party (the withdrawal of the Social Democratic faction.) This rise in pluralisation was only a one-off event and later it kept declining. So the overall 1979–1992 period meant the rolling back of pluralisation. So there is clear evidence that party manifesto polarisation can successfully decrease pluralisation trends. Moreover, given the fact that the pre-1974 and the post-2010 political circumstances were quite similar (no class and no issue difference), a potential polarisation could produce similar effects to the one during the Thatcher years. So Margaret Thatcher's polarisation years (1979–1992) support the idea that the current British party competition can successfully respond to pluralisation. It could work in the past and it has all the necessary preconditions to work in the present, too. Hence, the Thatcher years support H_2.

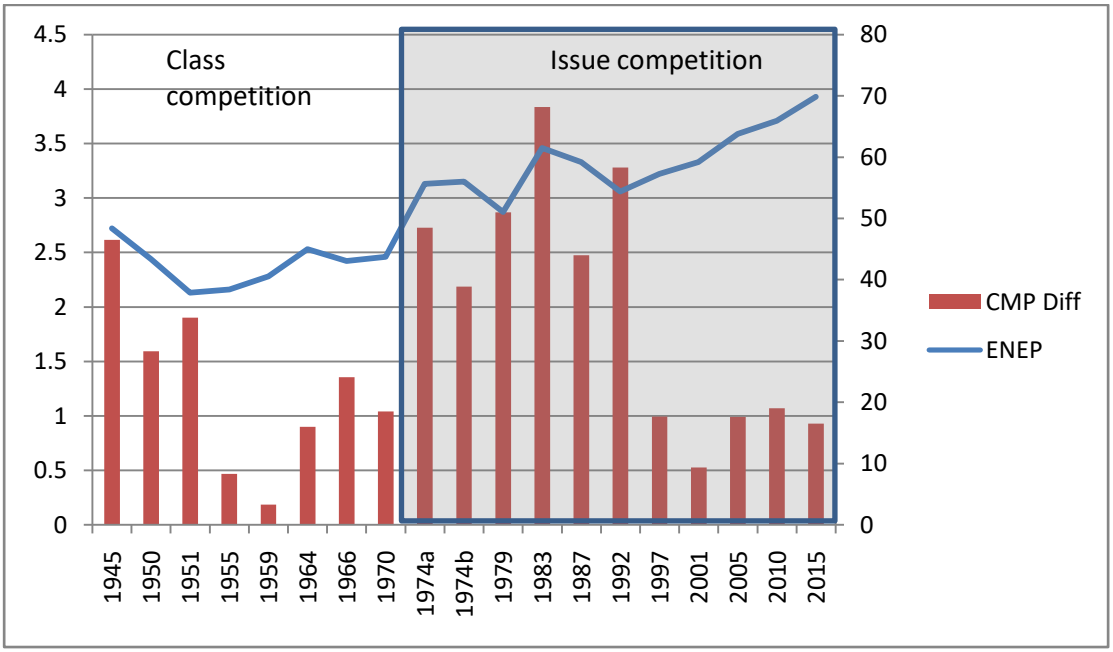


Figure 31 Manifesto positions and ENEP value (1945–2015)

10.1.2 The end of Big Society during David Cameron's first premiership (2012–2015)

In Chapter 8.3.2, I noted that Big Society was responsible for the Conservative Party's failure in 2010. The abandonment of Big Society likely secured an absolute victory in 2015. This is clear evidence that polarisation brought success to the Conservative Party. However, ENEP kept increasing from 3.71 in 2010 to 3.93 in 2015. So the post-2012 polarisation period had some rather controversial effects:

- It did help the Conservative Party to win an absolute majority. There was a return to single government in 2015, which acted against the pluralisation process.
- However, the whole UK party competition did not decline or stop. Instead, ENEP reached a record high level of 3.93.

Therefore, strictly referring to the 2012–2015 polarisation period, H_2 should be rejected. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to think in such a short time framework. One should not forget that the polarisation years under Margaret Thatcher (1979–1992) also had exceptions when pluralisation temporarily peaked like in 1983. Nevertheless, the overall period had a declining trend. In this sense, the 2015 ENEP rise should be treated cautiously. It can be easily similar to the 1983 general election, when ENEP suddenly jumped but in the long term it kept falling. It is therefore necessary to observe more general elections (at least 2 or 3) before making a final statement about this kind of polarisation. The 2017 general election therefore can play an important role in rejecting or confirming H_2.

10.1.3 The 2017 snap election

The 2017 snap election was called by Theresa May to get further legitimacy for the upcoming Brexit negotiations. However, the Conservative Party failed to increase their parliamentary seat share and ended up with a hung parliament. The outcome of the 2017 general election was very similar to that of the 2010 elections; the winning Conservative Party had to rely on the support of one minor party (the Lib Dems in 2010 and the Democratic Unionist Party in 2017.)

My interpretation of this election is, nevertheless, very different. The uniqueness of the 2017 general election, I argue, lies in the massive decline of third party vote share. Table 30 shows that third party vote share declined from 32.8% (2015) to 17.6% (2017). By the way, this sharp decline resembles the data experienced in the 1960s and 1970s. At the same time, the two major parties (Conservatives and Labour) reached a combined 82.4% vote share, which again recalls the 1970s or even the years before. In sum, the 2017 general election provided a massive return to two-party politics and a sharp reduction of pluralisation (or fragmentation).

I argue that the decline of third party vote share fits perfectly into the hypothesis of polarisation (H_2). In my opinion, the 2017 general election has been one of the most polarised in recent British history. The manifestos of Labour and the Conservatives were very different and easy to distinguish. On the one hand, there was Jeremy Corbyn, who fought a campaign with the somewhat anti-establishment manifesto *'For the many, not the few'* (Labour Manifesto, 2017), while Theresa May's manifesto proudly identified itself as *'Governing from the mainstream'* (Conservative Manifesto, 2017). In addition to this rhetorical difference, the issue of Brexit negotiations fundamentally differentiated the two parties; the Conservatives wanted to *leave* the Single Market, whereas Labour wanted to *stay in* it. Unfortunately, no CMP data is available on the polarisation of the 2017 general elections yet. However, there are also other British political scholars who support my idea about the extreme polarisation of the 2017 general election. For instance, Jonathan Wheatley (2017) emphasized that the 2017 general election was one of the most polarized in recent British history.

Table 30 Share of Vote at UK general elections (1945–2017)

		CON	LAB	LD	PC/SNP	Other	Third parties	CON+LAB
1945		39.7%	47.7%	9.0%	0.2%	3.4%	12.6%	87.4%
1950		43.3%	46.1%	9.1%	0.1%	1.4%	10.6%	89.4%
1951		48.0%	48.8%	2.6%	0.1%	0.6%	3.3%	96.7%
1955		49.6%	46.4%	2.7%	0.2%	1.1%	4.0%	96.0%
1959		49.4%	43.8%	5.9%	0.4%	0.6%	6.8%	93.2%
1964		43.3%	44.1%	11.2%	0.5%	0.9%	12.5%	87.5%
1966		41.9%	47.9%	8.5%	0.7%	1.0%	10.2%	89.8%
1970		46.4%	43.0%	7.5%	1.7%	1.5%	10.7%	89.3%
1974	Feb	37.8%	37.2%	19.3%	2.6%	3.2%	25.1%	74.9%
1974	Oct	35.7%	39.3%	18.3%	3.4%	3.3%	25.0%	75.0%
1979		43.9%	36.9%	13.8%	2.0%	3.4%	19.3%	80.7%
1983		42.4%	27.6%	25.4%	1.5%	3.1%	30.0%	70.0%

1987	42.2%	30.8%	22.6%	1.7%	2.7%	26.9%	73.1%
1992	41.9%	34.4%	17.8%	2.3%	3.5%	23.7%	76.3%
1997	30.7%	43.2%	16.8%	2.5%	6.8%	26.1%	73.9%
2001	31.6%	40.7%	18.3%	1.8%	7.7%	27.7%	72.3%
2005	32.4%	35.2%	22.0%	2.2%	8.2%	32.5%	67.5%
2010	36.1%	29.0%	23.0%	2.2%	9.7%	35.0%	65.0%
2015	36.8%	30.4%	7.9%	5.3%	19.6%	32.8%	67.2%
2017	42.4%	40.0%	7.4%	3.5%	6.7%	17.6%	82.4%

The polarisation of two-party politics affected third parties quite negatively. The biggest losers were UKIP (from 3.8 million votes (2015) to 0.6 million (2017)), SNP (from 1.4 million (2015) to 0.9 million (2017)) and the Greens (1.15 million and 0.5 million) (BBC, 2017). The overall vote loss for third parties was 4.4 million, whereas the two main parties (Lab and Con) secured an additional 5.8 million vote increase vis-á-vis their 2015 performance (the 1.5 million difference between third party loss and two-party gain comes from the 1.5 million additional turnout, which also flowed to the two major parties.)

The 2017 general election was also the culmination of the post-2012 polarisation process. Previously I argued that the 2012–2015 polarisation period is too short to evaluate its impact on pluralisation. I suggested at least 2 or 3 consecutive general elections. The 2017 elections, however, provided somewhat opposing results to the 2015 elections:

- The pluralisation significantly dropped because ENEP declined from 3.93 to 2.89. This record low level recalls the 1970s and the polarisation years of Margaret Thatcher.
- However, pluralisation did achieve some partial victory because the Conservatives could not get an absolute majority and they were forced to have coalition talks with the Democratic Unionist Party (it was not a formal coalition, just a 'confidence and supply' deal, which meant external support for the minority Conservative government).

So, the 2017 snap election, just like the 2015 election provides somewhat controversial verification for H_2. Nevertheless, I argue that the decline of ENEP is more important than the hung parliament. Hung parliament basically depends on the other index (ENPP) because it is the result of the electoral system. Therefore, hung parliament is about the parliamentary arena (ENPP) and not about the electoral arena

(ENEP). The Democratic Unionist Party enjoyed a kingmaker position inside the House of Commons even with relatively little UK vote share. Because I mentioned that the parliamentary arena depends on the electoral arena, I give more importance to ENEP than ENPP. Therefore, the 2017 general election result and the record decline of ENEP are more important than the hung parliament (and ENPP.)

The 2017 general election therefore verifies H_2. There is a correlation between two-party polarisation and the decline of pluralisation.

10.2 VERIFICATION

I tested H_2 and there is evidence that *polarisation* can decrease *pluralisation*. Polarisation in British politics has always paid off; either by stagnating or reversing pluralisation. Hence, polarisation has justified that pluralisation can be suspended or even reversed.

11 HYPOTHESIS 3

The growing incongruence between the parliamentary and electoral arenas was never large enough to trigger the electoral system change of the UK general elections.

The hypothesis tries to evaluate the potential consequence that a split in the UK party system might lead to. If incongruence is significant, one could think that the UK parliamentary arena is not responsive to the electoral arena. This lack of responsiveness also suggests that the FPTP electoral system can be blamed for such an outcome. However, if the electoral system is changed for a mixed or PR one, the level of incongruence can decline. So the growing incongruence could necessitate an electoral system change over time. I want to find correlation between the growing incongruence and the likelihood of electoral system change in Britain between 1945 and 2015.

This hypothesis is about electoral system change. The FPTP electoral system provided less and less congruence between the Westminster parliamentary arena and the UK electoral arena according to $H_{1.}$ Therefore, the growing incongruence has likely undermined the legitimacy of the FPTP electoral system. If an electoral system change happened from the current FPTP to a mixed or PR system, then the adaptational pressure would likely ease. However, it has not happened until today. So we have to figure out why it has not happened even though the incongruence would have made it necessary. If we talk about growing pluralisation (H_1), we also have to talk about its potential consequences (the necessity of an electoral system change) (H_3).

In order to verify H_3, I use the following logical steps; (1) I summarize how the New Zealand electoral system changed in 1993, which will be a counter-variable for the British case; (2) I compare the New Zealand case with the British case both quantitatively and qualitatively. Finally, (3) I discuss previous attempts in Britain about electoral system change. Here I attach particular importance to the 2011 AV referendum. Hence, the verification of H_3 follows a somewhat different logical chain than in H_1. Instead of observing the counter-variable in the end, I start with this in H_3.

So, basically an *opposite argumentation* takes place in H_3 than in H_1. This method helps us to better understand the process. The New Zealand *experience* might provide empirical ground for future predictions about a possible electoral system change in Britain, too.

11.1 COUNTER-VARIABLE – THE NEW ZEALAND CASE STUDY

New Zealand can serve as a practical example for the British electoral system change because (1) it is one of the rare Western democracies which changed their electoral systems after the Second World War and (2) it is a Westminster democracy which used to have a similar two-party system as Britain. (Fore more background information, please see: Mulgan & Aimer, 2004). Even the unwritten constitutional background is similar. (See more about unwritten constitution in Lánczi, 2012). Thus, the New Zealand electoral system change is almost the only case which allows us to estimate the potential outcome of a British electoral system change. (See more about the change in Kelsey, 2015; N. Roberts, 1997.)

The process of electoral system change was quite fast and contingent in New Zealand. Gallagher (1998: 205) defined three causes behind the electoral system change: (1) growing 'third party' vote share, (2) opportunism of both major parties against each other and (3) "political mistakes and miscalculations" by both parties.

Third party vote share has been on the rise since the Second World War. However, this rise has not been linear and continuous. There were often ups and downs. (Please see New Zealand Electoral Commission (2016) for detailed data.) For instance, in 1954, third party vote share reached 11.6%, which later declined during the following years. The next jump occurred in 1966 with 16% third party vote share. Then again, it declined (10.6% in 1969) but reached a record high level in 1978 (19.8%). Since then, third party vote share was gradually higher and higher except for the 1987 general election when it was very low again (8%). During the last election before the electoral system change in 1993, third party vote share was record high (30.2%). In sum, the growing third party vote share had two important characteristics in New Zealand; (1) it was truly an increasing trend, however, (2) there were many ups and downs in this pluralisation trend. It suggests that the growing 'third party' vote share was very

hectic and *unpredictable*. It is in sharp contrast with the *steady* and *predictable* nature of third party vote share growth in Britain. (See Figure 32.)

Election year	National Party	Labour	Third parties
1946	48.4	51.3	0.3
1949	51.9	47.2	0.9
1951	54	45.8	0.2
1954	44.3	44.1	11.6
1957	44.2	48.3	7.5
1960	47.6	43.4	9
1963	47.1	43.7	9.2
1966	43.6	41.4	15
1969	45.2	44.2	10.6
1972	41.5	48.4	10.1
1975	47.6	39.6	12.8
1978	39.8	40.4	19.8
1981	38.8	39	22.2
1984	35.9	43	21.1
1987	44	48	8
1990	47.8	35.1	17.1
1993	35.1	34.7	30.2

Table 31 Vote share (%) in New Zealand[15]

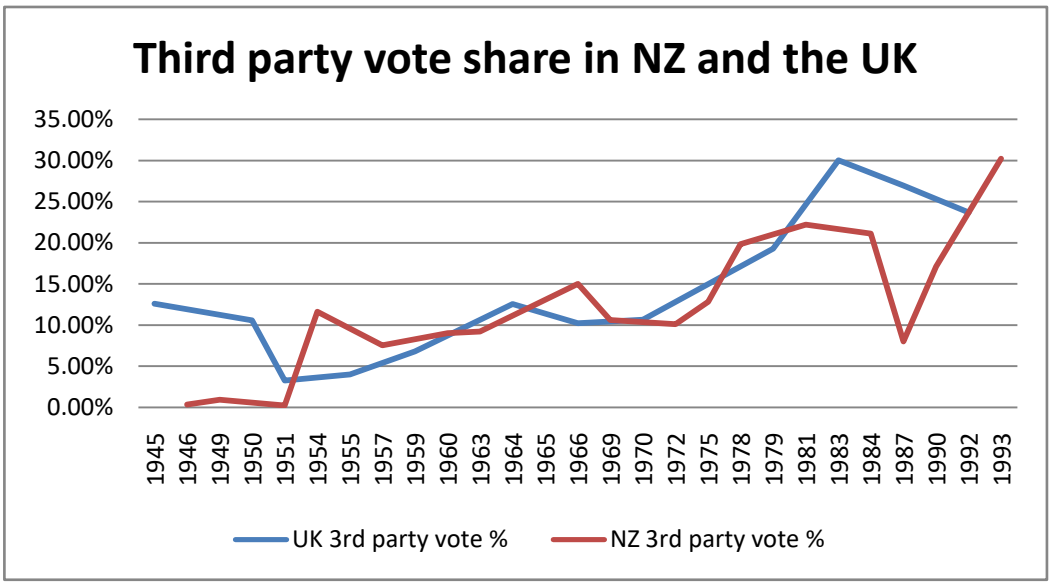


Figure 32 Third party vote share in NZ and the UK

[15] Source: New Zealand Electoral Commission (2016) [Third parties column is my own calculation] See detailed third party vote share in New Zealand at Vowles (1995:99). (It can confirm my calculations.)

Opportunism and *political mistakes* certainly profited from this very hectic environment. The first opportunistic response to New Zealand's contingent political landscape came from the NZ Labour Party before the 1984 general election by making an electoral promise to establish the Royal Commission of Inquiry on the Electoral system (Vowles, 1995: 103). The reason for such an initiation was the *malapportionments* of the former two general elections. In 1978, the National Party got a smaller vote share than Labour (39.8% against 40.4%), nevertheless the FPTP electoral system generated more seat share for the former (55.43% to 43.48%). This phenomenon re-occurred in 1981, when the Nationals won again with fewer votes (38.8% against 39% vote share and 51.09% against 46.74% seat share.) These two *malapportionments* generated a feeling inside the Labour Party that they would scarcely win with the then FPTP electoral system. Therefore, before the 1984 general election, Labour decided to promise an electoral system revision once they were elected. Interestingly, however, the 1984 general election generated a clear Labour victory without *malapportionment*. (See Table 32.) So I argue that the previous political calculus (opportunism) turned out to be a mistake. However, after the 1984 general election Labour had to fulfil its electoral reform promise.

Election year	**National Party**			**Labour**		
	seats	% of votes	% of seats	seats	% of votes	% of seats
1946	38	48.4	47.50%	42	51.3	52.50%
1949	46	51.9	57.50%	34	47.2	42.50%
1951	50	54	62.50%	30	45.8	37.50%
1954	45	44.3	56.25%	35	44.1	43.75%
1957	39	44.2	48.75%	41	48.3	51.25%
1960	46	47.6	57.50%	34	43.4	42.50%
1963	45	47.1	56.25%	35	43.7	43.75%
1966	44	43.6	55.00%	35	41.4	43.75%
1969	45	45.2	53.57%	39	44.2	46.43%
1972	32	41.5	36.78%	55	48.4	63.22%
1975	55	47.6	63.22%	32	39.6	36.78%
1978	51	39.8	55.43%	40	40.4	43.48%
1981	47	38.8	51.09%	43	39	46.74%
1984	37	35.9	38.95%	56	43	58.95%
1987	40	44	41.24%	57	48	58.76%
1990	67	47.8	69.07%	29	35.1	29.90%
1993	50	35.1	50.51%	45	34.7	45.45%

Table 32 Two-party vote- and seat share in New Zealand[16]

Following the 1984 general election, in 1986, the independent Royal Commission eventually found that the FPTP electoral system should be reformed and a German-type mixed electoral system was needed instead (Boston, 1987). Since the majority of the parliamentary Labour party was against electoral system change after their successful 1984 victory, the issue should have become a low-profile topic. However, during the 1987 general election campaign the Labour leader, David Lange, made a *mistake.* During a televised debate he promised to hold a referendum on electoral system reform if he was re-elected. Later he confirmed that he misread the briefing notes before the TV debate (Vowles, 1995: 103 cites Jackson, 1993: 18).

Labour won the elections in 1987 so they had to continue their electoral system reform and hold a referendum. It became much of a burden on Labour. Gradually, they wanted to water down and drop the electoral system reform. However, it was the opposition party (the Nationals) which decided to carry on with the electoral system topic. This call was very rational and *opportunistic* because the idea of an electoral system reform became a salient issue for the electorate. The *opportunistic* bipartite rivalry around electoral system reform hence generated path-dependency for both parties. They kept electoral system reform on the agenda and the New Zealand people started to support the idea.

The National Party campaigned for holding a referendum on electoral system reform during the 1990 general election. They were confident that people would prefer the status quo (FPTP) during the referendum. Hence the Nationals were *opportunistic* (because they wanted to show support for electoral system reform against the Labour party) and they made a *mistake* (because they thought that a referendum would necessarily lead to preserving the status quo) (Aberbach & Christensen, 2001). The last nail in the coffin was the record high disproportion of the 1990 general election. The National Party was over-represented in the New Zealand Parliament with 47.8% vote share (Labour 35.1%) and 69.07% seat share (Labour 29.9%.) This context gave additional momentum for demanding electoral system change in New Zealand. So an electoral system reform was eventually inevitable.

[16] Source: New Zealand Electoral Commission (2016)

The National government tried to make the electorate uncertain by holding two separate referenda on the same issue. In 1992, the first referendum had two options; either keeping FPTP or choosing one of four different other options (mixed-member proportional (MMP), single transferable vote (STV), preferential voting (PV) and supplementary vote (SV)) (Levine & Roberts, 1993). There were practically five answers to the referendum question. Nevertheless, this did not confuse the New Zealand electorate and 70.5% voted for MMP. Although turnout was relatively low (55.2%), it was difficult to question its legitimacy.

An additional part of the electoral reform was the *Maori* under-representation in New Zealand (Geddis, 2006). Since the 1980s there has been growing criticism against the unfair nature of FPTP towards the indigenous Maoris. Therefore, the two-party rivalry over electoral system reform was further confirmed by the moral necessity to make the system more representative. Nevertheless, the Maori issue was not really a key factor. In the 1980s and 1990s it was just one of many other factors (like third party growth, opportunism and political mistakes.)

The second referendum was held in 1993 in parallel with the general elections (Levine & Roberts, 1994; Nagel, 1994). That time there were only two questions on the ballots; FPTP or MMP. Although the results were much closer than in 1992 (due to a better economic situation and good campaigning for the status quo), MMP won by 53.86%. This meant an ultimate end to FPTP general elections and confirmed the new electoral system. The next 1996 general election was already held accordingly. ENEP jumped immediately from 3.52 to 4.27 and electoral disproportion (LSq) dropped from 18.19 to 3.43. So there was a rapid growth of congruence between the New Zealand parliamentary and electoral arenas from 1993 to 1996. (See also in the Appendix.)

11.2 USING THE NEW ZEALAND CASE STUDY FOR THE UK

In the following I will analyse the impact of the New Zealand electoral system change on the parliamentary and electoral arenas both *quantitatively* and *qualitatively*. Then I will compare it with British data.

11.2.1 **Quantitative approach**

The quantitative approach compares New Zealand's ENEP and ENPP trends before and after the electoral system change. Figure 33 shows that the relative incongruence ([ENEP–ENPP]/ENPP) was very similar in Britain and New Zealand till the late 1970s. Both countries had gradual and growing incongruence between party system and party competition after the Second World War. In New Zealand, the incongruence was usually a little bit higher than in Britain due to the more disproportionate effect of the same FPTP electoral system. However, beginning from the 1980s, there was an opposite trend; the UK incongruence *declined* (after 1983) and the NZ incongruence *skyrocketed* (in 1990 and 1993). In 1993, the NZ incongruence had the highest level ever above the UK level (62.96% in NZ (1993) and 34.80% in the UK (1992)). Then the electoral reform was implemented in New Zealand and the incongruence dropped to the levels of the 1940s (around 10%). So the New Zealand example shows that the *adaptational pressure* reached a *threshol*d in 1993, which was 62.96% relative difference between parliamentary and electoral arenas. It meant that the electoral arena was 62.96% higher than the parliamentary arena in New Zealand. In absolute numbers this meant 3.52 ENEP and 2.16 ENPP. Such high difference has never been observed in British politics until now. Although the 2015 general election result came very close to this; 3.93 ENEP and 2.54 ENPP, it was just 54.72% relative incongruence.

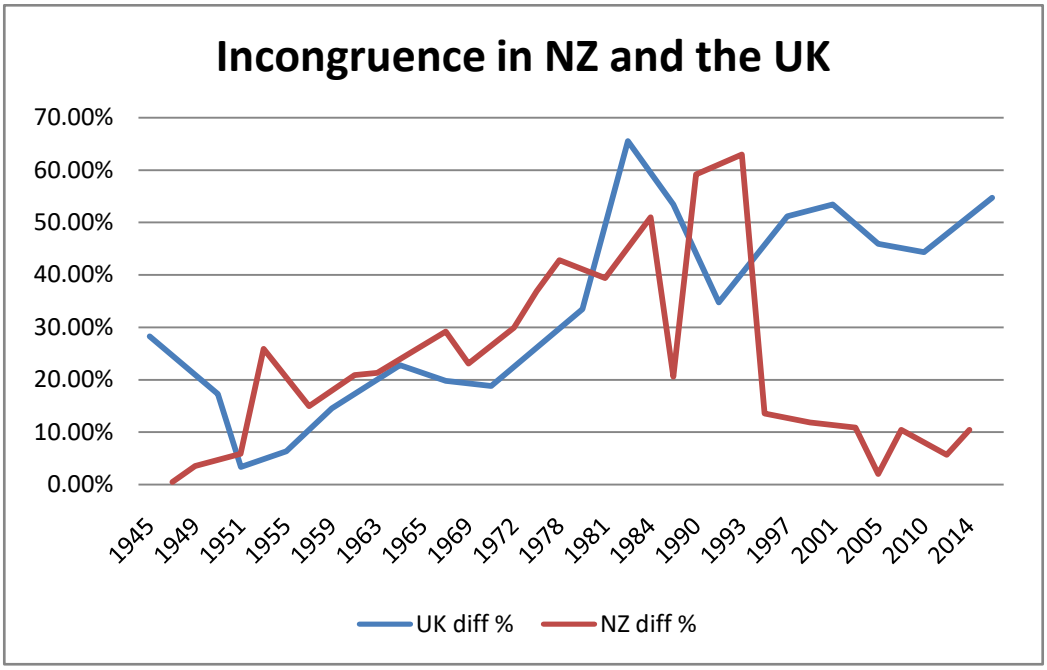


Figure 33 Incongrunce in NZ and the UK[17]

If I adopt mechanically the New Zealand threshold and I use future predictions about ENEP/ENPP values, electoral system change should happen in the 2040s (according to the 1945 linear trend) or in 2050s (according to the 1992 linear trend.) Until then the British incongruence would likely be under 62%. The quantitative approach of British electoral system change hence suggests relative *security* for the *status quo*. It demonstrates that the British incongruence will remain under the New Zealand level prior to the 1993 electoral system change for a while. (See Table 33.)

Year	ENEP	R^2	ENPP	R^2	Diff (ENEP-ENPP)	Trend	Diff (%)
2017	3.74	0.78	2.42	0.61	1.32	Calculated from 1945 linear trend	54.71%
2022	3.81		2.44		1.37		56.25%
2027	3.89		2.46		1.42		57.75%
2032	3.96		2.49		1.47		59.23%
2037	4.03		2.51		1.52		60.68%
2042	4.11		2.53		1.57		62.10%
2047	4.18		2.56		1.62		63.50%
2017	4.09	0.98	2.66	0.68	1.42	Calculated from 1992 linear trend	53.47%
2022	4.26		2.75		1.51		54.95%
2027	4.44		2.84		1.60		56.33%

[17] See more precise data in the Appendix.

2032	4.61	2.92	1.69	57.63%
2037	4.78	3.01	1.77	58.86%
2042	4.96	3.10	1.86	60.02%
2047	5.13	3.19	1.95	61.11%
2052	5.31	3.27	2.03	62.15%
2057	5.48	3.36	2.12	63.13%

Table 33 UK ENEP and ENPP prediction based on different regression models

Obviously, however, electoral system change cannot follow exactly the same rules in Britain as in New Zealand. (Please see also Dunleavy & Margetts, 1995.) There are plenty of qualitative differences which go against such quantitative predictions. Nevertheless, it is important to note that Britain has not reached New Zealand's quantitative *threshold* yet. This quantitative conclusion supports the potential resilience of the current Westminster party system against adaptational pressure.

11.2.2 **Qualitative approach**

New Zealand has long been considered the 'purest model of Westminster democracies' (Ilonszki, 1998; Levine, 2004). It was more British than Britain. Lijphart's (1984, 2012) criteria of a Westminster democracy were fulfilled better in New Zealand than in Britain. It was an exemplary two-party system with regular and overall power shifts between the government and the opposition. However, at the end of the 1980s the political setup started to erode so fast that an electoral system reform was introduced, which caused the end of traditional Westminster democracy and the beginning of a more consensual democracy.

The political crisis in New Zealand prior to the electoral system change shows lots of *similarities* to current British politics. (I have used Vowles (1995) to understand NZ in this section.) In both countries the first thing which started to erode two-party dominance was *de-alignment.* In New Zealand it was already there in the 1950s, however, it gained new momentum from the 1972 general election (Sinclair & Dalziel, 2001). Similarly, in Britain de-alignment showed its early signs in the 1960s, and it intensified since the 1974 general elections. In both countries, de-alignment brought new phenomena into party politics; growing electoral volatility, increasing 'third party' support and less predictable electoral outcomes (more landslide victories by one of the main two parties.) As a result, growing electoral disproportionality

called attention to potential electoral system reform after the 1978 election in New Zealand and the 1974 elections in Britain. The late 1970s caused polarisation in party manifestos in both countries. In New Zealand since 1975 the National Party (conservatives) conducted harsh interventionist policies while NZ Labour reacted with a neoliberal and monetarist agenda after their 1984 victory. In Britain, Margaret Thatcher (conservatives) started a neoliberal agenda which was opposed by Old Left politicians in the UK Labour Party. Later, in both countries two-party consensus was formed; in New Zealand, the National Party adjusted to the NZ Labour Party's monetarist policy after 1990, and in Britain the UK Labour Party adjusted to the Conservative Party's neoliberal agenda in 1997. This neoliberal political consensus generated anti-establishment sentiment in both countries; in New Zealand it came very fast after the swift policy switch of the National Party in 1990, whereas in Britain it took more time because the first signs of clear anti-establishment sentiment appeared in 2010.

Nevertheless, there have been a couple of differences as well. The most important difference, I argue, is *momentum*. In New Zealand, the political crisis was a rapid chain of events which generated a sudden and unforeseen anti-establishment sentiment. It started in 1978 with the National Party's *malapportionment* (i.e,. they won against Labour with a smaller vote share.) The anomaly of the electoral system was further intensified by manifesto polarisation between 1975 and 1990. In 1990, the winner National Party introduced harsh monetarist policies (following their Labour predecessor) which clearly went against their previous election promises. The sudden and unprecedented policy switch created a general feeling of anti-party politics. It eventually ended up in the 1992 and 1993 referenda on electoral reform. In sum, the time interval between the first signs of two-party erosion (1978) and the complete electoral system change (1993) took only 15 years. During this period, there was almost everything: third party vote growth, polarisation and consensus politics, anti-establishment sentiment and devolution (i.e., giving the Maoris fair representation.)

In contrast, in Britain the chain of events took much longer time. Hence, the *momentum* factor played a less important role. The first anomaly happened in 1974 with the heavy underrepresentation of the Liberal Party (19.3% vote share and 2.2% seat share.) Later, although the years of polarisation had almost the same length (1979–1997 in Britain and 1975–1990 in New Zealand), the consensual period was

longer in Britain (1997–2012) than in New Zealand (1990–1993). In addition, there is the question of devolution in different political contexts, as well. In Britain, devolution started to develop after 1997 during the consensual period. However, in New Zealand, the Maori question co-incided with the troublesome years of two-party polarisation (1980s and early 1990s). Thus, the biggest difference between Britain and New Zealand is the pace of events. It was slower, more organic and evolutionary in Britain whilst it was very fast, fundamental and revolutionary in New Zealand. I argue that the lack of momentum *preserved* the British electoral system because there was not too much pressure on it at any particular moment. In contrast, it was very intensive for NZ; hence it could not resist.

The other difference between New Zealand and Britain is *intra-party democracy*. In New Zealand there were relatively few MPs: between 1946 and 1966 the number of MPs was only 80, which gradually increased to 99 in 1993. It was one of the lowest *'electorate/MP'* ratio in any Western democracies. This very small number favoured small party factions with very harsh party line. The MPs therefore often could not represent their constituency's interest and had to obey a central party line. In Britain, nevertheless, the number of MPs has always been very high (between 630 and 650 after the Second World War). Therefore, party discipline was more problematic in Britain because party factions often surpassed 2-300 MPs. In comparison with the 2-30 MP factions in pre-1993 New Zealand, this difference is remarkable. The high number of MPs in a party faction can ease the pressure on the individual MP and they can rebel or speak out more often. This gives flexibility to the British system and it can incorporate anti-establishment sentiment, too, in the major parties. Hence, the MPs' responsiveness could be better in Britain than in New Zealand.

In sum, beside many similarities there are two important differences which can cause the preservation of the current status quo in Britain. On the one hand, larger parties and bigger parliament give more *flexibility* to the party system in Britain and it can ease adaptational pressure through less anti-establishment sentiment. On the other hand, *momentum* clearly fuelled electoral system change in New Zealand. Nevertheless, in Britain, such fundamental change has not happened yet. Instead, there is a slow but steady electoral trend which shows increasing incongruence between the parliamentary and electoral arenas. The lack of momentum supports resilience against

pluralist adaptational pressure. So, qualitatively and quantitatively the New Zealand case supports the idea that the UK party system can resist.

11.3 THE BRITISH CASE

11.3.1 Earlier attempts at electoral system change

Until now there have been four cases when the UK faced potential or real electoral system reform;

- In 1997, when the winner Labour Party reviewed the FPTP electoral system at general elections (*Jenkins committee*) (Commons Research Paper 98/112, 1998);
- in 1998, 1999 and 2000, when the *devolved assemblies* first elected their members with mixed electoral systems;
- in 1999, when the first *EP election* was held under the PR system, and
- in 2011, when the UK electorate had a *referendum on the AV system* at general elections.

From these above mentioned four occasions, two were *real* but *secondary* and two were *primary* but *potential*. The EP and devolved elections truly caused *real* change in British politics, however, they remained *secondary* arenas to the UK general elections. Nevertheless, the Jenkins Committee and the 2011 AV referendum indeed affected the *primary* arena (the House of Commons), however, it *did not become reality* for various reasons. So the current British record on electoral system change is confusing; some steps have been taken towards more PR elections, however, they have not affected the most important arena (the parliamentary arena.) Therefore we cannot say that a 'threshold' has been reached in British politics. It would only happen if the electoral reform *both* affected the primary arena and it became reality. Moreover, the AV electoral system cannot be truly seen as an ideal reform since it represents *another* type of majority electoral system than the FPTP. (In my definition of party system change I argued that mixed or PR electoral system change is a precondition for party system change.) Even if AV had been voted for in 2011, it wouldn't necessarily have led to better congruence between parliamentary and electoral arenas. So in Britain, at the time being, we are far from any similar change as the one that happened in New Zealand.

In addition to the relatively modest change in British electoral systems, it is worth noting that both devolved and EP electoral system changes were somewhat elite-driven. Devolution was created and implemented by Tony Blair's government, so it was not really a bottom-up initiative. The PR EP elections, in contrast, were demanded by EU officials because the UK was the last country in the EU which still used the overdue FPTP system for their EP elections. The EU hence obliged the UK to change its EP electoral system. So it was a rather top-down reform. The devolved and EP electoral system reforms prove that change came from the top (from the UK government or from the EU) and it was somewhat inevitable.

The two types of secondary electoral arenas (devolved and EP) nevertheless contributed to the idea of electoral system change at general elections, too. First, the introduction of mixed electoral systems in the devolutions showed that no new polity could use the traditional FPTP electoral system. Second, once these arenas were created, they started to produce alternative results to UK general elections with the FPTP system. Therefore, the legitimacy of the FPTP electoral system suffered remarkably after the late 1990s.

The threshold theory (H_3), however, wants to focus only on the primary legislative arena (the parliamentary arena.) In this case there were two cases when a potential electoral system reform was on the agenda (although it was still very limited): the Jenkins Commission and the AV referendum. I think that the Jenkins Commission was only a superficial response to previous Labour manifesto promises about electoral system change. Since its final recommendation was the AV system, here I do not want to talk about the Jenkins Commission's findings in more detail. I argue that the 2011 AV referendum somewhat incorporates the arguments of the Jenkins Commission, too (Dunleavy & Margetts, 1999; McLean, 1999). So, when I talk about the 2011 AV referendum, I also talk about the recommendations of the Jenkins Commission.

11.3.2 Case study on electoral system change – the 2011 AV referendum

The 2010 general election ended up with a hung parliament in which the Lib Dems played leverage because none of the two major parties could form a majority government without them. It was a once in a lifetime moment for the Lib Dems because it last happened in 1974. Then the coalition talks eventually failed. Now, they

wanted to grasp the opportunity and reach electoral system reform. It was vested interest of the Lib Dems because they had been kept disproportionately underrepresented at general elections under FPTP. So, one of the toughest parts of the Conservative–Lib Dem coalition talks was electoral system reform (Quinn et al., 2011). The Conservatives consequently opposed the idea of any change whilst the Lib Dems desperately wanted it.

In recent times this was the closest moment when an electoral system reform could have been reached in the parliamentary arena. However, the coalition negotiations and the eventual implementation of such reform demonstrate impressively how the threshold works *in practice*. By using Rahat and Hazan's (2011) theory I want to prove that the resilience of the Westminster party system is rather qualitative and not quantitative. Rahat and Hazan (2011) write about 'barriers to electoral system reform.' They identify seven barriers (or thresholds) before such change can happen. These thresholds are the following:

- procedural superiority of the status quo,
- political tradition,
- social structure,
- system-level rationale,
- vested interests,
- coalition politics.

They analyse each barrier separately and come to the conclusion that the seven barriers are not equally formidable. There are some of them which can be relatively easily overcome (like political tradition, social structure and system-level rationale), there are those which might delay an electoral system change (like procedural superiority of the status quo and disagreement over content), and there are major obstacles (like vested interests and coalition politics.)

In the British case, this approach has some interesting consequences. First, if Rahat and Hazan (2011) are correct, the Anglo-Saxon majority political tradition known as Westminster democracy plays only a minor role in electoral reform. Hence, they argue that the two-party path dependency is not as important as Lijphart (1984, 2012) would suggest. Second, they say that constitutional debate over the possible alternatives of

the current FPTP electoral system can only *delay* the transformation, but not stop it. Third, they argue that only vested interests and coalition politics can successfully and finally stop electoral system change. For a Westminster democracy like Britain, coalition government does not usually exist; instead, a single majority government is established. So vested interests remain the only major barrier.

I argue that Rahat and Hazan's (2011) theory is perfectly confirmed by the New Zealand electoral system change in 1993. In New Zealand a long tradition of two-partyism (the purest model of Westminster democracy) continued. Despite growing third-party vote share in the party competition, the two major parties in the party system (Nationals and Labour) had a vested interest in opposing electoral system reform. They used some delaying techniques like debating over the content and emphasizing the possible negative outcomes for New Zealand, or holding two rounds of referenda in order to confuse the New Zealand electorate. In the New Zealand case we cannot speak of a coalition government. On the contrary, the two major parties usually formed single governments. The most influential push for the two major parties to change their mind (and vested interests) was the changing *mood* in the New Zealand electorate. By debating over a possible electoral system change, the two parties *indirectly* contributed to the popularity of the idea of an electoral system change. Later, the two parties had to adapt to the changed political mood to some extent if they wanted to be popular among voters. So, eventually, the vested interests of the two parties cannot differ from the electorate's opinion in the long term. In sum, the vested interests of the major parties must be in accordance with the vested interests of the electorate.

If we examine the case of the UK, we can say the following. Political acts and decisions should play a major role in the process. The threshold for any electoral system change is hence not a matter of statistical (ENEP/ENPP) difference, instead, a matter of contingent (human) factors. (Note: here I am only talking about 'threshold,' which does not mean that ENEP/ENPP is useless at all. They have only limited impact on the threshold, however, they are very useful for other explanations like adaptational pressure (H_1).

The idea of an electoral system reform was most importantly advocated by the Lib Dems. They wanted a change from the current FPTP to a more PR system. In this

sense, the Lib Dems' 'vested interest' was *change*. However, the winner Conservatives had a completely different 'vested interest' to keep the *status quo*. Between these two parties Labour held an intermediate stance; it did not have an official party stance on the question and secured a free vote for everyone on the issue. (Note, in contrast, that in their 2010 general election manifesto they campaigned for an AV electoral system reform.) So the coalition parties' 'vested interests' concerning electoral system reform fundamentally differed. However, the Conservatives had another 'vested interest': to get into government after 13-year-long opposition (Curtice, 2013: 218). So the Conservatives had also two different 'vested interests.' The opposing interests could only have been harmonised by one solution; *compromise*. This is the moment when quantitative threshold theory ends and qualitative approach starts.

The political *compromise* which could have offered a way out of the gridlock was Alternative Vote (AV.) This electoral system was more PR than FPTP, however, still majority and very far from any mixed or PR electoral systems. In fact, AV is a preferential electoral system where voters must cast their ballots according to their preferences for *every* candidate. The winner must get more than 50% vote share. The candidate with the least support is removed and those ballots which were casted with the first preference for him/her are re-distributed according to the second, third etc. preferences. This electoral system is slightly more PR than FPTP, however, still favours large parties. Hence the AV electoral system was much more a concession for the Lib Dems than for the Conservatives. Previous calculations showed that the Lib Dems could have performed only slightly better in 2010 with the new electoral system (by roughly 23 seats) (Curtice, 2013: 217–218). Nevertheless, they expected more hung parliaments in the future and new coalitions which could eventually lead to a complete electoral system change (i.e., to Single Transferable Vote (STV), which the Lib Dems favoured the most). The AV system was therefore a necessary bad for both the Conservatives because they could not get in power without the Lib Dems and for the Lib Dems because the Conservatives did not want to grant more concessions.

The second element of this *compromise* was the way in which the AV electoral system was handled. The Conservatives and the Lib Dems agreed that a referendum would serve their interests best; it was in accordance with their previous commitments to hold more referenda and it was also a good way to split the coalition on this issue

while keeping it together on other topics. This second *compromise* hence chose direct democracy (referendum) instead of indirect democracy (parliamentary constitutional bill.) The referendum additionally offered the Conservatives opportunity to keep FPTP if they managed to convince the electorate to do so. The parliamentary way, however, did not offer them this leeway.

So this *dual compromise* (AV system and referendum) shows the qualitative nature of electoral system reform perfectly. Following Rahat and Hazan's (2011) terminology, there were three major barriers in the post-2010 UK electoral reform: (1) coalition politics, (2) vested interests and (3) disagreement over content. However, the other barriers remained less important; (4) procedural superiority of the status quo, (5) political tradition, (6) social structure, (7) system-level rationale. A fundamental conclusion derives from it: the relative irrelevance of historical, constitutional and social barriers proves that *non-actor related* factors were not crucial at the 2011 AV referendum. However, such *actor-related* factors as party interests and coalition negotiations were decisive. This difference demonstrates that the barriers before an electoral system change are eventually *behavioural* and not *systemic*. It is very similar to the New Zealand electoral reform, when contingent *human* decisions proved to be vital. The contingent nature of political decisions makes the numerical calculation of a threshold for electoral system reform scarcely possible.

The predominant part of *human* decision in an eventual electoral system change does not make *systemic* factors irrelevant. In contrast, I argue that systemic factors like the growing incongruence between the UK electoral arena and Westminster parliamentary arena give legitimate ground for contingent human decisions. In other words, *systemic* (or non-actor related) circumstances have an impact on *human* (or actor-related) decisions. In short, if adaptational pressure grows (as H_1 verified), there is more room for human contingency and mistakes, too. If the adaptational pressure is low, no such contingent situation arises in which the personal decisions of individual politicians would count so much.

The campaign during the 2011 AV referendum also proves the link between *systemic* and *human* factors. Both the 'Yes' and the 'NO' campaigns tapped into the anti-politics mood in the UK (Curtice, 2013: 221). The 'Yes' campaign argued that AV would make elections more PR and responsive to the electorate. MPs hence would

‘work harder’ and represent ordinary people better. In contrast, the ‘No’ side used anti-establishment sentiment for campaigning against AV. They said that the new preferential voting would cost 250 million pounds more because new electronic balloting devices would have to be purchased. Moreover, AV harms the ‘one person, one vote’ principle because certain (loser) ballots count several times. Finally, the FPTP could create a clear and legitimate result in opposition to the obscure and confusing AV system (Curtice, 2013: 221). That is, the ‘No’ campaign also tried to benefit from the anti-politics mood.

The interesting thing about these two campaigns is that both sides reflected *anti-establishment* sentiment. (See more about the AV referendum in Clarke et al., 2013; Lundberg & Steven, 2013; Vowles, 2013.) Hence the campaigns and the political decisions of each party did indirectly incorporate *systemic* rational. The contingent context in which the AV referendum took place was created by a systemic phenomenon (growing incongruence) and during the campaign the very same phenomenon was reflected (anti-establishment sentiment.) This is clear and convincing evidence for interdependence between *systemic* and *human* factors. Interestingly, however, *anti-establishment* sentiment did not closely follow the political and campaign logic. The anti-establishment sentiment was expressed differently in the results of the 2011 AV referendum: (1) general turnout was record low in the UK (42%) and (2) the Lib Dems were the clear losers of the results (Yes was only 32.1%.). So the electorate used the AV referendum to express their dissatisfaction with the Lib Dem governmental record (with it becoming an ‘established party.’) (See also Whiteley, Clarke, Sanders, & Stewart, 2012.) At the same time the other ‘established party’ (the Conservatives) secured a clear victory.

In sum, the situation before the 2011 AV referendum was very similar to the pre-1993 New Zealand one. Although the political process unfolded differently in the UK and New Zealand, the general patterns were similar: (1) incongruence between the parliamentary and electoral arenas was growing, (2) individual politicians tried to react to this contingent context, and (3) a referendum was used in order to react to growing public dissatisfaction (anti-establishment sentiment). In the end, New Zealand had two successful referendums, which changed the electoral system from FPTP to a mixed one. However, in the UK the referendum was not successful and the FPTP system remained. This difference supports the idea that *incongruence* is not

enough for an electoral system reform. The political context, contingency, human behaviour also play an important role in it. This heavy reliance on actor-related barriers proves that a merely quantitative approach to an electoral system reform cannot work.

11.4 VERIFICATION

On the basis of the *quantitative* and *qualitative* arguments and examining a *counter-variable (New Zealand)*, I have to reject H_3. The incongruence between the parliamentary and electoral arenas is not enough to trigger an electoral system reform. Human elements (behaviour, mistakes, momentum, contingency) play a large part in any potential electoral system change. The only thing one can say is that growing adaptational pressure (H_1) makes such change more likely. However, it is not enough alone for an electoral system change.

12 CONCLUSION

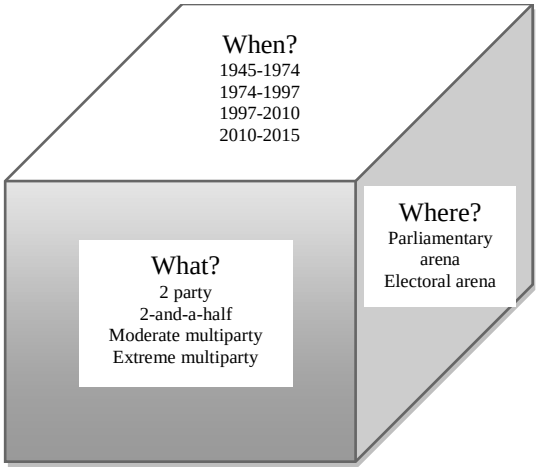
At the end of this thesis, I want to return to the original research question: *is there a split in the UK party system?* In other words, what is the UK party system like today? How did it evolve during the last half-century?

In order to answer this question, I carried out the following research. First, I called attention to the anomalies experienced in British politics recently. Since these anomalies cannot be explained by the tradition of Westminster democracy, I needed a new explanation which would better reflect changes in British politics. For this I compared four critical junctures in the evolution of British party politics after the Second World War. They each had a lasting effect on the patterns of UK party interaction. The first critical juncture was the 1945 general election, which established two-partyism. The second critical juncture was the 1974 February and October general elections, which introduced pluralisation. The third critical juncture was the 1997 general election, which further contributed to pluralisation whilst it was also a return to classic two-party politics in Westminster. Hence, there remained very high, yet latent incongruence in the UK party system. And the fourth critical juncture happened in 2010–15, when the previously latent (and implicit) incongruence became visible (and explicit.) All these four critical junctures were discussed separately with the same structural analysis. Once these separate findings were ready, I looked for regularities and overlap in these four critical junctures. In this comparative way I could figure out that the two most important endeavours of change in British party politics were pluralisation and valance. Pluralisation means that 'third parties' are increasingly popular in Britain for the detriment of the two major parties (Conservatives and Labour). And valence means that this sort of pluralisation can be tempered by the expertise of major parties in the electorate. Therefore, pluralisation and valence have rather antagonistic relationship. Pluralisation acts against the two major parties for the benefit of third parties. However, valance politics acts against third parties for the benefit of major parties. Finally, I went back to the three original hypotheses which I set up at the beginning. Here I could conclude the following: (H_1) pluralisation is indeed a long-term trend in British party politics; (H_2) pluralisation could slow down

when the two major parties went into a polarized ideological party competition; and (H_3) pluralisation was not enough to trigger an electoral system change because the additional momentum (or pace) of contingent events lacked. In sum, these three hypotheses helped me with answering the research question. There is a certain *split in the UK party system.*

This *split in the UK party system*, however, can be perceived in different ways. In order to understand it in a systemic way, I use my original concept of party system. It stated that a party system can be observed in a three-dimensional way. It has a *typological*, *temporal* and *spatial* aspect. The *typological* aspect puts the party system into a category according to the patterns of inter-party competition. However, this categorisation is rather limited in both time and space. The typological approach is quite general. It says that the UK party system belongs to a certain type of party system without sophisticating the picture. The *temporal* aspect, however, calls attention to the potential change in the patterns of party interaction. It emphasises the importance of time in any categorisation of party systems. Finally, the *spatial* aspect emphasises the importance of the different arenas of party system. It says that the UK party system can barely be understood in one general (or restricted) arena. Instead, it offers various arenas for party system. Therefore, investigating the split in the UK party system should take into consideration these three aspects; there should indeed be

Figure 34 The UK party system in 3 dimensions (typology in time and space)



The evolution of British party politics in this three-dimensional way can be demonstrated by using Mainwaring and Scully's (1995) and Siaroff's (2000)

methodological framework. These authors offered a method to link the continuous ENEP/ENPP index values to discrete party system categories. Thus, this method could unite the discrete party system categories (typology) with time (electoral years) and space (parliamentary and electoral arenas), too. I think therefore that the split in the UK party system can be further illustrated by these methods.

Mainwaring and Scully (1995: 31–32) use quite a simple technique to link ENEP/ENPP values with party system typology. They use empirical ENEP/ENPP data from different South American countries, on the one hand, and they classify these values into different typology categories, on the other hand. That is, they say that ENEP/ENPP values until 1.7 suggest a predominant party system, between 1.8 and 2.4 a two-party system, between 2.5 and 2.9 a two-and-a-half party system, between 3.0 and 3.9 limited pluralism, and above 4.0 extreme pluralism.

Siaroff (2000) also offers a method to link ENEP/ENPP values with typology categories. However, he follows opposite logic to that of Mainwaring and Scully (1995: 31–32). First, Siaroff (2000) creates his own party system typology based on Sartori's (1976) work. Then he classifies each party system examined into a category according to its qualitative conditions. Finally, he calculates a *mean number* of ENPP in every party system category. Hence, he gets a mean ENPP for each typology category. This method results in a typology as shown by Table 34 below.

Table 34 Siaroff 's (2000: 72) party system typology and ENPP values

Type of party system (Siaroff's typology)	**Mean ENPP**
1. two-party systems	1.92
2. two-and-a-half-party systems	2.56
3. moderate multiparty systems with one dominant party	2.95
4. moderate multiparty systems with two main parties	3.17
5. moderate multiparty systems with a balance among the parties	3.69
6. extreme multiparty systems with one dominant party	3.96
7. extreme multiparty systems with two main parties	4.41
8. extreme multiparty systems with a balance among the parties[18]	5.56

Both Mainwaring and Scully (1995) and Siaroff (2000) manage to reconcile the continuous index values with discrete party system categories. However, Siaroff

[18] Later, Siaroff (2006: 6) added a 9th (zero) category called imbalanced two-party system, which consists of those two-party systems which have one hegemonic party in fair competitive circumstances.

(2000) uses more party system categories (eight categories) than Mainwaring and Scully (1995) (five categories). If I want to compare these two works, first I have to merge Siaroff's (2000) certain categories. I think the three moderate multiparty categories, on the one hand, and the three extreme multi-party categories, on the other hand, can be merged . Second, I have to calculate threshold values from the mean ENPP values. (I do this by halving the distance between the mean ENPP values of two consecutive categories.) Now, I can already compare Siaroff's (2000) and Mainwaring and Scully's (1995) typologies. See the comparison of the two typologies in Table 35 below.

Table 35 Comparing Siaroff's (2000) and Mainwaring and Scully's (1995) typology thresholds

Modified Siaroff (2000)			**Mainwaring and Scully (1995)**		
	Min	Max		Min	Max
			predominant		1.79
two-party		2.24	two-party	1.8	2.49
two-and-a-half	2.24	2.76	two-and-a-half	2.5	2.99
moderate multiparty	2.76	3.83	limited pluralism	3	3.99
extreme multiparty	3.83		extreme pluralism	4	

What we can see in Table 35 is that both Siaroff's (2000) and Mainwaring and Scully's (1995) method conclude very similar ENEP/ENPP threshold values for the same party system categories. For instance, Mainwaring and Scully's (1995) limited pluralism (3.0–4.0) is very close to Siaroff's (2000) merged moderate multi-party category (2.76–3.83). Usually, Mainwaring and Scully's (1995) values are a little bit higher than Siaroff's (2000), but are still very close. (Again, Siaroff's (2000) threshold is my own artificial calculation. It was not part of his argument. I just used his mean ENPP values for calculating the thresholds.)

The benefit of using Siaroff's (2000) and Mainwaring and Scully's (1995) categorisations becomes evident when it comes to the three dimensions of UK party system. Their methods use all the three dimensions of my concept of UK party system; there are discrete typologies in different electoral years in different arenas. If I place the British ENEP/ENPP values between 1945 and 2015 into the same analytical framework, I get the following Table 36.

Table 36 The classification of UK party system according to ENEP/ENPP values

Year	Classification by modified Siaroff(2000)		Classification by Mainwaring and Scully (1995)	
	ENEP	ENPP	ENEP	ENPP
1945	two-and-a-half	two-party	two-and-a-half	two-party
1950	two-and-a-half	two-party	two-party	two-party
1951	two-party	two-party	two-party	two-party
1955	two-party	two-party	two-party	two-party
1959	two-and-a-half	two-party	two-party	two-party
1964	two-and-a-half	two-party	two-and-a-half	two-party
1966	two-and-a-half	two-party	two-party	two-party
1970	two-and-a-half	two-party	two-party	two-party
1974feb	moderate multiparty	two-and-a-half	limited pluralism	two-party
1974oct	moderate multiparty	two-and-a-half	limited pluralism	two-party
1979	moderate multiparty	two-party	two-and-a-half	two-party
1983	moderate multiparty	two-party	limited pluralism	two-party
1987	moderate multiparty	two-party	limited pluralism	two-party
1992	moderate multiparty	two-and-a-half	limited pluralism	two-party
1997	moderate multiparty	two-party	limited pluralism	two-party
2001	moderate multiparty	two-party	limited pluralism	two-party
2005	moderate multiparty	two-and-a-half	limited pluralism	two-party
2010	moderate multiparty	two-and-a-half	limited pluralism	two-and-a-half
2015	extreme multiparty	two-and-a-half	limited pluralism	two-and-a-half

In Table 36, one can see how the UK party system changed its classifications over time. As the ENEP index had intuitively suggested, the UK party competition is moving from two-partyism to multi-partyism in the electoral arena (‘moderate/extreme multiparty’ for Siaroff (2000) and ‘limited pluralism’ for Mainwaring and Scully (1995)). At the same time, the stagnating ENPP index produces a two- or a two-and-a-half party system in the parliamentary arena. So this table underlines the theory of a split in the UK party system. It confirms that in 1945 both the parliamentary and electoral arenas could be classified as two- or two-and-a-half party system. Nevertheless, in 2015 the split between the electoral and parliamentary arenas became major; a certain kind of multi-party system was functioning in the electoral arena whilst the parliamentary arena had just a two-and-a-half party system.

If we take a look at Table 36, it is visible how the UK party system changed over time. It is also visible that the four critical junctures indeed changed the patterns of UK

party competition. Hence, we can conclude that the split in the UK party system appeared in four periods:

1. The first period between 1945 and 1974 was the ‘golden era’ of two-party politics. Then, both the electoral and parliamentary arenas almost perfectly overlapped each other. Thus, the incongruence was quite small. This small incongruence was further confirmed by the centripetal dynamics of party competition. Both major parties had reached consensus over welfare economics (also known as the ‘post-war consensus’).
2. The second period between 1974 and 1997 introduced pluralisation. Then the incongruence between the electoral and parliamentary arenas started to increase. Thus, the incongruence became significant between the parliamentary and electoral arenas. However, the dynamics of party competition was usually polarized. So pluralisation co-existed with polarisation.
3. The third period between 1997 and 2010 meant the continuation of pluralisation. So the incongruence continued rising. However, this incongruence was different from that of the 1974–1997 period because the dynamics of party competition changed to a consensual one. So pluralisation co-existed with consensual politics.
4. The fourth period in 2010 and 2015 made the impacts of latent pluralisation explicit. Incongruence reached a record high level. And this phenomenon also questioned the validity of two-party consensus politics in the form of anti-establishment sentiment. This period is hence similar to the 1974–1997 one, however, it is rather different regarding the level of pluralisation. The very high level of pluralisation, on the one hand, and the centripetal two-party politics, on the other hand, gave sufficient grounds for more radical anti-establishment feelings than in the 1970s.

So now we can finally assess the nature of the split in the UK party system.

It can surely be concluded that the split in the UK party system mainly appears in the incongruence between the two arenas of British party system. The parliamentary and electoral arenas diverged from each other in the last half-century. Thus, the split in the UK party system necessarily has a spatial dimension. Nevertheless, this split also had different emphasis over time. The temporal dimension suggests that the split in the

UK party system has been growing. In the 1950s, the split in the UK party system was almost non-existent. However, in 2015, the split in the UK party system was one of the deepest in the world (and certainly in Europe). This temporal dimension reflects that pluralisation is a long-term trend in British party politics. Though this stable trend had some setbacks, it has continuously characterized British politics since the 1970s. Finally, the typology dimension helps us to grasp the split in the UK party system. Although fragmentation indices like ENEP/ENPP provide a good description of party system change in Britain, the discrete typologies make it more visible. This typology dimension suggests that party system change has been gradually going on in the electoral arena, however, it is less obvious in the parliamentary arena. For instance, in Table 36 we can see that, according to Siaroff's (2000) modified thresholds, the UK party system changed in the electoral arena (ENEP) at least four times: from two-and-a-half-party system to two-party system in 1951, from two-party system to two-and-a-half-party system in 1959, from two-and-a-half-party system to moderate multi-party system in 1974, and from moderate multi-party system to extreme multi-party system in 2015. Meanwhile, the UK party system remained quite stable around the two-party system and the two-and-a-half party system. In Table 36, Mainwaring and Scully's (1995) categorization leads to similar conclusions. Their thresholds suggest that the UK party system in the electoral arena was a two-party system and two-and-a-half-party system until 1974. However, the 1974 general election introduced moderate pluralism in the electoral arena. At the same time, their thresholds suggest that the UK party system has *always* been a two-party system in the parliamentary arena. The first electoral year when a moderate party system change happened was in 2005 from two-party system to a two-and-a-half-party system. It is clear that a party system change has occurred in the UK. However, it has happened asymmetrically: this party system change mostly affected the electoral arena and not the parliamentary arena.

However, the gradually growing split in the UK party system can raise further questions. How far can such incongruence between the parliamentary and electoral arenas go? Is it possible for the parliamentary arena to resist any adaptational pressure coming from the pluralized electoral arena? Does it mean that the adaptational pressure will enforce an electoral system change sooner or later? Well, I think my hypotheses can be used to answer these hypothetical questions, as well.

First, I think the split in the UK party system can go quite far. Particularly, H_2 (polarisation) and H_3 (momentum) have proved that the parliamentary arena can successfully resist adaptational pressures from the electoral arena. It means that the polarisation of two-party competition can reduce the pace of pluralisation. The lack of momentum of contingent events can also reduce such adaptational pressures. In other words, the status quo guarantees a positional advantage for the parliamentary arena against the electoral arena. If we compare the UK party system with New Zealand's party system prior to 1993, it can be seen that the UK's split in the party system is already much deeper than New Zealand's in the late 1980s. It suggests that the resilience of the UK parliamentary arena is particularly strong. The mere fact that any UK electoral system change at general elections has previously failed can demonstrate that the UK party system is quite strong in spite of the high incongruence between the different arenas. So the strength of the UK party system contributes to the idea that the split in the UK party system can exist quite long.

Table 37 below shows the resilience of the UK party system in a dynamic and comparative way. As H_1 confirmed, we can expect a continuously rising *adaptational pressure* on the parliamentary arena (first column.) However, this adaptational pressure is not enough for an electoral system change. If the two major parties have a *polarized* party competition, the adaptational pressure (and pluralisation) may slow down. It has been verified by H_2. So electoral system change is more likely if adaptational pressure is high and two-party polarisation is low. Nevertheless, these two criteria are not sufficient for an electoral system change. A further third one is needed: the *momentum* of contingent events. It has been proved by H_3. Therefore, electoral system change likely happens if there is a constellation of three different variables: adaptational pressure is high, polarisation is low and momentum is high. If one of these variables is not involved, electoral system change becomes less likely. This is the reason why I think resilience is more probable. In brief, the resilience of the parliamentary arena against the pluralizing electoral arena is more probable than adaptation. I think this is partly the reason why there has not been an electoral system change in the UK (at general elections) until today.

Table 37 Resilience or Adaptation outcomes

Adaptational pressure (H_1)	**Polarisation (H_2)**	**Momentum (H_3)**	**Outcome**

High	Low	Low	Resilience
High	**Low**	**High**	**Adaptation**
High	High	Low	Resilience
High	High	High	Resilience

In my opinion, the post-2010 period perfectly illustrates the findings of this table. In the 2010s the adaptational pressure was very high. ENEP reached 3.71 in 2010 and 3.93 in 2015, however, ENPP still lagged behind it with 2.57 and 2.54. In addition to this high adaptational pressure, there was a further constellation of unexpected events (e.g., coalition government, AV referendum, Scottish independence referendum, UKIP's EP victory), which favoured party system change. However, due to the polarisation of the two-party politics in Westminster (firstly, by David Cameron's abandonment of Big Society, and secondly, by Jeremy Corbyn's and Theresa May's polarized campaign in 2017), the adaptational pressure significantly diminished. In 2017, the two-party combined vote share reached 82.4% again and ENEP fell from 3.93 to 2.84. Therefore resilience occurred even if both adaptational pressure and momentum were initially high. We can see that, after 2010, first the *status quo* preserved the party system and then *polarisation* further strengthened it. So resilience occurred.

This thesis was intended to be *analytical* rather than *normative*. Nevertheless, at some point, I must make some normative conclusions as well. There is a somewhat hidden opinion that the current Westminster party system is outdated and it can often produce rather undemocratic results caused by the first-past-the-post electoral system. It also suggests that a PR or mixed electoral system would easily create better congruence between the parliamentary and electoral arenas and hence the legitimacy of the whole UK polity might increase. Nevertheless, there are clear examples which attest the opposite; the electoral system change in New Zealand might have contributed to reducing incongruence, however, other problems appeared. For instance, the New Zealand party system became over-fragmented; there were no single governments, instead, coalition governments acted in a disunited way, small parties played king-maker positions (New Zealand First Party) and electoral volatility skyrocketed. This caused so much upset and apathy about the new party system in New Zealand that even the re-introduction of the Westminster system was reconsidered at some point. Otherwise, in the UK, the new electoral systems of the PR EP elections and the mixed

devolved elections attest to some similar phenomena; electoral volatility jumped, fragmentation deepened and single governments were more difficult to form (i.e,. Scotland, Wales.) So the normative expectation that a better incongruence would be better for democracy is not necessarily true. (Please see also Nagy (2016.)) It might be so, but the opposite could also happen. So the current electoral system has some clear *benefits* besides its obvious weaknesses: it is a simple system, there are usually single governments which can easily be brought to account and it has a long historical record, which further contributes to its stability.

Finally, I can sum up the dissertation in the following way. Although there is a split in the UK party system, the resilience of the parliamentary arena against the electoral arena is more likely in the long run than adaptation. I proved it with scientific methods and hypotheses. I also offered some normative argument that this split can be reduced by keeping the current party system. I think the lack of congruence is only partially caused by the institutional framework (i.e,. party system, electoral system, laws.) Another important cause is the attitude of politicians in a party system. If politicians in a party system intend to be more responsive to the electorate, either a two-party system or a multi-party system can suit the purpose. In such cases responsiveness can be either delivered through different platforms in a two-party system or through different individual parties in a multi-party system. Therefore, I think that the intention of politicians to become more responsive to the UK electorate is crucial. This conclusion is very promising, by the way. It suggests that UK party politics can become more responsive without revolutionary reforms. It is in harmony with the British traditions of life: "*combining the best of the old with the best of the new*" (Lindsay, 2018).

13 APPENDIX – DATA

UK general elections vote shares with my own calculations

Data source: Commons, Briefing Papers CBP-7529 (2017)

	CON	LAB	LD	PC/SNP	Other	Third parties (PC/SNP +Other)	CON+LAB	Abs Diff(Con-Lab) vote share	ABS Diff(Con-Lab) seat share	(Abs Diff(Con-Lab) seat share)/(Abs Diff(Con-Lab) voteshare)	Rae index	ENEP	Electoral Volatility (Pedersen)	(Con+Lab) electoral volatility	3rd parties electoral volatility	Electoral volatility Diff((Con+Lab)-(3rd parties))
1918	38.4%	20.8%	25.8%		14.9%	40.8%	59.2%	17.6%	46.0%	2.61	0.72	3.57				
1922	38.2%	29.4%	28.8%		3.6%	32.3%	67.7%	8.8%	32.8%	3.74	0.68	3.16	11.56%	4.41%	7.16%	-2.75%
1923	37.9%	30.5%	29.6%		2.0%	31.6%	68.4%	7.4%	10.9%	1.47	0.68	3.08	1.88%	0.70%	1.18%	-0.48%
1924	47.2%	33.0%	17.6%		2.2%	19.8%	80.2%	14.2%	42.4%	2.99	0.64	2.75	11.97%	5.88%	6.09%	-0.20%
1929	38.2%	37.0%	23.4%	0.0%	1.4%	24.8%	75.2%	1.3%	4.4%	3.48	0.66	2.96	9.83%	6.48%	3.35%	3.12%
1931	60.8%	30.7%	6.8%	0.1%	1.6%	8.5%	91.5%	30.0%	76.4%	2.54	0.53	2.14	22.88%	14.39%	8.48%	5.91%
1935	53.5%	37.9%	6.6%	0.1%	2.0%	8.7%	91.3%	15.6%	44.7%	2.87	0.57	2.30	7.54%	7.22%	0.31%	6.91%
1945	39.7%	47.7%	9.0%	0.2%	3.4%	12.6%	87.4%	8.0%	28.6%	3.60	0.61	2.53	13.73%	11.78%	1.95%	9.82%
1950	43.3%	46.1%	9.1%	0.1%	1.4%	10.6%	89.4%	2.8%	2.7%	0.98	0.59	2.45	3.73%	2.59%	1.14%	1.44%
1951	48.0%	48.8%	2.6%	0.1%	0.6%	3.3%	96.7%	0.8%	4.2%	5.16	0.53	2.13	7.31%	3.65%	3.65%	0.00%
1955	49.6%	46.4%	2.7%	0.2%	1.1%	4.0%	96.0%	3.3%	10.8%	3.28	0.54	2.16	2.42%	2.05%	0.37%	1.68%
1959	49.4%	43.8%	5.9%	0.4%	0.6%	6.8%	93.2%	5.5%	17.0%	3.08	0.56	2.28	3.33%	1.40%	1.93%	-0.52%
1964	43.3%	44.1%	11.2%	0.5%	0.9%	12.5%	87.5%	0.8%	2.1%	2.54	0.60	2.53	6.03%	3.16%	2.87%	0.29%
1966	41.9%	47.9%	8.5%	0.7%	1.0%	10.2%	89.8%	6.0%	17.6%	2.92	0.59	2.42	4.11%	2.62%	1.49%	1.12%
1970	46.4%	43.0%	7.5%	1.7%	1.5%	10.7%	89.3%	3.4%	6.7%	1.96	0.59	2.46	6.02%	4.73%	1.30%	3.43%
1974Feb	37.8%	37.2%	19.3%	2.6%	3.2%	25.1%	74.9%	0.6%	0.6%	1.05	0.68	3.13	14.43%	7.21%	7.21%	0.00%
1974Oct	35.7%	39.3%	18.3%	3.4%	3.3%	25.0%	75.0%	3.5%	6.6%	1.87	0.68	3.15	3.05%	2.06%	0.99%	1.08%
1979	43.9%	36.9%	13.8%	2.0%	3.4%	19.3%	80.7%	7.0%	11.0%	1.57	0.65	2.87	8.31%	5.28%	3.03%	2.24%
1983	42.4%	27.6%	25.4%	1.5%	3.1%	30.0%	70.0%	14.9%	28.9%	1.95	0.68	3.11	11.55%	5.36%	6.19%	-0.83%
1987	42.2%	30.8%	22.6%	1.7%	2.7%	26.9%	73.1%	11.4%	22.6%	1.98	0.67	3.07	3.43%	1.73%	1.70%	0.03%
1992	41.9%	34.4%	17.8%	2.3%	3.5%	23.7%	76.3%	7.5%	10.0%	1.33	0.67	3.05	5.02%	1.93%	3.09%	-1.16%
1997	30.7%	43.2%	16.8%	2.5%	6.8%	26.1%	73.9%	12.5%	38.4%	3.07	0.69	3.18	12.33%	10.03%	2.30%	7.73%
2001	31.6%	40.7%	18.3%	1.8%	7.7%	27.7%	72.3%	9.1%	37.3%	4.12	0.70	3.28	3.27%	1.73%	1.54%	0.19%
2005	32.4%	35.2%	22.0%	2.2%	8.2%	32.5%	67.5%	2.8%	24.3%	8.60	0.72	3.52	5.49%	3.11%	2.38%	0.74%
2010	36.1%	29.0%	23.0%	2.2%	9.7%	35.0%	65.0%	7.1%	7.4%	1.05	0.72	3.61	6.20%	4.95%	1.25%	3.70%
2015	36.8%	30.4%	7.9%	5.3%	19.6%	32.8%	67.2%	6.4%	15.1%	2.36	0.72	3.63	15.13%	1.08%	14.05%	-12.97%

Please note that this dataset uses the combined category of 'Other parties.' This method implies lower ENEP values than my or Gallagher's detailed calculations. Please see Gallagher's calculations later

UK general elections seat share and my own calculations

Data source: Commons, Briefing Papers CBP-7529 (2017)

	CON	LAB	LD	PC/SNP	Other	Third parties (PC/SNP +Other)	CON+LAB	Abs Diff(Con-Lab) vote share	ABS Diff(Con-Lab) seat share	(Abs Diff(Con-Lab) seat share)/(Abs Diff(Con-Lab)	Rae index	ENPP	Parliamentary Volatility (Pedersen)	(Con+Lab) parliamentary volatility	3rd parties parliamentary volatility	Parliamentary volatility Diff((Con+Lab)-(3rd parties))
1918	54.0%	8.1%	23.1%		14.9%	37.9%	62.1%	23.1%	46.0%	1.99	0.63	2.68				
1922	55.9%	23.1%	18.7%		2.3%	21.0%	79.0%	18.7%	32.8%	1.76	0.60	2.49	16.93%	8.47%	8.47%	0.00%
1923	42.0%	31.1%	25.7%		1.3%	27.0%	73.0%	25.7%	10.9%	0.42	0.66	2.95	14.96%	10.98%	3.98%	6.99%
1924	67.0%	24.6%	6.5%		2.0%	8.5%	91.5%	6.5%	42.4%	6.53	0.49	1.95	25.69%	15.77%	9.92%	5.85%
1929	42.3%	46.7%	9.6%	0.0%	1.5%	11.1%	88.9%	9.6%	4.4%	0.46	0.59	2.46	25.20%	23.41%	1.79%	21.63%
1931	84.9%	8.5%	5.9%	0.0%	0.8%	6.7%	93.3%	5.9%	76.4%	13.06	0.27	1.37	42.60%	40.41%	2.20%	38.21%
1935	69.8%	25.0%	3.4%	0.0%	1.8%	5.2%	94.8%	3.4%	44.7%	13.10	0.45	1.82	17.56%	15.85%	1.71%	14.15%
1945	32.8%	61.4%	1.9%	0.0%	3.9%	5.8%	94.2%	1.9%	28.6%	15.25	0.51	2.06	38.48%	36.65%	1.83%	34.83%
1950	47.7%	50.4%	1.4%	0.0%	0.5%	1.9%	98.1%	1.4%	2.7%	1.89	0.52	2.08	14.87%	12.94%	1.93%	11.01%
1951	51.4%	47.2%	1.0%	0.0%	0.5%	1.4%	98.6%	1.0%	4.2%	4.33	0.51	2.05	3.68%	3.44%	0.24%	3.20%
1955	54.8%	44.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.3%	1.3%	98.7%	1.0%	10.8%	11.33	0.51	2.03	3.40%	3.32%	0.09%	3.23%
1959	57.9%	41.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.2%	1.1%	98.9%	1.0%	17.0%	17.83	0.50	1.99	3.17%	3.10%	0.08%	3.02%
1964	48.3%	50.3%	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	98.6%	1.4%	2.1%	1.44	0.51	2.06	9.84%	9.52%	0.32%	9.21%
1966	40.2%	57.8%	1.9%	0.0%	0.2%	2.1%	97.9%	1.9%	17.6%	9.25	0.50	2.02	8.10%	7.78%	0.32%	7.46%
1970	52.4%	45.7%	1.0%	0.2%	0.8%	1.9%	98.1%	0.8%	6.7%	8.40	0.52	2.07	13.02%	12.14%	0.87%	11.27%
1974Feb	46.8%	47.4%	2.2%	1.4%	2.2%	5.8%	94.2%	0.8%	0.6%	0.80	0.56	2.25	5.61%	3.65%	1.96%	1.69%
1974Oct	43.6%	50.2%	2.0%	2.2%	1.9%	6.1%	93.9%	0.2%	6.6%	42.00	0.56	2.25	3.62%	2.99%	0.63%	2.36%
1979	53.4%	42.4%	1.7%	0.6%	1.9%	4.3%	95.7%	1.1%	11.0%	10.00	0.53	2.15	9.76%	8.82%	0.94%	7.87%
1983	61.1%	32.2%	3.5%	0.6%	2.6%	6.8%	93.2%	2.9%	28.9%	9.89	0.52	2.09	10.22%	8.95%	1.27%	7.68%
1987	57.8%	35.2%	3.4%	0.9%	2.6%	6.9%	93.1%	2.5%	22.6%	9.19	0.54	2.17	3.38%	3.15%	0.23%	2.92%
1992	51.6%	41.6%	3.1%	1.1%	2.6%	6.8%	93.2%	2.0%	10.0%	5.00	0.56	2.27	6.55%	6.32%	0.23%	6.08%
1997	25.0%	63.4%	7.0%	1.5%	3.0%	11.5%	88.5%	5.5%	38.4%	7.03	0.53	2.12	26.57%	24.19%	2.39%	21.80%
2001	25.2%	62.5%	7.9%	1.4%	3.0%	12.3%	87.7%	6.5%	37.3%	5.72	0.54	2.17	1.06%	0.53%	0.53%	0.00%
2005	30.7%	55.0%	9.6%	1.4%	3.4%	14.4%	85.6%	8.2%	24.3%	2.96	0.59	2.46	7.57%	6.51%	1.05%	5.46%
2010	47.1%	39.7%	8.8%	1.4%	3.1%	13.2%	86.8%	7.4%	7.4%	1.00	0.61	2.58	16.43%	15.84%	0.58%	15.26%
2015	50.8%	35.7%	1.2%	9.1%	3.2%	13.5%	86.5%	7.8%	15.1%	1.92	0.61	2.53	29.38%	3.85%	7.69%	-3.85%

UK general elections votes (in million) and my own calculations

Data source: Commons, Briefing Papers CBP-7529 (2017)

	CON	LAB	LD	PC/SNP	Other	Third parties (PC/SNP +Other)	Total Vote	Turnout (%) UK	Abstention %	Electorate	Con votes/Electorate	Lab votes/Electorate	(CON+LAB votes)/Electorate	Third partie/Electorate	Con electorale vote share change since 1945 (%point)	Lab electorale vote share change since 1945 (%point)
1918	4.14	2.25	2.79		1.61	4.40	10.79	57.2%	42.8%	18.86	21.98%	11.91%	33.88%	23.32%		
1922	5.50	4.24	4.14		0.51	4.65	14.39	73.0%	27.0%	19.72	27.91%	21.49%	49.40%	23.60%		
1923	5.51	4.44	4.30		0.29	4.59	14.55	71.1%	28.9%	20.46	26.95%	21.70%	48.65%	22.45%		
1924	7.85	5.49	2.93		0.37	3.30	16.64	77.0%	23.0%	21.61	36.35%	25.40%	61.75%	15.25%		
1929	8.66	8.37	5.31	0.00	0.31	5.62	22.65	76.3%	23.7%	29.68	29.16%	28.20%	57.36%	18.94%		
1931	13.16	6.65	1.48	0.02	0.35	1.85	21.66	76.4%	23.6%	28.35	46.41%	23.46%	69.87%	6.53%		
1935	11.76	8.33	1.44	0.03	0.43	1.91	22.00	71.1%	28.9%	30.94	38.00%	26.91%	64.91%	6.16%		
1945	9.97	11.97	2.25	0.05	0.86	3.16	25.10	72.8%	27.2%	34.47	28.93%	34.72%	63.65%	9.15%	0.0%	0.0%
1950	12.47	13.27	2.62	0.03	0.39	3.04	28.77	83.9%	16.1%	34.29	36.36%	38.69%	75.04%	8.86%	-2.5%	4.2%
1951	13.72	13.95	0.73	0.02	0.18	0.93	28.60	82.6%	17.4%	34.62	39.62%	40.29%	79.92%	2.68%	0.8%	5.8%
1955	13.29	12.41	0.72	0.06	0.29	1.07	26.76	76.8%	23.2%	34.84	38.13%	35.60%	73.73%	3.07%	-0.7%	1.1%
1959	13.75	12.22	1.64	0.10	0.16	1.90	27.86	78.7%	21.3%	35.40	38.84%	34.51%	73.35%	5.35%	0.0%	0.0%
1964	11.98	12.21	3.10	0.13	0.24	3.47	27.66	77.1%	22.9%	35.87	33.40%	34.03%	67.43%	9.67%	-5.4%	-0.5%
1966	11.42	13.07	2.33	0.19	0.26	2.78	27.26	75.8%	24.2%	35.97	31.74%	36.33%	68.07%	7.73%	-7.1%	1.8%
1970	13.15	12.18	2.12	0.48	0.42	3.02	28.34	72.0%	28.0%	39.37	33.39%	30.94%	64.33%	7.67%	-5.4%	-3.6%
1974Feb	11.83	11.65	6.06	0.80	1.00	7.86	31.34	78.8%	21.2%	39.77	29.75%	29.28%	59.04%	19.76%	-9.1%	-5.2%
1974Oct	10.43	11.46	5.35	1.01	0.95	7.31	29.19	72.8%	27.2%	40.09	26.01%	28.57%	54.58%	18.22%	-12.8%	-5.9%
1979	13.70	11.51	4.31	0.64	1.07	6.02	31.22	76.0%	24.0%	41.08	33.34%	28.01%	61.35%	14.65%	-5.5%	-6.5%
1983	13.01	8.46	7.78	0.46	0.96	9.20	30.67	72.7%	27.3%	42.19	30.84%	20.05%	50.89%	21.81%	-8.0%	-14.5%
1987	13.74	10.03	7.34	0.54	0.88	8.76	32.53	75.3%	24.7%	43.20	31.80%	23.22%	55.01%	20.29%	-7.0%	-11.3%
1992	14.09	11.56	6.00	0.78	1.18	7.96	33.61	77.7%	22.3%	43.26	32.58%	26.72%	59.30%	18.40%	-6.3%	-7.8%
1997	9.60	13.52	5.24	0.78	2.14	8.17	31.29	71.4%	28.6%	43.82	21.91%	30.85%	52.76%	18.64%	-16.9%	-3.7%
2001	8.34	10.72	4.81	0.46	2.03	7.30	26.37	59.4%	40.6%	44.39	18.78%	24.16%	42.94%	16.46%	-20.1%	-10.3%
2005	8.78	9.55	5.99	0.59	2.24	8.81	27.15	61.4%	38.6%	44.22	19.87%	21.60%	41.47%	19.93%	-19.0%	-12.9%
2010	10.70	8.61	6.84	0.66	2.88	10.38	29.69	65.1%	34.9%	45.60	23.47%	18.87%	42.34%	22.76%	-15.4%	-15.6%
2015	11.30	9.35	2.42	1.64	6.00	10.05	30.70	66.2%	33.8%	46.37	24.37%	20.16%	44.53%	21.67%	-14.5%	-14.3%

European Parliament election results and my own calculations								
Data source: Commons, Briefing Papers CBP-7529 (2017)								
	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999	2004	2009	2014
Great Britain (votes)								
Conservative	6,508,493	5,426,821	5,331,098	4,268,539	3,578,203	4,397,087	4,198,664	3,788,405
Labour	4,253,207	4,865,261	6,153,661	6,753,881	2,803,820	3,718,683	2,381,760	4,020,646
Liberal Democrat [1]	1,691,531	2,591,635	944,861	2,557,887	1,266,549	2,452,327	2,080,613	1,087,632
UKIP				150,251	696,055	2,660,768	2,498,226	4,352,051
Scottish National	247,836	230,594	406,686	487,237	268,528	231,505	321,007	389,503
Plaid Cymru	83,399	103,031	115,062	162,478	185,235	159,888	126,702	111,864
Green [2]	17,953	70,853	2,292,718	494,561	625,378	1,028,283	1,303,745	1,244,975
BNP					102,644	808,201	943,598	179,694
Other	71,433	24,678	117,181	417,888	475,841	1,001,861	1,282,887	654,054
Total	**12,873,852**	**13,312,873**	**15,361,267**	**15,292,722**	**10,002,253**	**16,458,603**	**15,137,202**	**15,828,824**
Great Britain (vote share)								
Conservative	50.56%	40.76%	34.70%	27.91%	35.77%	26.72%	27.74%	23.93%
Labour	33.04%	36.55%	40.06%	44.16%	28.03%	22.59%	15.73%	25.40%
Liberal Democrat [1]	13.14%	19.47%	6.15%	16.73%	12.66%	14.90%	13.75%	6.87%
UKIP				0.98%	6.96%	16.17%	16.50%	27.49%
Scottish National	1.93%	1.73%	2.65%	3.19%	1.85%	1.41%	2.12%	2.46%
Plaid Cymru	0.65%	0.77%	0.75%	1.06%	2.68%	0.97%	0.84%	0.71%
Green [2]	0.14%	0.53%	14.93%	3.23%	6.25%	6.25%	8.61%	7.87%
BNP					1.03%	4.91%	6.23%	1.14%
Other	0.55%	0.19%	0.76%	2.73%	4.76%	6.09%	8.48%	4.13%
Turnout	**32.08%**	**32.13%**	**36.51%**	**36.16%**	**23.12%**	**38.20%**	**34.27%**	**34.98%**
ENEP	**2.61**	**2.96**	**3.25**	**3.29**	**4.26**	**5.52**	**5.99**	**4.74**
ENPP	**1.56**	**1.99**	**1.99**	**1.69**	**3.12**	**4.06**	**4.34**	**3.62**

ENEP/ENPP values in the UK

Year	ENEP (Kaszap)	ENPP (Kaszap)	Diff (ENEP-ENPP) (Kaszap)	Diff % ((ENEP-ENPP)/ENPP) (Kaszap)	ENEP (Gallagher)	ENPP (Gallagher)	Diff % ENEP (Kaszap-Gallagher)*	Diff % ENPP (Kaszap-Gallagher)*
1945	2.78	2.04	0.74	36.52%	2.72	2.12	2.31%	-3.85%
1950	2.68	2.08	0.61	29.18%	2.44	2.08	9.93%	-0.17%
1951	2.34	2.05	0.28	13.74%	2.13	2.06	9.72%	-0.25%
1955	2.40	2.03	0.37	18.36%	2.16	2.03	11.08%	-0.14%
1959	2.50	1.99	0.51	25.85%	2.28	1.99	9.64%	-0.19%
1964	2.70	2.18	0.52	23.82%	2.53	2.06	6.75%	5.89%
1966	2.54	2.10	0.44	21.00%	2.42	2.02	4.91%	3.87%
1970	2.57	2.13	0.44	20.53%	2.46	2.07	4.46%	3.00%
1974Feb	3.14	2.26	0.88	38.96%	3.13	2.25	0.26%	0.37%
1974Oct	3.16	2.26	0.90	39.79%	3.15	2.25	0.34%	0.49%
1979	2.88	2.16	0.72	33.29%	2.87	2.15	0.19%	0.34%
1983	3.46	2.09	1.37	65.41%	3.46	2.09	0.11%	0.20%
1987	3.34	2.18	1.15	52.89%	3.33	2.17	0.25%	0.62%
1992	3.06	2.27	0.80	35.06%	3.06	2.27	0.10%	-0.09%
1997	3.23	2.13	1.10	51.69%	3.22	2.13	0.17%	-0.17%
2001	3.33	2.17	1.16	53.56%	3.33	2.17	0.06%	0.00%
2005	3.59	2.47	1.13	45.72%	3.59	2.46	0.09%	0.24%
2010	3.72	2.58	1.14	44.00%	3.71	2.57	0.24%	0.49%
2015	3.93	2.54	1.39	54.59%	3.93	2.54	0.10%	0.19%

*Diff % (ENEP)=(ENEP(Kaszap)-ENEP(Gallagher))/ENEP(Gallagher)

*Diff % (ENPP)=(ENPP(Kaszap)-ENPP(Gallagher))/ENPP(Gallagher)

Gallagher's ENEP/ENPP values in other Westminster democracies with my own calculations

Data source: Gallagher (2015)

UK					NZ					Can				
	ENEP	ENPP	Diff	**Diff %**	Year	ENEP	ENPP	Diff	**Diff %**	Year	ENEP	ENPP	Diff	**Diff %**
1945	2.72	2.12	0.60	**28.3%**	1946	2.01	2	0.05	**2.5%**	1945	3.49	2.83	0.66	**23.2%**
1950	2.44	2.08	0.36	**17.3%**	1949	2.03	1.96	0.11	**5.4%**	1949	2.78	1.80	0.98	**54.4%**
1951	2.13	2.06	0.07	**3.4%**	1951	1.99	1.88	0.09	**4.6%**	1953	2.76	2.15	0.61	**28.2%**
1955	2.16	2.03	0.13	**6.4%**	1954	2.48	1.97	0.51	**26.0%**	1957	2.88	2.86	0.02	**0.8%**
1959	2.28	1.99	0.29	**14.6%**	1957	2.3	2	0.31	**15.3%**	1958	2.43	1.54	0.89	**58.1%**
1964	2.53	2.06	0.47	**22.8%**	1960	2.37	1.96	0.41	**21.0%**	1962	3.22	2.86	0.35	**12.4%**
1966	2.42	2.02	0.40	**19.8%**	1963	2.39	1.97	0.42	**21.1%**	1963	3.19	2.65	0.54	**20.5%**
1970	2.46	2.07	0.39	**18.8%**	1966	2.61	2.02	0.59	**29.0%**	1965	3.31	2.59	0.72	**27.7%**
1974a	3.13	2.25	0.88	**39.1%**	1969	2.45	1.99	0.46	**23.1%**	1968	2.97	2.33	0.64	**27.4%**
1974b	3.15	2.25	0.90	**40.0%**	1972	2.43	1.87	0.56	**30.1%**	1972	3.25	2.84	0.41	**14.3%**
1979	2.87	2.15	0.72	**33.5%**	1975	2.56	1.87	0.69	**36.8%**	1974	2.96	2.38	0.58	**24.2%**
1983	3.46	2.09	1.37	**65.6%**	1978	2.87	2.01	0.86	**42.5%**	1979	3.09	2.47	0.62	**25.0%**
1987	3.33	2.17	1.16	**53.5%**	1981	2.9	2.08	0.81	**39.0%**	1980	2.93	2.39	0.53	**22.4%**
1992	3.06	2.27	0.79	**34.8%**	1984	2.99	1.98	0.99	**49.4%**	1984	2.74	1.69	1.05	**61.9%**
1997	3.22	2.13	1.09	**51.2%**	1987	2.34	1.94	0.4	**20.6%**	1988	3.02	2.33	0.69	**29.6%**
2001	3.33	2.17	1.16	**53.5%**	1990	2.77	1.74	0.98	**55.5%**	1993	3.92	2.35	1.57	**66.6%**
2005	3.59	2.46	1.13	**45.9%**	1993	3.52	2.16	1.36	**63.0%**	1997	4.08	2.98	1.10	**37.0%**
2010	3.71	2.57	1.14	**44.4%**	1996	4.27	3.76	0.51	**13.6%**	2000	3.77	2.54	1.23	**48.4%**
2015	3.93	2.54	1.39	**54.7%**	1999	3.86	3.45	0.41	**11.9%**	2004	3.77	3.03	0.74	**24.3%**
					2002	4.17	3.76	0.41	**10.9%**	2006	3.74	3.22	0.51	**15.9%**
					2005	3.04	2.98	0.06	**2.0%**	2008	3.84	3.15	0.69	**22.0%**
					2008	3.07	2.78	0.29	**10.4%**	2011	3.43	2.41	1.02	**42.2%**
					2011	3.15	2.98	0.17	**5.7%**	2015	3.33	2.50	0.83	**33.3%**

Cross-national ENEP comparision

Source: Gallagher (2015)

Year	ENEP_Ita	ENEP_Isr	ENEP_Ire	ENEP_Ge	ENEP_Fra	ENEP_Den	ENEP_Öst	ENEP_Malt	ENEP_Esp	ENEP_USA	ENEP_UK
1945					4.62	4.57	2.22	1.74			2.72
1946	4.68									2.04	
1947						3.8		2.42			
1948	2.95		4.1							2.07	
1949		5.38		5.7			2.78				
1950						4.01		4.21		2.06	2.44
1951		5.1	3.37		5.42			3.39			2.13
1952										2.04	
1953	4.18			4.21			2.76	2.78			
1954			3.25							2.01	
1955		6.31						2.06			2.16
1956					6.09		2.48			2.01	
1957			3.16	3.59		3.91					
1958	3.87				6.09					1.98	
1959		5.17					2.48				2.28
1960						3.81				2.01	
1961		5.49	3.23	3.5							
1962					4.93		2.46	3.22		2.01	
1963	4.16										
1964						3.75				1.97	2.53
1965		4.91	2.72	3.15							
1966						4.23	2.39	2.39		2.03	2.42
1967					4.56						
1968	3.94				4.31	4.56				2.04	
1969		3.63	2.83	3.03							
1970							2.29			2.03	2.46
1971						4.52	2.28	2.04			
1972	4.08			2.85						2.04	
1973		3.83	2.81		5.68	7.11					
1974										2	
1975						5.59	2.26				
1976	3.53			2.91				2		2.02	
1977		5.03	2.75			5.23			4.3		
1978					5.08					2.04	
1979	3.91					4.99	2.27		4.25		2.87
1980				3.1						2.06	
1981		3.59	2.87		4.13	5.76		2			
1982									3.19	2.02	
1983	4.52			3.22			2.4				3.46
1984		4.31				5.24				2.03	
1986					4.65		2.72		3.59	2.01	
1987	4.62		3.47	3.56		5.82		2.01			3.33
1988		5.03			4.4	5.83				2.03	
1989			3.38						4.13		
1990				3.75		4.85	3.16			2.08	
1992	6.63	4.93	3.94					2.06		2.14	3.06
1993					6.89				3.52		
1994	7.58			3.75		4.76	3.87			2.08	
1995							3.59				
1996	7.17	6.15						2.06	3.21	2.18	
1997			4.03		6.56						3.22
1998				3.78		4.73		2.04		2.21	
1999		10.07					3.82				
2000									3.12	2.25	
2001	6.32					4.69					3.33
2002			4.13	4.09	5.22		3.02			2.15	
2003		7.05						2.02			
2004									3	2.18	
2005				4.46		5.19					3.59
2006	5.69	8.98					3.71			2.1	
2007			3.77		4.32	5.41					
2008	3.82						4.79	2.08	2.79	2.09	
2009		7.37		5.58							
2010										2.15	3.71
2011			4.77			5.71			3.34		
2012					5.27					2.13	
2013	5.33	8.68		4.81			5.15	2.05			
2014										2.14	
2015		7.71									3.93

Cross-national ENPP comparision

Source: Gallagher (2015)

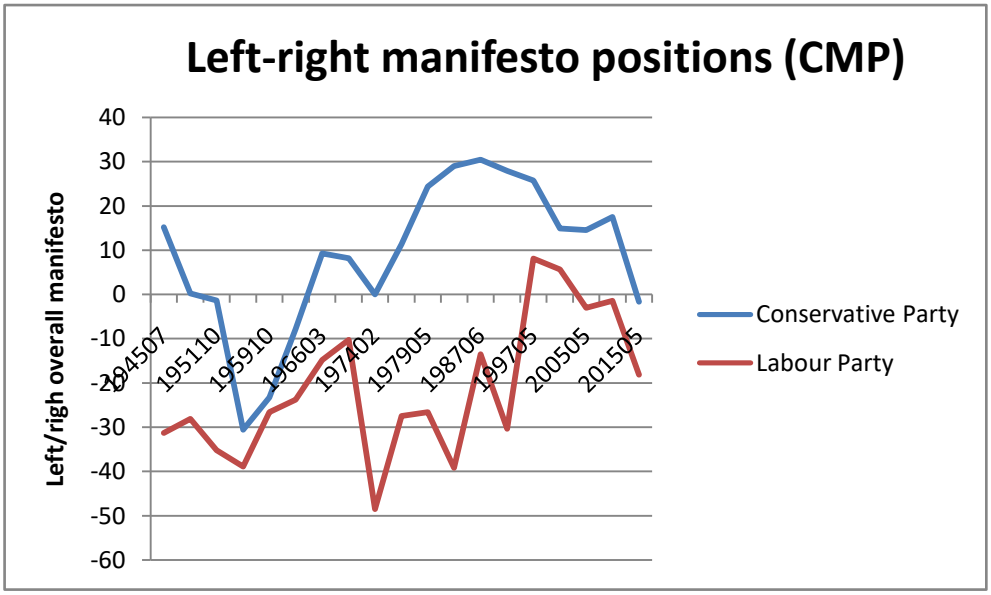
Year	ENPP _Ita	ENPP _Isr	ENPP _Ire	ENPP_ Ge	ENPP _Fra	ENPP_ Den	ENPP _Öst	ENPP_ Malt	ENPP_E sp	ENPP_ USA	ENPP_ UK
1945					4.2	4.48	2.09	1.22			2.12
1946	4.39									1.98	
1947						3.56		2.45			
1948	2.57		3.66							1.92	
1949		4.73		4.65			2.54				
1950						3.99		3.96		2	2.08
1951		5.02	3.26		5.93			3.29			2.06
1952										2.01	
1953	3.54			3.63			2.47	2.31			
1954			3.01							1.99	
1955		5.96						1.96			2.03
1956					5.73		2.22			1.99	
1957			2.72	3.07		3.76					
1958	3.45				3.45					1.84	
1959		4.89					2.2				1.99
1960						3.59				1.92	
1961		5.35	2.78	3.11							
1962					3.43		2.2	2.74		1.93	
1963	3.74										
1964						3.5				1.77	2.06
1965		4.71	2.61	2.93							
1966						3.96	2.14	1.97		1.96	2.02
1967					3.76						
1968	3.53				2.49	4.23				1.97	
1969		3.56	2.46	2.71							
1970							2.12			1.94	2.07
1971						3.94	2.21	2			
1972	3.55			2.79						1.97	
1973		3.35	2.59		4.52	6.86					
1974										1.8	
1975						5.41	2.21				
1976	3.16			2.85				2		1.79	
1977		4.37	2.36			5.17			2.91		
1978					4.2					1.86	
1979	3.47					4.83	2.22		2.81		2.15
1980				2.96						1.97	
1981		3.13	2.62		2.68	5.47		2			
1982									2.34	1.89	
1983	4.02			3.16			2.26				2.09
1984		3.86				5.04				1.95	
1986											
1987					3.9		2.63		2.68	1.93	
1988	4.07		2.89	3.47		5.31		2			2.17
1989		4.38			3.07	5.31				1.93	
1990			2.94						2.85		
1992				3.17		4.36	2.99			1.91	
1993											
1994	5.71	4.39	3.46					2		1.94	2.27
1995					2.86				2.67		
1996	7.67			3.45		4.54	3.73			2	
1997							3.49				
1998	6.09	5.61						2	2.72	2	
1999			3		3.54						2.13
2000				3.31		4.71		1.99		2.01	
2001		8.69					3.41				
2002									2.48	2.02	
2003	5.3					4.48					2.17
2004			3.38	3.38	2.26		2.88			2	
2005		6.17						1.99			
2006									2.53	2	
2007				4.05		4.89					2.46
2008	5.06	7.84					3.38			1.99	
2009			3.03		2.49	5.33					
2010	3.07						4.24	2	2.36	1.94	
2011		6.77		4.83							
2012										1.97	2.57
2013			3.52			5.61			2.6		
2014					2.83					1.99	
2015	3.47	7.28		3.51			4.59	1.97			

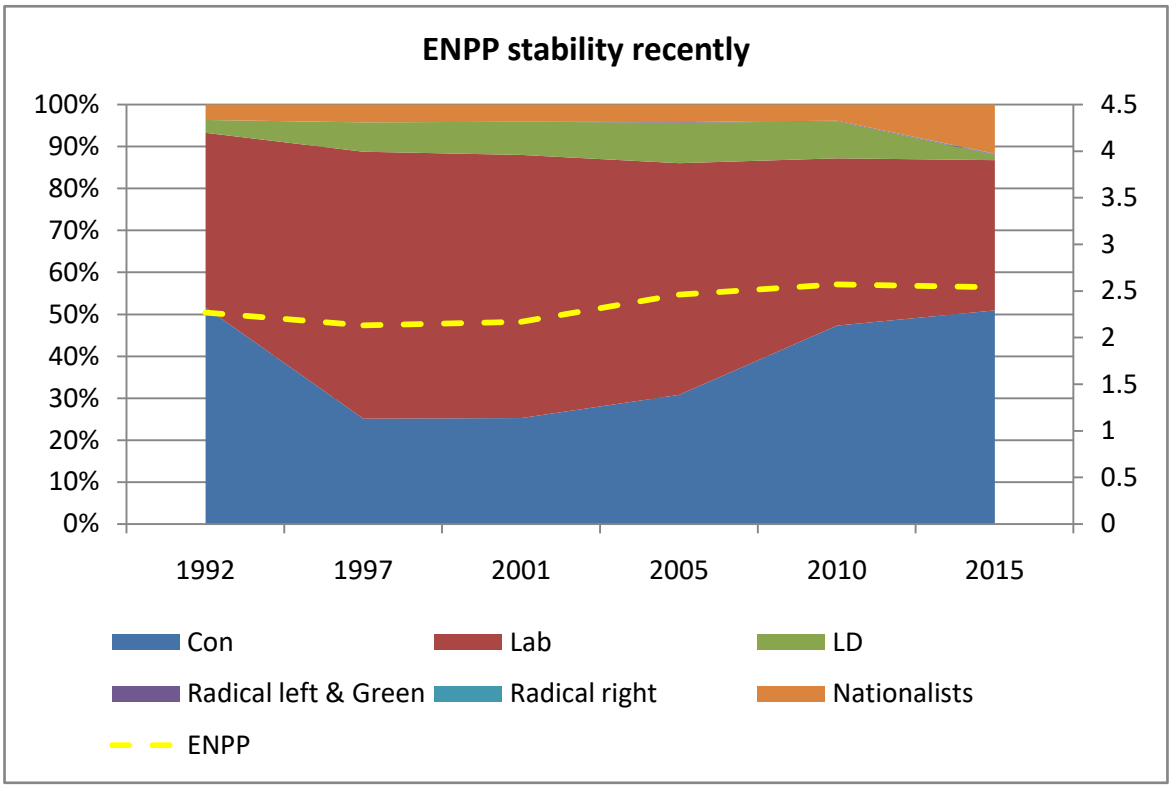
Comparing ENEP/ENPP rel. difference ((ENEP-ENPP)/ENPP)

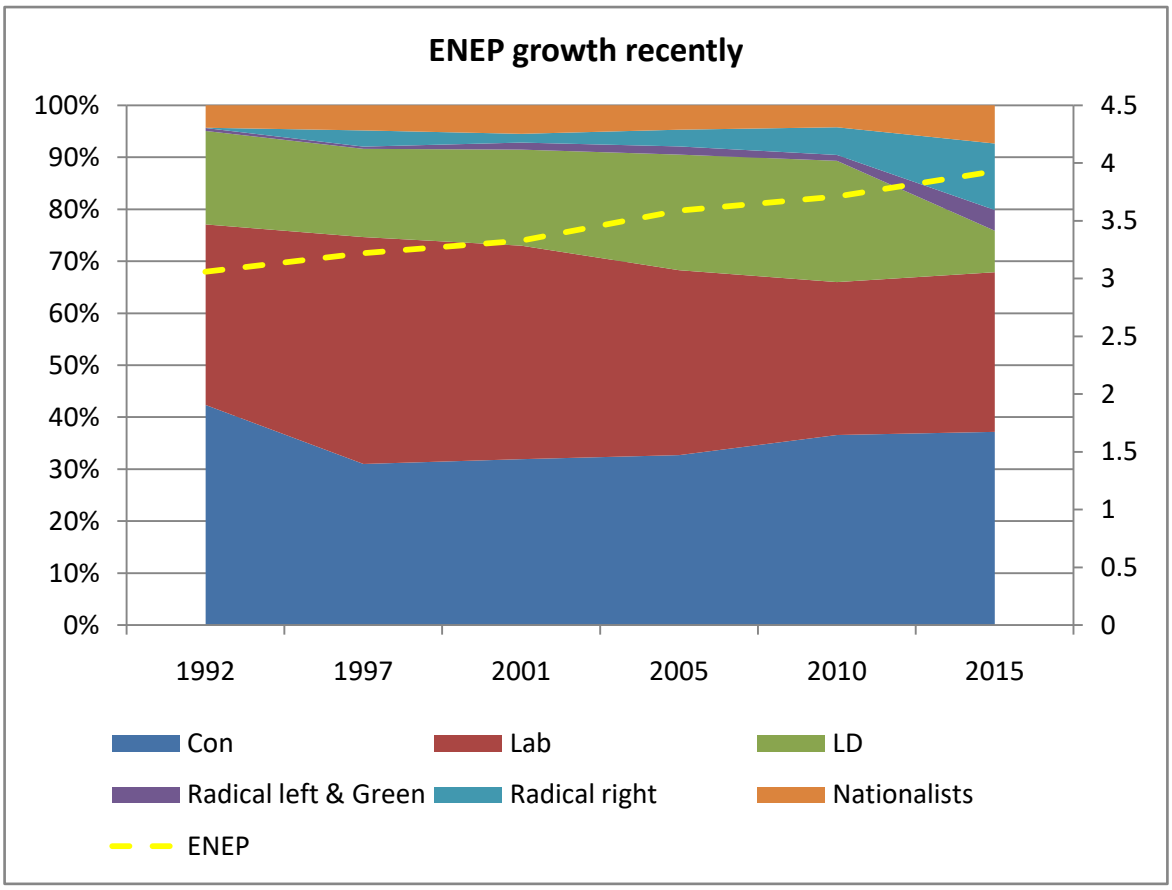
Data source: Gallagher (2015) with my own calculations

Year	Diff_Ita	Diff_Isr	Diff_Ire	Diff_Ge	Diff_Fra	Diff Den	Diff_Öst	Diff_Malt	Diff_Esp	Diff_Usa	Diff_Uk
1945					10.00%	2.01%	6.22%	42.62%			28.30%
1946	6.61%									3.03%	
1947						6.74%		-1.22%			
1948	14.79%		12.02%							7.81%	
1949		13.74%		22.58%			9.45%				
1950						0.50%		6.31%		3.00%	17.31%
1951		1.59%	3.37%		-8.60%			3.04%			3.40%
1952										1.49%	
1953	18.08%			15.98%			11.74%	20.35%			
1954			7.97%							1.01%	
1955		5.87%						5.10%			6.40%
1956					6.28%		11.71%			1.01%	
1957			16.18%	16.94%		3.99%					
1958	12.17%				76.52%					7.61%	
1959		5.73%					12.73%				14.57%
1960						6.13%				4.69%	
1961		2.62%	16.19%	12.54%							
1962					43.73%		11.82%	17.52%		4.15%	
1963	11.23%										
1964						7.14%				11.30%	22.82%
1965		4.25%	4.21%	7.51%							
1966						6.82%	11.68%	21.32%		3.57%	19.80%
1967					21.28%						
1968	11.61%				73.09%	7.80%				3.55%	
1969		1.97%	15.04%	11.81%							
1970							8.02%			4.64%	18.84%
1971						14.72%	3.17%	2.00%			
1972	14.93%			2.15%						3.55%	
1973		14.33%	8.49%		25.66%	3.64%					
1974										11.11%	
1975						3.33%	2.26%				
1976	11.71%			2.11%				0.00%		12.85%	
1977		15.10%	16.53%			1.16%			47.77%		
1978					20.95%					9.68%	
1979	12.68%					3.31%	2.25%		51.25%		33.49%
1980				4.73%						4.57%	
1981		14.70%	9.54%		54.10%	5.30%		0.00%			
1982									36.32%	6.88%	
1983	12.44%			1.90%			6.19%				65.55%
1984		11.66%				3.97%				4.10%	
1985											
1986					19.23%		3.42%		33.96%	4.15%	
1987	13.51%		20.07%	2.59%		9.60%		0.50%			53.46%
1988		14.84%			43.32%	9.79%				5.18%	
1989			14.97%						44.91%		
1990				18.30%		11.24%	5.69%			8.90%	
1991											
1992	16.11%	12.30%	13.87%					3.00%		10.31%	34.80%
1993					140.91%				31.84%		
1994	-1.17%			8.70%		4.85%	3.75%			4.00%	
1995							2.87%				
1996	17.73%	9.63%						3.00%	18.01%	9.00%	
1997			34.33%		85.31%						51.17%
1998				14.20%		0.42%		2.51%		9.95%	
1999		15.88%					12.02%				
2000									25.81%	11.39%	
2001	19.25%					4.69%					53.46%
2002			22.19%	21.01%	130.97%		4.86%			7.50%	
2003		14.26%						1.51%			
2004									18.58%	9.00%	
2005				10.12%		6.13%					45.93%
2006	12.45%	14.54%					9.76%			5.53%	
2007			24.42%		73.49%	1.50%					
2008	24.43%						12.97%	4.00%	18.22%	7.73%	
2009		8.86%		15.53%							
2010										9.14%	44.36%
2011			35.51%			1.78%			28.46%		
2012					86.22%					7.04%	
2013	53.60%	19.23%		37.04%			12.20%	4.06%			
2014										9.18%	
2015		11.10%									54.72%

Manifesto polarisation in the UK					
Data source: CMP ('rile' index)*					
		Conservative Party	Labour Party	Diff	Mean (by periods)
05/07/1945	194507	15.2	-31.3	46.5	
23/02/1950	195002	0.2	-28.1	28.3	
25/10/1951	195110	-1.4	-35.2	33.8	
26/05/1955	195505	-30.6	-38.9	8.3	
08/10/1959	195910	-23.3	-26.6	3.3	
15/10/1964	196410	-7.8	-23.8	16.0	
31/03/1966	196603	9.3	-14.8	24.1	
18/06/1970	197006	8.2	-10.3	18.5	22.4
28/02/1974	197402	0.0	-48.5	48.5	
10/10/1974	197410	11.4	-27.5	38.9	
03/05/1979	197905	24.4	-26.6	51.0	
09/06/1983	198306	29.0	-39.2	68.2	
11/06/1987	198706	30.5	-13.5	44.0	
09/04/1992	199204	27.9	-30.4	58.3	51.5
01/05/1997	199705	25.7	8.1	17.7	
07/06/2001	200106	14.9	5.6	9.3	
05/05/2005	200505	14.5	-3.1	17.6	14.9
06/05/2010	201005	17.5	-1.5	19.0	
07/05/2015	201505	-1.6	-18.1	16.5	17.8
*The more positive the value is, the more right-wing the manifesto is.					
By contrast, negative values stand for leftist manifesto positions.					




ENPP stability recently
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
4.5
4
3.5
3
2.5
2
1.5
1
0.5
0
1992
1997
2001
2005
2010
2015
Con
Lab
LD
Radical left & Green
Radical right
Nationalists
ENPP


ENEP growth recently
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
4.5
4
3.5
3
2.5
2
1.5
1
0.5
0
1992
1997
2001
2005
2010
2015
Con
Lab
LD
Radical left & Green
Radical right
Nationalists
ENEP

14 ANNEX 1 – INTERVIEW COMPARISON

14.1 THE METHODOLOGY OF THE INTERVIEWS

During my research in the UK in 2015–16, I made interviews with 6 UK politicians. There were 3 peers (Lords) and 3 MPs. I did not record the interviews with the peers, however, I made short summaries about them. I did record the interviews with the MPs about which I have transcripts, too. Both the summaries and the transcripts can be found later in the Annex.

I tried to ask exactly the same questions to each politician so that later I could compare the answers. These questions were about (1) the pluralisation of British politics, (2) the impact of the EU on the UK, (3) the potential electoral system change, (4) party line in their party, (5) devolution and (6) anti-establishment sentiments.

Previously I thought that the UK's EU membership was a major explanatory factor for the pluralisation of British party politics. However, during my interviews, almost all politicians answered that anti-establishment sentiment was more important. (The only exception was Lord Balfe, who said it was not the most important but one of many important factors.) It is interesting because politicians who belong to anti-establishment parties have thought like this. Lord Beecham (Labour), Lord Balfe (Conservative), Lord Wallace (Lib Dem) and Kelvin Hopkins, MP (Labour), mentioned anti-establishment as a major explanatory factor. The two anti-establishment politicians (Douglas Carswell, MP, from UKIP and Paul Monaghan, MP, from SNP) obviously also supported the idea. So there was general consensus during the interviews irrespective of party affiliation that the current political developments and the pluralisation are due to anti-establishment sentiment. For those politicians who belonged to the establishment this sentiment meant

that ‘they hate us’, and for those who belonged to anti-establishment parties it meant ‘we hate them.’ Eventually, the very same sentiment was described from either side of the conflict.

The anti-establishment sentiment, however, was not a unanimous concept during the interviews. Although politicians shared the idea that there was a conflict between the elite and the people, each of them described it differently. Even the name of the phenomenon was used differently: Douglass Carswell MP (UKIP), for instance, called it *‘insurgency politics’*, Lord Jim Wallace (Lib Dems) mentioned it as *‘alienation or identity politics’* and Lord Beecham used the terms ‘*cynicism and apathy*.’ It also happened to me during the interviews that a politician started to use his own terminology for describing the current situation, and when I provided them the term ‘anti-establishment,’ they suddenly accepted it: yes, that’s the correct expression! This gave me the impression that the current political mood was quite confused in Britain, and there was no single term to describe it.

The anti-establishment sentiments could be identified in six different aspects during the interviews. These are the following which I will discuss in detail later:

1. lack of responsiveness (the elite doesn’t represent the people well),
2. media (the traditional media is on the side of the elite and manipulate the people),
3. localism (the UK government does not represent well local interests),
4. EU membership (the EU is against/for national sovereignty),
5. electoral system (the majority FPTP serves the interests of the major parties),
6. intra-party democracy (the strong party line and candidate selection harm intra-party democracy).

Perhaps the best summary of the anti-establishment sentiment came from Douglas Carswell, (UKIP) MP. He said;

> *‘They [Labour, Conservatives, Lib Dem] tend to think that the political furniture in Westminster should be arranged for the conveniences of the political elite. Ukip thinks that the political furniture should be organised for the benefit of the people.*

We don't have that cadre of carrier politicians who think the way that Labour and Conservatives think. Someone said to me in the run-up to the last election Ukip isn't experienced. Experienced of what? Experience of sitting in the House of Commons and using the system for your advantage? No, we don't have that experience, but that's a good thing. We're a party of the people.

14.2 LACK OF RESPONSIVENESS

The most obvious aspect of anti-establishment sentiment, in the light of the interviews, was the *lack of responsiveness.* This lack of responsiveness was usually interpreted as two-party collusion against the will of the people. In most cases, as my respondents argued, the whole collusion happens in a rather disguised way under cover of the superficial conflict of the two main parties. In fact, in rhetoric, they fight against each other, however, in practice they have a wide range of mutual interests. The obvious contradiction between rhetoric and practice generates the lack of responsiveness. As a result, there is a growing feeling of hypocrisy, mistrust and manipulation in the electorate, I was told.

For instance, Kelvin Hopkins, (Lab) MP told me about the two-party collusion that;

> *'They* [the people] *feel there's been a kind of conspiracy by the political establishment against people.'*
>
> *'Only if you put Cameron and Blair in the room together privately, they would agree with each other on everything.(...) Cameron and Blair, they are really ideologically identical. (...) They believe passionately in the private sector and the corporate world.'*

In addition to that, Mr Hopkins also said about the health service that;

> '*[Blair and Cameron are] secretly trying to privatise everything, including the health service.'*

In a similar vein, Douglas Carswell, MP, (Ukip) said that the two major parties want to impose their will on the people instead of representing them;

> *'They [Labour, Conservatives] tend to think that the political furniture in Westminster should be arranged for the conveniences of the political elite. Ukip thinks that the political furniture should be organised for the benefit of the people.'*

Paul Monaghan, MP, (SNP) usually talked about the unresponsiveness between Scotland and Westminster which does not represent adequately or even harms Scottish interests. Mr Monaghan argued that two-party collusion very likely happened in 1979, when the first Scottish devolved referendum failed and in 1997, when the mixed AMS electoral system was introduced in Scotland. Both these dimensions are further explained in Section 14.6 The Electoral system.

Lord Balfe (Con) mentioned a very interesting point about two-party collusion. He argued that Labour used to be an anti-establishment party before moving to the centre. So it is much more Labour that can be blamed for two-party collusion. The Conservatives did not move too much and they have kept their position on the political right. It was New Labour that followed the Conservatives to the economic right. This argument was also confirmed by Kelvin Hopkins, (Lab) MP, who mentioned a similar example in Greece;

> '*In Greece you saw that the Labour Party, Pasok, which was initially regarded as a socialist party of the left sided with New Democracy, the right-wing party, to support austerity against the wishes of the people.*

So when it came to two-party collusion, it was New Labour which opted to be in the elite rather than the Conservatives. (However, in my opinion, Big Society was a similar move to the left by the Conservative Party, which could have been interpreted as neglect of traditional conservative values.)

Beside the lack of responsiveness, there was one thing in common in the interviews which I made; there was a high expectation of *future change* in the political system. Almost each politician underlined that change was on the horizon. Kelvin Hopkins, MP, (Lab) for example mentioned that;

> '*a radical new youth generation is coming up who don't like the consensual right wing neoliberal policies... (...) [Jeremy Corbyn is] way to the left, far to the left of Blair.'*

Douglas Carswell similarly noted that '*the democratisation of opinion means that where the public is out of sync with the elite, it's the elite that's now having to change!'* Or he told about Brexit;

> S*o take, for example, an issue like Britain's EU membership; for years this has been a settled question, and we have been told that it's absurd to suggest that we should leave the European Union, not anymore. (Laughing.)*

Paul Monaghan, (SNP) MP, also believes that fundamental change is happening in Scotland:

> *'So first of all there has always been a fairly substantial minority of people in Scotland who have been interested in an independent Scotland and willing to promote that outcome. I think it's in relatively recent years that that view has extended to become, what I argue, is the majority of view now in Scotland.'*
>
> '*The number of political parties is not something that is new, what is new is their popularity.'*

In sum, the lack of responsiveness is a central part of anti-establishment sentiment. Almost every interviewee admitted that the two major parties have been out of sync with the electorate. And there was also consensus that a fundamental change is on the horizon when mainstream politicians have to turn back to the electorate and represent their original policies.

14.3 **MEDIA**

The second most important element of the anti-establishment sentiment was media. As I have argued, the lack of responsiveness generates a feeling of hypocrisy, mistrust and manipulation. Especially, manipulation can be closely related to the media.

Douglas Carswell, (UKIP) MP, and Paul Monaghan, (SNP) MP, argued particularly strongly in line with this. They said that the mainstream media often served the interests of the mainstream parties. Hence niche issues like Britain's EU membership or Scotland's independence were not raised in the media. Mr Carswell said, for example, that:

Opinion previously was only aggregated by elitist institutions: BBC producers, Guardian editors, political elites.

Paul Monaghan, (SNP) MP, also underlined that traditional media is controlled by the establishment. For him, the manipulation which came from the mainstream media was most primarily responsible for the previously bad Scottish representation of interest. The mainstream media left Scotland behind.

Interestingly, Lord Beecham (Lab) joined the critics of the mainstream media. He said to me that the Conservatives had strong positions in mainstream media and they often misinformed people. For instance, they say that Labour is only about 'welfare state' and 'benefits for those who are out of work', however, it is a rather restrictive interpretation in his opinion. He says that even BBC is not independent in this respect.

However, the politicians also think there is a change on the horizon in the media, too. Both Douglas Carswell (Ukip) and Paul Monaghan (SNP) emphasized the importance of the social media and the internet. They told me that the new communication tools can link up people easier; they make communication less dependent on traditional media and they democratise the whole system. Particularly they underlined the importance of these tools for agenda setting. In this manner, the new communication methods can, first, change the media and, second, force the elite to become more responsive to the people.

Mr Carswell (UKIP) noted;

'*The internet has allowed the aggregation of opinion. (...) The democratisation of opinion means that where the public is out of sync with the elite, it's the elite that's now having to change.'*

'*Now the comment has been democratised. If people are uneasy about Britain's EU membership the political elite has to address it. This is why it is on the agenda.'*

Paul Monaghan also heavily supported the idea that the internet and social media fundamentally changed British politics.

'I think in the last 10–15 years, the population of Scotland in particular has had the opportunity to understand the world and what is going all in the world not

through the mainstream media but through social media. I think that has contributed to a growing awareness of the fact that the people of Scotland are not well represented by the UK parliament, and that there is a different way to govern our country.'

'And again I think it's only in recent years that that understanding has become developed and entrenched though social media which allows access to up to date information that is not influenced by the political bias of the government here in London.'

Moreover, Mr Carswell broadened his argumentation by suggesting how new media tools can transform the whole way we think about politics. He said that the internet taught us to be picky and look for the best niche option for us. The same thing is happening in politics. This can be the reason why smaller parties are increasingly popular.

'Internet has created a major transformation in people's cultural expectations. The idea of choice and competition become ubiquitous. The idea that you can shop around not for a product that you want but for the best product for you is now accepted as normal. I grew up in a world where when we listened to music 30 years ago a DJ on a government owned radio station selected the songs for us. Now, you have Spotify. I grew up in a world where there were three TV channels, now we have Netflix. (Laughs) People want the same in politics. They want niche distinctly particular choices. Chris Anderson wrote a book several years called The Long Tail and it was ostensibly about how the Internet is changing retail. And we get the so-called Long Tail in politics. Parties that come along that appeal to a niche distinctive particular and sometimes local audience which is why you get the SNP in Scotland why you start to see distinctive political messaging. So the internet is changing society's expectations of what they want from their politicians. The Internet is also changing politics because it means that in order to do politics you don't need to be part of a big corporate party anymore. In the Clacton by-election I put in practice and theories I had about communicating my people. I didn't need a vast office in London funded by plutocrats to fight an election here. I could use the Internet to mobilize opinion. Even the process of

printing literature; when I first took election in 2005, I couldn't personalize my literature. It was costly to do so. Digital technology means that I can now produce a different leaflet for each different part of the constituency. You can brand yourself. You create the personalisation of the branding of politics. I can market myself as Me to the constituency rather than as a party political representative. So you'll seen digital also changing the ability of politicians to do politics. So you don't need to be part of a big corporate political machine to that.

I guess Douglas Carswell (Ukip) and Paul Monaghan (SNP) had very much in common when it came to observing the link between anti-establishment and media. Both of them thought that the internet is both a source and a tool for anti-establishment. It is a source because citizens have become more aware of their rights and individual preferences. And it is a tool as well because citizens can avoid traditional media and link up with fellow citizens.

14.4 LOCALISM

The third aspect of anti-establishment sentiment was localism in the interviews. Localism was a broad expression used for a great deal of different things. It could have meant self-governance at country, regional, county and local council levels. Whereas Paul Monaghan, (SNP) MP, usually used localism as devolution, Douglas Carswell, (UKIP) MP, referred to it at county level, and Lord Beecham (Labour) interpreted it at UK regional level (each made up by several counties.) However, there was one thing in common in my respondents' answers; any form of localism should be desirable in the UK because it would help counter-balance the London-based establishment. In other words, local entities suffer from too much centralisation by London. This territorial dimension of anti-establishment puts the central state (the elite) and the local entities (the people) in conflict with each other. This aspect is in accordance with the general claims of groups with anti-establishment sentiments that power should be brought down to the closest level to people. In this way, the lack of responsiveness between the elite and the people means that local problems are not reflected in the centre.

Particularly Paul Monaghan, (SNP) MP, and Douglas Carswell, (UKIP) MP, supported the idea of localism. For Paul Monaghan (SNP), localism was mainly understood as regional self-governance in Scotland. It could have been either more devolution or complete independence. He was particularly strong at criticizing London and Westminster for being the elite. He complained that London often manipulated and badly represented the Scottish interests. He also noted that this type of anti-establishment is less strong in other parts of the UK.

> *'I think the people of Scotland have always been resistant to that idea of an elite or an establishment here in London. I think that's a majority view and it always has been. Some people were prepared to accept that because it was the only alternative, there were no alternatives to that level of government, and in recent years I think people understand that there are alternatives, there are different ways of doing it, and that is something that we should push for. I think in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, the people in these countries are still very accepting of the idea of an elite and of an establishment here in London, and they think it's a good thing.'*

Paul Monaghan had very interesting remarks about localism. In the case of Scotland, localism means two things in parallel: Scottish autonomy from the central state (i.e., devolution) and local autonomies inside the Scottish devolution, too. He said that in this respect Scotland is pioneering; they do not only ask for more devolution within the state of the UK but also feel committed to delegating some of their power to lower and local levels inside Scotland.

> *I think in Scotland, we have had, we've reformed the Scottish Parliament and I use the word 'reform', and now that is becoming more mature, I think that there are some opportunities becoming evident for devolution of powers from the Scottish parliament to local authorities in specific areas, about specific things and I think that's to be welcomed, and I think it is something that as the parliament grows and develops and receives more powers from Westminster some of those will be passed down to local level to allow local economies to develop in a more effective way.*

Mr Monaghan also emphasized the potential danger of devolution *per se*. He says that it is true that devolution can be a good tool for securing autonomy from the central state (establishment), however, it should not lead to a 'new tier of establishment.' In other words, devolution has to be different from the central state (establishment) and represent the people's interest, and should not multiply the already existing establishment at the local level. He quotes the example of the 2004 North East England devolution referendum, which failed because people did not want 'another establishment.'

> *'The vote about the regional assemblies in England, I think, as I understand that the analysis was, that the people votes against it because they didn't want another tier of government with more politicians taking money out of the system.'*
> *[00:33:42.25] Me: More establishment...*
> *[00:33:42.25] Paul Monaghan MP: Yeah. So they voted against it.*

Similarly to Paul Monaghan (SNP), Douglas Carswell (UKIP) was also a strong advocate of localism. However, his localism was not at the centre of his anti-establishment sentiments, as it was the case with Paul Monaghan, it was instead complementary. He mentioned to me that he had written a book with the title of 'Paying for Localism,' in which he argues that localism is desirable and the basic unit should be the *counties*.

> *'I personally think that the basic unit of administration in this country should be the county, the counties. We have this identity, you know, people feel strongly that they are from Essex, or from North, that from Yorkshire, and at Yorkshire feel particularly strong that they are from Yorkshire. It's a good thing; county identity. And we have county councils, we have police and crime commissioners, the head of the police is now elected at county level, this is a policy I wrote for the Conservative Party. In a sense, the reform doesn't need to be revolutionary; it could be incremental putting power back to county level. I would love it, if counties in Britain had similar powers to states in the United States, or cantons in Switzerland. And why shouldn't they? If Kent... or if Essex was a state in the United States, I think I am right saying that would be the 24th biggest state in the Union, counties are good unit of local government. People talk about city-regions,*

I don't know what a city-region is, maybe we need to have counties and metropolitan boroughs.

Lord Beecham, who is a Labour politician from Newcastle (North-East England), also supported the idea of English localism, however, differently from Douglas Carswell. He said that regions instead of counties should be the basic unit of localism in England. He says that 8–10 English regions with regional assemblies would be favourable. They could be responsible for regional education, infrastructure and so on. However, a large English Parliament (English devolution) is not needed. In this sense, he agrees with Mr Carswell, who did not talk about English devolution either.

Both Lord Beecham (Labour) and Douglas Carswell, (UKIP) MP, agreed that the toughest question about localism was financial autonomy. Douglas Carswell said;

'The key is the money, devolved control for the money.'

'No taxation without representation, you know, no representation without taxation. Local authorities need to be given control of setting business rights and setting the council tax.'

Lord Beecham also emphasized the necessary sync between local duties and appropriate financial resources. He says a problem with localism often emerges when the UK central government *'pass the bucks,'* which means it delegates more tasks to local level without enough financial background.

On the basis of these interviews one could say that the link between localism and anti-establishment sentiment is strong. It would also suggest that devolving power to local level would automatically temper the territorial aspect of anti-establishment sentiments. However, the interviews shed light on two potential pitfalls in this respect: (a) the local authority might copy and reproduce the political establishment at the local level and (b) it can further antagonise the conflict between the UK central state and localism if there is no necessary financial support for the increased tasks. As the experiences of the past show, devolution had very different effects in different parts of the UK. While in Northern Ireland it certainly contributed to curb sectarian violence, in Scotland devolution

increased the need for either more devolution or total independence. So the territorial aspect of anti-establishment is as confused as anti-establishment itself.

14.5 THE EUROPEAN UNION

The link between anti-establishment sentiment and EU membership is also unclear. On the one hand, eurosceptics like Douglas Carswell (UKIP) and Kelvin Hopkins (Labour) state that the supranational EU is a major source of anti-establishment sentiment. They say that the EU is too centralised, it is unelected and it limits Britain's sovereignty. However, contrary to this, pro-EU politicians like Paul Monaghan (SNP) think that the EU can be a counterweight against the British elite in London. Particularly the Scottish nationalists look up to the supranational EU as a protector and as a guarantee against national centralisation. So the EU is both seen as a threat and a guardian of democracy in the UK.

Douglas Carswell, UKIP MP, said that the EU is a centralised political institution which pulls back Britain. He mentioned plenty of positive cases in European history when a country had decentralised its political system and it proved to be successful soon. For instance, the Netherlands after the Habsburg monarchs, the United States with their new constitution and Switzerland with their confederated system. He concluded; '*one of the reasons why we should leave the European Union is because it has centralised its power.'*

Kelvin Hopkins, Labour MP, also had a similar view on this issue. He emphasised the importance of national sovereignty and democratic accountability. The EU both intervenes in domestic politics, hence limiting national sovereignty, and proves to be unaccountable due to its 'democratic deficit.' He said;

> *I want sovereignty so we can govern ourselves so we can create a more fair and democratic, more social democratic society. So what we can't do is that if laws or governments actually come from Brussels rather than from our own parliament. The great thing about our system is that actually you can change governments. You can elect a new government and have a change, whereas in the EU if all power goes to the EU, there is no possibility of change. And you are seeing how they behave towards Greece which's been brutal, absolutely brutal. (...) So we*

know, and I think many ordinary people know that the EU is not interested in a fair fully employed democratic society, they believe in the free market.

There is an interesting difference between Douglas Carswell's (UKIP) and Kelvin Hopkins' (Labour) euroscepticism, which should be noted. Whereas Douglas Carswell (UKIP) is a strong supporter of free market capitalism and rolling back the state, Kelvin Hopkins (Labour) is the opposite; he wants a managed economy and more state intervention (through public ownership). Nevertheless, they both agree that the EU threatens Britain's sovereignty. The controversy can be resolved if we observe how the two politicians interpret the EU's role in Britain's sovereignty. For Douglas Carswell (UKIP) the EU is too bureaucratic and makes too many regulations. Therefore, it constitutes a significant impediment to British entrepreneurship and free market. For Kelvin Hopkins (Labour), in contrast, the EU is basically a 'neoliberal' club, which imposes bad economic policies on member states. So the very same EU is economically too interventionist (leftist) for the UKIP MP, however, it is too neoliberal (rightist) for the Labour MP. These two opposing interpretations come from two different perceptions of the EU. Nevertheless, they lead to the very same conclusion: the EU threatens British sovereignty.

Paul Monaghan, SNP MP, had a very different opinion about the EU. He thought that there was a major difference between Scotland and the rest of the UK when it came to evaluating the benefits of EU membership. He said that the people of Scotland feel much closer to the EU than other nations in the UK.

The people of Scotland always felt quite closely aligned with Europe, and they have had good relationships with many European countries, so in the mean the people of Scotland are international in outlook, they are outward facing and they are welcoming of incomers.

He suggested two important factors shaping the positive general perception of the EU in Scotland. First, in the last 10–15 years the people of Scotland had intensified relationships with foreigners through foreign holidays, exchange students and foreign tourists. This brought genuine pleasure for those who got in touch with foreigners. Second, the EU

played an important role in tempering the negative policies of the UK government. Therefore, since the 1980s, the Scots have been feeling that the EU protects them both against British unionism and neoliberal policies. Paul Monaghan said about unionism and neoliberal economic policies that;

> *Part of her [Margaret Thatcher's] philosophy was to some extent the erosion of separate identities around the UK, and she worked very hard at trying to destroy that. That was heavily resisted by the Scottish people. There is a view that the Scottish people have benefited from the EU in many ways through the development and implementation of European social policy and law.*

So for Paul Monaghan, the EU is perceived as a counterweight against both unionism and neoliberalism. The EU as a protector against unionism is in accordance with Mr Monaghan's previous remarks about devolution and anti-establishment.

Finally, Douglas Carswell (UKIP) mentioned a very interesting point about the link between the EU and anti-establishment sentiment. He told me that the EU was not the most important reason for anti-establishment sentiment. In this vein, he continued his earlier logic about localism because that was not crucial for him either. Right now, he said about Britain's EU membership that;

> *Actually, I think insurgency politics and political insurgency would be happening whether immigration is a problem or not, whether EU membership is an issue or not. Wherever there was an issue where the official elite's opinion and the public opinion were out of sync you would start to have an essence of realignment.*

So Douglas Carswell supported the idea that anti-establishment sentiment cannot be restricted to one factor. Instead, it is a combination of several different factors.

14.6 THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

The current FPTP majority electoral system was often criticized. It was conceived as being part of the collusion by the two main parties against the smaller ones. For instance, Douglas Carswell (UKIP), who called the FPTP electoral system 'disgraceful' said that the most remarkable illustration for the disproportionate outcome was that he was alone

from UKIP and surrounded by 50 something SNP MPs in the Commons. He also said that the current majority electoral system was invented by the traditional parties in order to control politics.

> *'They introduced it in 1884, the same year they gave the working man the vote. They created an electoral system that was monopolistic, so that they could control who it is the working man votes for.'*

However, when it came to suggesting alternative electoral systems, he preferred to talk about the reform of the current FPTP system. (His remarks on this will be discussed in detail in Section 14.7 Intra-party democracy.) He said;

> *'More important than reforming the electoral system, we need a process of open primary candidate selection'*

Paul Monaghan (SNP) also criticized the UK electoral system in general. He talked about the 1979 Scottish devolution referendum which was cheated by the traditional parties. He said;

> *'At the last moment before the vote, the UK government said that there had to be majority of 40 %, which effectively meant that the vote could never be won. So it wasn't a legitimate way forward. That I think encouraged the people of Scotland, or many of the people of Scotland, to start to look at [?] for an alternative model for representation.'*

Then, he also talked about the current AMS electoral system in Scotland. He argued that the mixed AMS system was intended to create coalition governments in Scotland in order to make it impossible to have strong single majority governments. However, both after the 2011 Scottish elections and the 2015 general elections the electoral system 'fired back' because the SNP had landslide victories. He said;

> *[The AMS system is imposed by] Westminster. (...) So it's not a system that we would choose. So I don't think that the PR system in Scotland serves Scotland particularly well. I think it was designed deliberately by Westminster to avoid the formation or the election of majority governments in the Scottish parliament. It is designed to make that very very difficult, if not impossible. (...) The same in Wales,*

the same system in Wales. They have never managed to form a majority government. The FPTP system has never served my party well in the past in any election. (...) I think in 2015 that system worked against Westminster for the first time, and I think that the, meaning the establishment here, is frustrated and worried by that, and is now looking at ways to adjust the system to return it to a situation that they might find more acceptable.

Lord Jim Wallace (Liberal Democrat) noted that a 'second elected chamber' could significantly contribute to the further pluralisation of British politics. Hence the electoral system reform had two arenas; first, the House of Commons and the FPTP system, and, second, the House of Lords and its current unelected (appointed) system. However, he immediately added that the reform of the House of Lords is very modest and it might take a very long times. So in the medium or short term, it is unlikely that any change would happen in the House of Lords.

There is one thing in common to the previous opinions: although the FPTP electoral system is very unjust towards smaller parties, it also gives an opportunity to achieve sudden and landslide victories. The anti-establishment logic here is confused. In theory, the FPTP is unjust, however, in practice it is the most effective way to make any significant change. Any mixed or PR system, like the AMS in Scotland, is more just in theory, however, in practice, it makes change unlikely because small parties would never have an absolute majority. Therefore, the link between anti-establishment and the FPTP electoral system is controversial. This leads to the potential reform of the current system in the form of intra-party democracy.

14.7 INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY

Anti-establishment sentiment is often interwoven with complaints about intra-party democracy. Candidate selection is the key part of any majority electoral system. Usually, those candidates are the favourites in the constituency who are supported by one of the major parties. Moreover, parties usually preserve their privilege to select a candidate, and it is not the candidate who selects his/her party affiliation. (Although independent candidates can do so, if they are popular locally, however, it is relatively rare.) So there is

an asymmetric relation between parties and their candidates. The party's central office decides who will run in the party's colour at the next election in a constituency. This party monopoly on candidate selection reveals a further aspect of anti-establishment sentiment. There is growing awareness that the elite (as the party leadership) should be fought inside political parties, too.

David Carswell, (UKIP) MP, particularly favoured the promotion of intra-party democracy. He thought it even more important than any reform of the current FPTP electoral system. He suggested an *open primary system* for a more democratic candidate selection process. He argued that, in opposition to the *closed primary system*, which is in practice in the United Sates, open primaries would allow citizens to participate at constituency level in the candidate selection process of each party. For instance, he mentioned his own constituency in Clacton, where every citizen could decide who would run for the elections under UKIP. Mr Carswell agreed that open primaries could lead to radicalisation in politics, however, in the long term, this deliberation would create more responsiveness and eventually moderation. Mr Carswell argued:

> *'More important than reforming the electoral system, we need a process of open primary candidate selection, so that when your are choosing the candidate for a political party instead just a party deciding the candidate, you should have a vote in the whole district. So everyone who lives in Clacton should be able to vote to decide who the Ukip candidate for Clacton is. (...) If you have an open primary system, by definition, you have politicians who have to appeal to the broad spectrum of opinion. Open primaries would lead to political radicalism, if I can call it that, but not extremism. (...). Reform needs to be based on a question of how can you be populist, in the sense that you allow the demos to control the elite, but not do it in a way that means that political charlatans can come along and blame other people for the fact that we live in an imperfect world. And so all reform has to basically be about giving the demos more control, and if you do that properly you, far from creating a mob mentality in politics, you actually create moderation.'*

Kelvin Hopkins, (Lab) MP, who often rebelled against his own party line during parliamentary voting in Westminster, also supported the idea of intra-party democracy. He said that New Labour was delivered with elitist party leadership tactics. One of these was candidate selection which was controlled by the central office and particularly by Peter Mandelson. Mr Hopkins said that part of New Labour's success was due to Peter Mandelson's monopolistic candidate selection procedure. He gradually changed Old Labour MPs for New Labour MPs, which eventually created consensus about New Labour policies inside the party. Without this elitist candidate selection, New Labour could not have dominated the Labour Party. Mr Hopkins said;

> *'You know, the selection of candidates is crucial in the Labour Party, and for a long time, Peter Mandelson quietly controlled the selection process for candidates. So people of the left were pushed out, and the sort of centre-right people from the Labour Party were elevated. So, now we have a parliamentary party which is very different from when it was 50 years ago. 50 years ago they were social democratic, democratic socialist, they believed in welfare state, public ownership of the railways, many parts of that, the economy were again publicly owned which is now privatized. But all of those have died, moved away, and one of the relics of that left.'*

Lord Beecham (Lab) told me that smaller parties can also 'bully' their members through candidate selection. He said that the SNP had particularly strong monopolistic positions in Scotland. They control almost every public office (i.e,. Westminster MPs, Scottish Parliament MSPs, the Scottish government and lots of Scottish local councils). Mr Beecham hence said that there was a great difference between politics in Northern England (his own region) and Scotland (the neighbouring region). The SNP's monopoly in Scotland could harm intra-party democracy as it happened to the Labour and the Conservative Parties.

Paul Monaghan, (SNP) MP, personally rejected such blames. He said that the SNP parliamentary party is quite united in values. Although they sometimes disagree on macro-economic problems, generally they share the same ideology which is social democratic, nationalist and liberal. So Mr Monaghan told me that the SNP's unity is not

maintained by the lack of intra-party democracy, but by a shared ideological view which links all SNP politicians. He precisely said:

> *So the Westminster group, I think, on all aspects of social values, we are absolutely consistent that we want to see a quality in every respect, we want to see the maximisation of opportunity for people. I think whilst we do have a difference in opinion occasionally in terms of views of particular policies that relate perhaps to economic factors, you know macro-economics, I think that does not spill over into social values at all. I think we are absolutely of one mind on that issue.*

Although candidate selection is usually controlled by the party leadership, there are some cases when such monopoly cannot exist. Kelvin Hopkins, (Lab) MP, told me that whips were often worried about sanctioning MPs for not keeping the party line during parliamentary voting. He said that MPs who went against the will of the party's whip could have become 'heroes' in their constituency. Moreover, he also added that local parties were quite strong in Britain, which limited the power of the central office. Today, whips are more and more 'nervous' about using their power against their MPs. In this sense, there is natural democratisation of intra-party politics. Mr Hopkins said;

> *'But the whips have been nervous about doing that because they know if you do that then those who rebel become heroes outside...'*
>
> *'I think, that we have quite strong local parties in, we are selected as individual candidates in constituencies, and if you've been there for a long time and you have a good reputation and people think you are a good person, it is very difficult for the party to get rid of you.'*

Lord Balfe (Con) also told me that there was more responsiveness between the party leadership and MPs. Previously, those MPs who belonged to the centre did not fit into either of the two major parties. Later, when both parties became more moderate and moved to the centre, these MPs, similarly to him, became mainstream politicians. Today, moderate MPs can feel that their party leadership is more responsive towards them than previously.

The issue of intra-party democracy reflects the general concerns about anti-establishment sentiments in the society. In parallel to a society where there is a conflict between the political elite and the people, a similar conflict exists inside a political party between the party leaders and the MPs (or the membership). The electoral system change from FPTP to a mixed or PR electoral system might have an effect on *inter*-party democracy (i.e,. on representing each party proportionally), however, it is unlikely to impact on *intra*-party democracy (i.e,. does not break the monopoly of the party leadership.) A mixed or PR electoral system could even undermine intra-party democracy by giving more power to central offices than to rank candidates on party lists. In an FPTP system, though the central office has considerable power, popular local MPs can contest their party's central office decisions. Therefore, intra-party democracy is an element of anti-establishment sentiments which likely prevails in the long run.

14.8 SUMMARY OF THE INTERVIEWS

In sum, anti-establishment sentiment was a confused term in these interviews. It was usually a mixture of different feelings which revolved around the conflict between the elite and the masses. However, when it came to detailed evaluation of one aspect of the anti-establishment sentiment, there were many controversies. For instance, the EU is the 'establishment' for UKIP, however, it is the 'anti-establishment' for the SNP.

On the basis of the interviews, nowadays there are two main strands of anti-establishment sentiments in the UK. On the one hand, UKIP fights against the unresponsive elite in the whole UK. On the other hand, SNP fights against the UK government in Scotland. Almost each politician confirmed that UKIP and SNP are anti-establishment parties. In addition to these two parties, I would mention the Green Party as a third anti-establishment party. Unfortunately, I could not make an interview with them.

There are anti-establishment efforts in traditional parties as Kelvin Hopkins from Labour said. Those politicians who were not anti-establishment also confirmed to me that anti-establishment is the most important factor in the pluralisation of British politics today.

15 ANNEX 2 – INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

15.1 INTERVIEW #1

Photo source: https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/mr-douglas-carswell/1527

Speaker: Douglas Carswell MP

Constituency: Clacton (England).

Party: UK Independence Party (UKIP)

Time of the interview: 8th Jan 2016 (Constituency Business Hours)

Place of the interview: Library, Clacton-on-Sea

[00:00:07.21] Me: So I have five questions. In your opinion what is a major factor which contributes to this kind of pluralisation of British politics, that instead of a two- party system there are more and more parties...

[00:00:17.09] Douglas Carswell MP: the Internet.

[00:00:19.00] Me: Really?

[00:00:19.00] Douglas Carswell MP: Yes. Internet has created a major transformation in people's cultural expectations. The idea of choice and competition become ubiquitous. The idea that you can shop around not for a product that you want but for the best product for you is now accepted as normal. I grew up in a world where when we listened to music 30 years ago a DJ on a government owned radio station selected the songs for us. Now, we you have Spotify. I grew up in a world where there were three TV channels, now we have Netflix. (Laughs) People want the same in politics. They want niche distinctly particular choices. Chris Anderson wrote a book several years called The Long Tail and it

was ostensibly about how the Internet is changing retail. And we get the so-called Long Tail in politics. Parties that come along that appeal to a niche distinctive particular and sometimes local audience which is why you get the SNP in Scotland why you start to see distinctive political messaging. So the internet is changing society's expectations of what they want from their politicians. The Internet is also changing politics because it means that in order to do politics you don't need to be part of a big corporate party anymore. In the Clacton by-election I put in practice and theories I had about communicating my people. I didn't need a vast office in London funded by plutocrats to fight an election here. I could use the Internet to mobilize opinion. Even the process of printing literature. When I first took election in 2005, I couldn't personalise my literature. It was costly to do so. Digital technology means that I can now produce a different leaflet for each different part of the constituency. You can brand yourself. You create the personalisation of the branding of politics. I can market myself as Me to the constituency rather than as a party political representative. So you'll seen digital also changing the ability of politicians to do politics. So you don't need to be part of a big corporate political machine to that.
[00:02:45.05] Me: OK. And what do you think about the factors usually suggested like anti-establishment feeling...

[00:02:59.17] Douglas Carswell MP: of course...

[00:02:59.17] Me: or devolution...

[00:02:59.17] Douglas Carswell MP: of course... I mean, it's quite interesting, as people's social expectations and cultural expectations of politics have changed, areas where the political elite is out of sync with the public where the 'Kratos', the official state, is out of touch with the 'demos', the people, you're beginning to see obvious evidence of disconnect. So take for example an issue like Britain's EU membership; for years this has been a settled question, and we have been told that it's absurd to suggest that we should leave the European Union, not anymore. (Laughing.) Because the official mind for that for many years and the official mind that control the political process and the parameters of political debate. Now the comment has been democratised. If people are uneasy about Britain's EU membership the political elite has to address it. This is why it is on the agenda.

[00:03:52.06] Me: And do you think that the EU issue is independent from anti-establishment feeling or are they inter-linked?

[00:03:58.27] Douglas Carswell MP: No, it is inextricably linked. I mean, the people I think have been always anti-establishment but they have never really been able to link up with other people who think like they, do and doing thing about it. The internet has allowed the aggregation of opinion. Opinion previously was only aggregated by elitist institutions: BBC producers, Guardian editors, political elites. Now, opinion can be aggregated through the pages of Guy de Fawkes. The democratisation of opinion means that where the public is out of sync with the elite, it's the elite that's now having to change. But it's important; when people look at the issue of immigration and Europe the elites often dismiss these as the concerns of the mob. Actually, I think insurgency politics and political insurgency would be happening whether immigration is a problem or not, whether EU membership is an issue or nor. Wherever there was an issue where the official elite's opinion and the public opinion were out of sync you would start to have an essence of realignment.

[00:05:14.12] Me: And in your constituency, what is the case? What is the key to your success? Is it the earlier mentioned anti-establishment feeling or the immigration?

[00:05:25.18] Douglas Carswell MP: I have certainly branded myself as very much anti-establishment. I am very anti-establishment. I launched an attempt to unseat the Speaker of the House of Commons first time in 300 years. I have never been part of that consensus opinion. Can I tell you something? And I don't mean, I hope you don't think I am being big headed here. I think the key is to be honest with people. Because of the political system we have at the moment, politicians end up lying to the voters. They tell the voters what think the voters want to hear. And voters no longer trust that anymore because for years now the political elites would use focus groups and opinion poll testing to work out what the public wanted to hear and then tell them what they wanted to hear. And the public no longer believe that. So you could be honest with the public. Take the issue of immigration! I have never won a single vote and I never would try winning a single vote by saying immigration is bad or immigrants are bad. On the contrary, I say to people that, look; if you don't have a GP, and there is a shortage of doctors, and the best doctor who

can come and treat you happens to be born in Romania, isn't that a great thing? I say to people, look; this recording device you have, it's made by Sony, a Japanese company, the chips probably come from Korea, the technology probably comes from Japan or the West Coast of United Sates, it's probably assembled in, let's see, it was assembled in probably China, it is the product of...

[00:06:58.17] Me: I bought it in PC World which is partly a French company, I guess...

[00:06:59.16] Douglas Carswell MP: Ok. And the person who served you behind the counter, it's very old fashioned from you to go into an old shop[?]...

[00:07:04.01] Me: He was a French... (Laughing)

[00:07:05.10] Douglas Carswell MP: A French... Isn't that an extraordinary example of how living standards are raised by the collective efforts and endeavours of this global network of specialisation and exchange? That is going to mean more labour mobility, hat is going to mean that we... M parents grew up in world where that idea that your vegetables would be grown in Kenya or Brazil would have seemed extraordinary. It's normal. You are going to a supermarket and the vegetables come from all over the world. So will the doctors. (Laughing.) So will maybe the teachers that your child's school one day. This is an inevitable consequence of global specialisation and exchange. Politicians need to be honest with people about it and tell them, it is going to be a challenge. That doesn't mean that you have uncontrolled immigration. On the contrary! It's all the more the reason why you need to control immigration. But that is not the same as being against immigration. And if you are honest with people, they know that you mean it. And I think people would prefer politicians who tell them the truth... We elect people to lead us. But the problem with the political system is that so many people who hold office follow what they think as if public opinion. Actually, politicians should sometimes be prepared to say things that aren't popular, if it is the truth, if it needs saying. I get people who sometimes come to me and say, in Britain we should make our own products; we should make everything in Britain. We can build our own mobile phone in this country, instead of buying mobile phones from America or Samsung or Apple, we could make our own mobile phones just here in Essex. But do you know what? There would probably be the

size of a brick, they would be made out of clockwork, they would probably wouldn't work. You need that internationalism to prosper in a modern world. And if you are prepared to explain these things and say things that need to be said, people might not like it, but in my experience, they [?]...

[00:09:05.25] Me: Ok, so here in your constituency, your success is based on honesty and representing this kind of anti-establishment approach.

[00:09:16.00] Douglas Carswell MP: You can say that. It would be modest to me to say that. (...)

[00:09:41.00] Me: So the state is too big...

[00:09:41.00] Douglas Carswell MP: The state is too big, little people get squashed by big government. You know, I spend a great deal of time sitting and listening to people that have a problem. (...)

[00:10:25.09] Me: What do you think about the relationship between Ukip and the British electoral system? The First-past-the-post is a major impediment for Ukip...

[00:10:40.11] Douglas Carswell MP: I think it's disgraceful. We got nearly 4 million votes and we get one MP. If we had a proportional system, we would have had 80 something MPs. The Scottish Nationalists, I sit in parliament and surrounding me of 56 Scottish Nationalists MPs. My party gets three times more votes than they do and yet there are 50 more than me. Of course, it's unfair, we need to change it and we will change it. The electoral system we have at the moment came in, we... you know, we think of it as ancient as old as the hills and [?] the facts of the late Victorian invention. The introduced it in 1884, the same year they gave the working man the vote. They created an electoral system that was monopolistic, so that they could control who it is the working man votes for. We need to have a system of maybe two-three MPs per constituency, so you have choice and competition, it will come.

[00:11:34.18] Me: This is pretty much the Scottish Additional Member System...

[00:11:38.02] Douglas Carswell MP: Yeah, yeah, I mean, I have to be careful because if I say AV+ or STV, it's an alphabet [?] of complexity and it is too boring, but we need a system like...

[00:11:47.29] Me: More proportional...

[00:11:47.29] Douglas Carswell MP: Yeah. If you are a reformer and you start picketing about the details of the precise measure you want, you... The consensus in favour of change is gonna get bigger.

[00:12:02.09] Me: In this electoral system change, do you think that there can be a kind of alliance to change it? I mean, for instance, if Labour always lose elections because of the first-past-the-post, after a certain time it can be reasonable to change it.

[00:12:18.22] Douglas Carswell MP: I recently supported [?] a pro-MP, Jack Reynolds who was I think sacked by Jeremy Corbyn yesterday so there is some turmoil in the Labour Party, but generally speaking; yes, the left is waking up to these ideas.

[00:12:30.13] Me: And also the devolutions... right...

[00:12:36.14] Douglas Carswell MP: You have to be careful. Given the technological change that's happening if we are not careful we'll end up in a political system filled with people like Donald Trump, where you get shrill, angry, reactionary candidates. We need reform that allows popular expressions of opinion but doesn't end up fostering unpleasant extremism. So for example, I think that more important than reforming the electoral system, we need a process of open primary candidate selection, so that when your are choosing the candidate for a political party instead just a party deciding the candidate, you should have a vote in the whole district. So everyone who lives in Clacton should be able to vote to decide who the Ukip candidate for Clacton is. In America, they have closed primaries, and this means that only Republicans are voting for Republicans, so end up with Trump. If you have an open primary system, by definition, you have politicians who have to appeal to the broad spectrum of opinion. Open primaries would lead to political radicalism, if I can call it that, but not extremism. Here is a ballot paper, okay? (Starting to write on a paper.) This is a ballot paper. It's got your name, my name, two

other names, yeah. You have to put a cross; you have to put it there-there or there. Now politics should be about trying to make most people vote. You bring people together on that one spot of ballot paper. Politics should be drawing[?] people together. Under the current political system, we have created a system where people like Donald Trump try to divide people and pull people apart. Reform needs to be based on a question of how can you be populist, in the sense that you allow the demos to control the elite, but not do it in a way that means that political charlatans can come along and blame other people for the fact that we live in an imperfect world. And so all reform has to basically be about giving the demos more control, and if you do that properly you, far from creating a mob mentality in politics, you actually create moderation.

[00:15:06.17] Me: Can I ask you something about party line inside Ukip? I know it is a touchy question because I read the news about recent events between you and the leadership in Ukip. So, I realised that Ukip is the only party in Westminster which has a big central office and the other parties, Conservatives and Labour, have only tiny central offices.

[00:15:45.05] Douglas Carswell MP: Sorry, it is the other way around. They got big offices, we got a tiny office.

[00:15:45.05] Me: No, I mean the Conservatives and Labour are based in Westminster, while at the same time Ukip is based outside of Westminster because you are the only MP.

[00:15:56.24] Douglas Carswell MP: Right.

[00:15:56.24] Me: Do you think it has any consequence on party line?

[00:16:09.07] Douglas Carswell MP: Ukip is a party of political outsiders, absolutely, and that's a good thing. The Conservative party and the Labour Party are run by a clique of people many of whom went straight from university to working in an MP's office to becoming a candidate, to becoming an MP, to becoming minister or shadow minister. And so they tend to think that the political furniture in Westminster should be arranged for the conveniences of the political elite. Ukip thinks that the political furniture should

be organised for the benefit of the people. We don't have that cadre of carrier politicians who think the way that the Labour and Conservatives think. Someone said to me in the run up to last election Ukip isn't experienced. Experienced of what? Experience of sitting in the House of Commons and using the system for you advantage? No, we don't have that experience, but that's a good thing. We're a party of the people.

[00:17:05.21] Me: We run out of time so I ask my last question. What do you think about English devolution? I am not talking about an English Parliament, instead more devolution to, more powers to cities like London, Birmingham and things like that...

[00:17:25.14] Douglas Carswell MP: I wrote a book in 2008 with Daniel Hannen called 'The Plan', and we outlined the whole series of far-reaching reforms, and one of them was localism. I like to think that Dan and I helped to make the term localism central to the Cameron vocabulary. I strongly support devolution, but devolution is not about the Treasury saying we've got the Northern Powerhouse, because the Northern Powerhouse far from being devolution makes local officials in the North of England even more dependent upon the will[?] of the Treasury. Real devolution has to start with financial devolution...

[00:18:08.27] Me: financial, taxation...

[00:18:08.27] Douglas Carswell MP: Yep. No taxation without representation, you know, no representation without taxation. Local authorities need to be given control of setting business rights and setting the council tax. I wrote a book called 'Paying for Localism' which wrote, it's available online at the Adam Smith Institute, and I outlined different ideas about devolving power to local government. I personally think that the basic unit of administration in this country should be the county, the counties. We have this identity, you know, people feel strongly that they are from Essex, or from North, that from Yorkshire, and at Yorkshire feel particularly strong that they are from Yorkshire. It's a good thing; county identity. And we have county councils, we have police and crime commissioners, the head of the police is now elected at county level, this is a policy I wrote for the Conservative Party. In a sense, the reform doesn’t need to be revolutionary; it could be incremental putting power back to county level. I would love it, if counties in

Britain had similar powers to states in the United States, or cantons in Switzerland. And why shouldn't they? If Kent... or if Essex was a state in the United States, I think I am right saying that would be the 24th biggest state in the Union, counties are good unit of local government. People talk about city-regions, I don't know what a city-region is, maybe we need to have counties and metropolitan boroughs. The key is the money, devolved control for the money. To the government's credit, I don't like giving to the government too much credit but I have to give them credit on this, they are now in a position where they're localising control over the business rates and the finances of [?] where I think they can do some quite interesting and dramatic things, in terms of giving control [?] to local authorities over the money. And I would expect that to happen. And I think that's a very good thing. I mean, the most successful countries... one of the reasons why we should leave the European Union is because it has centralised its power. I [?] noticing that happy successful countries are those where power is dispersed; the Dutch Republic, when they kicked out the Habsburgs takes off. Why is it take off? Because power's dispersed throughout the united provinces. The English Revolution happens, powers dispersed in England, no absolute monarchy, we had the industrial revolution. America, after its wonderful constitution that disperses its power takes off. Switzerland, after 1848 has this constitutional based on the American model, it takes off. Even China begins to take off economically after economic control is dispersed after 1978. So, the correlation between dispersal of power and innovation and success is very very strong. We need to disperse power. And people say ok, that means people would do things differently... people might make mistakes, absolutely, absolutely... and by having lots of different people trying out different solutions, out of that you get innovation and progress.

[00:21:13.22] Me: Ok, thank you very much!

[00:21:13.22] Douglas Carswell MP: Wonderful. Good. Thank you.

15.2 **INTERVIEW #2**

Photo source: https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/Kelvin-Hopkins/2

Speaker: Kelvin Hopkins MP

Constituency: Luton North (England)

Party: Labour Party

Time of the interview: 11th Jan 2016

Place of the interview: Portcullis House, London

[00:00:11.09] Me: My first question is, I am dealing with the pluralisation of British politics and the trend towards a multi-party system. In your opinion what are the contributing factors which lead towards this kind of multi-party system?

[00:00:28.14] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Well, I think we have always had FPTP elections which gives enormous advantage to big parties. Small parties can't get elected because she needs to have majority or more votes than any other parties in the constituency. So, when you have FPTP you can win a seat with 35% of the vote. You see, you get 35%, next get 34%, next 30%, you won. [?] So, that's the real problem, that we have had these large parties. If we went for PR representation of any kind, I think it is likely that we would break up into multi-party system. If the Conservative Party would be, you know, the sort of populist-nationalist side and then there is the free market neoliberal component, but I think there are others... I used to teach politics... Once I taught a weekend school and I teased out six different strands[?] of conservatism, six different components of conservatism. And in other countries, these different parts of fractions would be other parties, like in Poland for example, where are religious parties, but there are conservatives so they would be in the Conservative party, and there are nationalist parties who would be against the EU for more the control on immigration reasons. They would be, they are in the Conservative Party. So you got all these different groups. And the Labour party has always had since the 2nd world war a range of views from the left to right but for a long time the social-democratic left, if you like, was the dominant faction.

It was a small part of that as well, but then when Neil Kinnock became leader we saw a great shift away from left, you know, towards, what might be called, right wing social democracy or centre. They still call themselves centre-left but really they are supporting free market neoliberal capitalism, and they were not supportive of public ownership and redistributive taxation. When Neil Kinnock became leader things started to change under the influence of what became New Labour. So you've got Peter Mandelson who was the great architect of all this.

[00:03:04.11] Me: Peter Mandelson?

[00:03:04.11] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Peter Mandelson, Lord Mandelson, yes! He was close associate with Tony Blair. When John Smith died, it was Mandelson who said Tony Blair was going to be leader. And at that time Labour was so desperate to get back into office, Tony Blair was good on television, very personable looking, so the party voted for him to be leader. But he took the party way to the right, you know, want forcing through privatizations and on whole range of policies. He drifted far to roughly to where the Cameron conservatives are now. So what happened was, over of this period, you saw, though they argue with each other politically, they are actually the same. Only if you put Cameron and Blair in the room together privately, they would agree with each other on everything, my theory. And I'm seriously pretty good, I mean, nobody disagrees. So the democratic-socialist, social democracy component of Labour party was marginalised, put down, and they controlled the selections. You know, the selections of candidates is crucial in the Labour Party, and for a long time, Peter Mandelson quietly controlled the selection process for candidates. So people of the left were pushed out, and the sort of centre-right people from the Labour Party were elevated. So, now we have a parliamentary party which is very different from when it was 50 years ago. 50 years ago they were social democratic, democratic socialist, they believed in welfare state, public ownership of the railways, many parts of that, the economy were again publicly owned which is now privatized. But all of those have died, moved away, and one of the relics of that left. But now, we got a radical new youth generation coming up who don't like the consensual right wing neoliberal policies... you know, the policies of Blair and Cameron, they want something different which is why the left has suddenly elected a new leader in

Jeremy Corbyn who is way to the left, far to the left of Blair. I mean they don't inhabit the same politics at all.

[00:05:51.06] Me: I also wanted to ask you something about party line. In my impression, I think that there are two different kinds of party lines; those parties who were born outside Westminster, and those parties who were born inside. Born inside like Labour and the Conservatives, and outside like SNP, UKIP and things like that. The old parties tend to have a tiny central office out of Westminster, while the other parties have a big central office. Do you think that it has something to do with party line? I mean, big parties are less ideological, more pragmatic in party line, while at the same time, the others are more ideologically driven.

[00:06:50.00] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Well, I think they represent different political factions. But I think the big parties are ideological, but they are all privately committed to the free market neoliberal model of economics. And that's where the consensus is grown. So the big parties for sometime even though they argue with each other in public, privately they really agree with each other. So if you take Cameron and Blair, they are really ideologically identical. They would deny it but it is true. I mean, privatly, Cameron says he models himself on Tony Blair. So there is an ideology there, but... let's have a look (starting to draw on a paper), you can have a look on the spectrum if you like... You got, on the right you've got the sort of extreme right, you know, fascist and then you got UKIP, and that is populist nationalist, nationalist populist party, many parties in Europe are alike that, you know they don't like immigration and they tend to be very populists appealing to prejudice about foreigners, immigration and that's sort of things... and that where UKIP is, but they become quite sophisticated now... And then you've got the conservative part that really like UKIP, this period of the Conservative Party. So the Conservative right wing were a bit like UKIP... And then you have got this great block in the middle of neoliberal politics, Conservative and New Labour. So Conservatives and New Labour in real terms, this is ideologically, they really agree with each other... and then you got a sort of Greens and Labour left. But there is of course the extra-parliamentary revolutionary left as well, you know, the Trotskist, so you got Trotskist out there who are revolutionaries. But they are small. But they are still very noisy, you know,

they make a lot of noise, but the Labour left is more pragmatic, supports the post-war style of politics that was established by the Labour government after 1945, public ownership of the railways, public ownership of utilities, high taxes of the rich to help the poor, welfare state, you know, that's sort of thing. Whereas this slot here are secretly trying to privatise everything, including the health service. I mean, they do it carefully and in a disguised way, that even Blair was secretly meeting with American health companies, private health companies.

[00:09:47.18] Me: Really?

[00:09:47.18] Kelvin Hopkins MP: because they wanted to sell off bits of the health service. They believe passionately in the private sector and the corporate world and they want obviously to...

[00:09:57.07] Me: So, can I say after you that this part is ideological, right, these two parts and this is the pragmatic one in the middle which tries to seek compromise?...

[00:10:08.02] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Well, I don't think that's true. I think they are as ideological as them but they have a different ideology...

[00:10:13.16] Me: Oh, I see...

[00:10:13.16] Kelvin Hopkins MP: They are strongly committed to the free market, the neoliberal model. I mean I think this left where I am, I think we're more pragmatic. If you really want to have railways that work privatizing them is a bad idea because they become more expensive and they work worse. So if you really want them to work, they should be in public ownership and planned in a controlled way. Railways have been a disaster; privatization has been an expensive disaster. You know, everything has been, they tried to marketize and receive massive subsidy from the government every year, you know, billions of [?] that goes into private pockets now because private companies are running the railway services so they want their profits, so the profits have to come from fare payers and from the government, a subsidy. Now that is stupid! You know, in a public sector it would be publicly accountable to parliament and it would be much more

efficient, less expensive to run. And we have the highest rail fares in Europe. Some of the fares are six times higher than [?].

[00:11:32.13] Me: Yeah, sometimes I can feel it on my skin. (laughing)

[00:11:37.00] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Well, exactly. (laughing) Well, you know, I think to nationalise the railway is pragmatic but these people are ideologically opposed to it, even though it might be sensible. If it [?] a complete collapse they would have to take it over but they would be reluctant to do that. They wanted to stay out there.

[00:11:56.13] Me: Yes. Can we turn to party line? So, what happens if there is a chief whip, or someone from party leadership from the neoliberal branch of Labour and you are with your own ideological convictions and you vote differently? Of course, you are a rebellious voter...

[00:12:19.05] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Yes.

[00:12:19.05] Me: ...what happens if you don't keep the party line?

[00:12:19.26] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Well, the whips historically would have been quite strict about that. Now, they could have [?] remove the whip when they are expelled from the parliamentary party and then you can't be reselected as a candidate. But the whips have been nervous about doing that because they know if you do that than those who rebel become heroes outside, had the support of the members, and the trade unions and so they are nervous about doing actually much. And what has happened over the election about Jeremy Corbyn is that tens of thousands of members suddenly decided to elect a left wing, who had said fed up with the right wing politics or [?] right wing politics of this group here. They don't want Blairism, they don't want neoliberalism, they want proper Labour party which helps the poor, doesn't want wars, doesn't fight wars and so on. So, the membership outside has to be considered and now that Blairism has lost its credibility. Now the Blair's been rejected not just by the Labour party members but by the country. He is [?] the Iraq war and other things, but the Iraq war particular. People don't want that anymore, they want a change. Across Europe, I mean, you have seen this over in many countries as well, Hungary is very different but, in Western Europe, I mean after

the 2nd world war there used to be a big socialist party, a big conservative party. In Greece you saw that the Labour party, Pasok, which was initially regarded as a socialist party of the left sided with New Democracy, the right wing party, to support austerity against the wishes of the people. So the people then voted Sirisa, anti-austerity party, and the Pasok which was this big socialist party was going down to a little party for 5%.

[00:14:27.12] Me: So, can I conclude that there is a kind of anti-establishment feeling which is the explanatory factor for this pluralisation of politics, for the evolution of new smaller parties, the popularity of devolved parties, things like that?

[00:14:46.27] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Yes, indeed, exactly, yes. I mean they feel there's been a kind of conspiracy by the political establishment against people. I mean the Scottish Nationalist Party, Scotland is a more socialist country, more Labour than... but they threw out the Labour Party and they voted Scottish nationalists. One of their slogans was; the Labour Party are 'red Tories'. You know, they are normally red but they are really Tories. And they threw them out. Now in Scotland, there is one Labour MP, one Conservative, one Lib Dem and 56 SNP. So the anti-establishment feeling is very strong in Scotland. (getting a phone call, stops speaking.)

[00:15:47.24] Kelvin Hopkins MP: (after the phone call) I am trying to give a genuine picture of what politics is really like over here. I mean the big difference between our parties and the continental parties is that they are small fractions of politics and they are very disciplined, and if you don't agree with your one party you got another party. Over here, if you wanna be in parliament you got to join one of the major parties.

[00:16:16.22] Me: Sorry to say, but it is exactly the opposite of what I learnt at university: that Westminster democracy is 'parliamentary dictatorship,' I was told that...

[00:16:28.26] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Yeah!

[00:16:32.02] Me: The whip is so strong...

[00:16:33.09] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Yeah, you are absolutely right. What because you have to have the approval of... The difference is, I think, that we have quite strong local parties in, we are selected as individual candidates in constituencies, and if you've been

there for a long time and you have a good reputation and people think you are a good person, it is very difficult for the party to get rid of you. Now, we have these party dictatorships because of the dominance of the executive over the legislative, really. If you want to get in politics in Britain, you don't join a minor party because they don't get elected and even at the last election many people wanted to vote UKIP but they didn't vote UKIP. If you vote UKIP the Conservatives would have been defeated and Labour would have come opposing a referendum. So Cameron said, if you want a referendum vote Conservative and lots of people went to vote Conservative and not UKIP because they knew that UKIP would never get enough seats. They might get 3-4-5 seats but the Conservatives will get 3-400 seats. So at the election time, termal elections, the small parties tend to be squeezed by the big parties because you want to get your government in. And there are many people on the left I know who didn't like New Labour but they voted Labour reluctantly to stop the Conservatives. And many conservatives don't like the Conservatives very much but they vote Conservatives to stop Labour. So these small parties get squeezed at election time. It is very interesting, in the last European Parliament elections UKIP won nationally because it was PR for style but also the European Parliament doesn't really matter. So lots of people who in normal times vote Conservatives voted UKIP, or even Labour voted UKIP. If you go back the European elections before that Labour had its worst election result in its history because people voted UKIP, Conservative, BNP, all the smaller parties because it is proportional representation.

[00:18:50.14] Me: Yes, can we talk a little bit about your country's EU relationship? You campaigned for NO in 1975, after it, your party switched, however, you remained on the euroscpetic side. Could you please tell me why your party changed its view, and why you didn't join them?

[00:19:17.12] Kelvin Hopkins MP: There was always a large minority within our party including people at cabinet level who supported membership with the then Common Market. And if you remember in 1975 the cabinet members, the leader of the party PM Harold Wilson said they can have a free vote. So, they didn't have a disciplined vote in parliament on the EU issue. Now the Labour party had a conference which voted

overwhelmingly for NO but the parliamentary Labour party was unhappy about that because maybe a quarter or third of them wanted to stay in the Common Market. So Harold Wilson said; OK, we'll have a free vote. So, several cabinet members and ministers voted for to stay in others voted to come out. But the majority of Labour MPs still voted to come out, but with the Conservative votes it was enough to make sure that Labour stayed in. So, there was no change. And for the change happened, because this minority which was always there, the pro-EU free market neoliberal right wing of the Labour Party, they always wanted to change party policy. When the Conservatives got in and were elected for the 3rd time, Margaret Thatcher '79, '83 and '87, they thought we will never ever win again, so we can't get rights back[?] for our people, we'll have to depend upon the European Union. And they put this argument and a lot of Labour Party people and trade unionists were so desperate they switched to be supportive of the European Union. Because they thought Margaret Thatcher was so right wing the EU would be not so right wing therefore they vote for the EU.

[00:21:10.00] Me: Ok, so it was Thatcher’s first step, and after it there was a reaction from the Labour Party to go into the position of the former Conservative Party.

[00:21:26.25] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Yeah, yes.

[00:21:26.25] Me: And all the arguments about individual worker's rights and things like that are much more of a narrative, or... ?

[00:21:31.20] Kelvin Hopkins MP: No, that was what the argument used to win the trade unions. The trade unions are a big block in the Labour Party and that time they had a majority at the conference. So they had to win over the trade unions and they said to the trade unions; Mrs Thatcher has got rid of worker's rights and trade union rights, you're going to be destroyed unless you seek the protection of social Europe of the laws, protecting trade unions and workers in the EU. So a lot of trade unionists switched side and moved over. Once that happened the rest of the party fell in line. There were still Eurosceptics; myself, I mean I wasn't an MP, Tony Benn who was a major figure in British politics, he remained a lifelong eurosceptic, he thought that the EU was anti-democratic and anti-socialist, there was a leading trade unionist called Bob Crow from the

railway union who again was a strong working class anti-EU because he was on the left. So there was always the left there, eurosceptic left, but as the selection process was controlled by Mandelson and the machine, they eliminated people bit by bit; there's all left wingers who were anti-EU who died or retired and were replaced by New Labour people who are pro-EU.

[00:22:55.18] Me: Does the argument remain for the eurosceptic part of Labour that it was a club for Christian Democrats and that was why it would have been better to stay away from the EU?

[00:23:12.09] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Well, I don't think even then because the Christian democrats are quite collectivists. They believe in, you know, welfare states and they are collectivists; it is the free market neoliberals who are quite different, they want to break down national barriers, get rid of government ownership of public assets and have the market and the corporations governing the world. This is what the neoliberals are about who is following the philosophy of... you have heard of Friedrich von Hayek?

[00:23:40.09] Me: Hayek, yes!

[00:23:41.13] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Well, they are Hayekians! And it's the Hayek drive. He believed that the state should always be diminished and weakened. He didn't believe in a strong state. He wrote a book called The road to serfdom which Margaret Thatcher carried around like a little Bible because he believed if you have a substantial state provision we'll all become slaves of the state. So the freedom love wanted the free market, privatisation, diminish the state. And that's what Margate Thatcher believed. And that's why she started privatising, diminishing the role of state and social housing. And Blair believed the same thing. Mrs Thatcher said her greatest achievement was the creation of Tony Blair, which she got Tony Blair to lead the Labour Party, it was her policies...

[00:24:41.29] Me: And when it comes to UKIP, the eurosceptic Labour and UKIP, if I compare the two because both of them want to leave for a different reason. UKIP want to leave for sovereignty...

[00:24:58.08] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Well, I think we do as well. But I want sovereignty so we can govern ourselves to we can create a more fair and democratic, more social democratic society. So what we can't to that if laws or governments actually comes from Brussels rather than from our own parliament. The great thing about our system is that actually you can change governments. You can elect a new government and have a change, whereas in the EU if all power goes to the EU, there is no possibility of change. And you are seeing how they behave towards Greece which's been brutal, absolutely brutal...

[00:25:34.24] Me: and even Portugal, where was a properly elected government that wasn't...

[00:25:39.10] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Exactly! So we know, and I think many ordinary people know that the EU is not interested in a fair fully employed democratic society, they believe in the free market. And it's interesting! You got in Poland now, you got an election of Conservative Catholic party and is ousted the Conservative free market party. I said to some Polish, I lunched with Polls about 2-3 years ago, Polish politicians, what they said, there is no social democratic party in Poland, but I believe in trade unions, the welfare state, in caring for less well off people, and I don't believe in the free market and letting us all in this race where some people lose and some people win. So what would I do in Poland, they said, we'd vote for the Catholic party. That trade union support would be with the Catholic party and not with the free marketers. So it is very strange! Christian democracy, I mean in Germany particularly, Christian democracy, social democracy they kind of overlapped. They are very collectivists. But the free market was taken over, lead by Britain I have to say, you know, it was Britain started this drift towards free market neoliberal politics, economics. Margaret Thatcher soon as she came in, she changed Britain overnight.

[00:27:13.07] Me: Probably it has some relation with the Catholic faith and the protestant faith. Your country it is a protestant country, and the Catholic attitude is more providential...

[00:27:25.22] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Yeah, that's right, exactly. But individualism would also be socialist and social democratic. If you look at Scandinavian countries which I mean very strongly social democratic... they are all protestant countries. I mean in Britain it is a bit more confused because many people aren't religious, so many people in Britain don't really understand the difference between Catholic and Protestant at all. Whereas in Germany and in France everybody understands the difference. I mean, I am a humanist myself, I am an atheist, not religious. But I know the difference, I am interested in religion because of its impact on politics. Interestingly, when I was last in Hungary, we were given a tour of Hungary. There was a young woman, she kept going all about how important the Catholic Church was in Hungary. And I asked what proportion of the population in Hungary are Catholic, and she said, 60%... What about the 40%? (laughing)

[00:28:28.00] Me: They are Protestants...

[00:28:28.00] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Really, yeah? So she was putting a particular view. And you know, that was very interesting. She got very annoyed at me because I said, [?] a simple question and she didn’t want to be asked that question.

[00:28:43.27] Me: Well, there wasn't a state religion, it was the religion of the Habsburgs which was Catholic but Hungarians were divided; Catholics, Protestants... Well, I guess it was more... I respect your time, so I don't want to...

[00:29:00.04] Kelvin Hopkins MP: No, no, I am interested. I always like to get the [?] of politics. When I go to other countries Holland, Denmark, Poland, wherever, I talk to people and try to find out what their politics is really about. Getting an understanding of what lies beneath the surface, it is so important in politics, it's not just a simple sort of... I mean, I was in Denmark some two years ago and I sat with a Danish politician in their parliament listening to debates. Now, I asked him, I said; well you've got I think 9 parties in parliament and over 3 of them called liberal parties. But each of those parties would fit into our parties. One was effectively a green social-democratic party, one was a kind of free market like the Free Democrats in Germany and [?], three parties called themselves liberals. They were completely different parties and British people wouldn't understand that at all... we're not very sophisticated politically... and then in Holland, it's even more

complicated; you got 3 religious parties in parliament, they got a party for the animals, a party for pensioners, they got two socialist parties, social democratic and a socialist party, and I think there are 14 parties in parliament. And there are always coalitions. So politics over there is very different. And what you do is you can look all the different parties, you can work out what they believe in and then that's my party. Over here, we have, you know historically, there are the Conservatives which is about snobbery, being rich, being more upper class and Labour which means if you are working class you vote Labour...

[00:30:51.04] Me: which is not socialist...

[00:30:51.04] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Yeah, but the word socialist they wouldn't understand much but I vote Labour because I am worker, I understand that. In a sense, we haven't had a kind of experiences that you've had and the continent of Europe. Every country in Europe apart from Britain was either been conquered in war, it's had revolutions, it's had fascist dictatorships, communist dictatorships, it's had all sorts of... but we had this continuity going on for 400 years now, well, 50 at least. So we retained some of the structures of the past. Shakespeare a great playwright, you know Shakespeare, if you look at some of Shakespeare's comedies the social relations that he describes in there is still here. In Midsummer Night's Dream, famous play, and where the king and the court go to see the ordinary workers doing a play, Boom the weaver and his friends, doing that, and they are simple folk, and they talk in working class accents, [?] Noblesse oblige, you know we'll kindly towards these simple folk, but that vision is still there!... I love classical music, but in classical music you are identified as middle class and when I was, obviously it was in my previous job, I was talking about classical music and a friend of my said; stop talking about classical music, you don't get any of that here. She was hostile to it was seen to be middle class and she wasn't middle class. She was sort of joking...

[00:32:58.18] Me: In Italy, everybody listens to classical music, even the workers...

[00:32:58.18] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Yeah, yeah, their social relations are different. And it is not even about economics. Over here it's about culture and education. You can have somebody who is very rich, who's made money out of building industry, betting shops or pubs or something, but he is still working class, his culture. And whereas someone who's

an unemployed school teacher with a degree in French is middle class. And as soon as people speak in Britain, you can tell what class they are from.

[00:33:34.24] Me: You mean the pronunciation, or the words?

[00:33:37.20] Kelvin Hopkins MP: The way we speak. I mean I speak in Standard English. I don't use colloquialism, I don't use idioms, I tend to speak...

[00:33:48.03] Me: I can recognise the posh English which uses lots of adjectives and speaks slowly.

[00:33:55.14] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Yes indeed. (laughing) I said to a friend of mine, she was German, she came from Potsdam and her husband was English, and we worked together 35 years ago, and she said to me one day; Kelvin what is it class? I do not understand British class, the English class, it is so difficult. I said it was very simply; with your husband John I haven't met your husband John, and I tell you about him; now, John is a clearly educated man, but he didn't go to private school, I think he went to what we call a grammar school, a state school, and he'd clearly been to university but I don't think that he went to Oxford or Cambridge, I think he probably went to what we call a 'red brick' university which is respectable but not Oxford. Oxford, Cambridge but then some respectable university, and there is the most recent ones which we call 'plate glass' because they are all modern glass buildings, and there is the 'red brick' which for the traditional universities and then there's the elite, Oxford, Cambridge. So, he is probably went to one of the 'red brick' universities and his left wing politics are suspect his parents maybe teachers, for example. Because he is clearly educated man, been to university, but he is left wing. So she said; how did you know; his parents were teachers, he went to Bristol University and that he went to grammar school? I said because as soon as he speaks I know and he would tell you about me as well in the same way. But when somebody people in here, the Conservatives went to boarding schools went to Eaton and they speak in entirely different accent. They speak with a posh accent. My accent actually is neutral, it's not posh, but I speak in standard English. I don't use colloquialism... Little story! A small story for you; we were in France on holiday, camping, caravan, round big table with some French people, with some Dutch people, with some German people we

were dinking a wave listening to British people, one of my friends in England, working class guy, working class man, he said to one of the French maybe, he spoke English, he understood English, understood my English when I spoke... 'Bit of a top up love.' And he said; 'Je ne comprends pas.' I said he was asking; would you like more wine? 'Bit of a top up love.' Top up mean filling a glass again. Bit of a top up love. And he said this to him, didn't understand why she didn’t understand him. Now, I would never use the expression. I would say; would you like more wine? White or red? You know, I would ask in Standard English, and that is a cultural difference.

[00:36:36.17] Me: I still can't understand Boris Johnson because he was in Eaton...

[00:36:41.11] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Oh no, he is posh, yeah. He rambles, talks like; wrrhhbjh all time. I mean, if you speak clearly and not too quickly, I speak quickly, I'm sorry about that but I try to speak you standard phrases in grammatical form. I try to speak in sentences, so that people could understand me.

[00:37:03.11] Me: Well, thank you very much. I really appreciate and I don't want to hold you back.

[00:37:08.06] Kelvin Hopkins MP: Yeah, ok.

15.3 **INTERVIEW #3**

Photo source: https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/commons/dr-paul-monaghan/4383

Speaker: Paul Monaghan MP

Constituency: Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross (Scotland).

Party: Scottish National Party (SNP)

Time of the interview: 13th Jan 2016

Place of the interview: Portcullis House, London

[00:00:15.16] Me: My first question is about multi-party system. In your opinion, what is the major factor which contributes to this kind of pluralisation of British party politics, that there are more and more smaller parties involved, the success of SNP as well, or the rise of UKIP? What are the major and most important factors?

[00:00:37.02] Paul Monaghan MP: Well, I think first of all, there has always been what we might have called the plurality of views across the UK. And there has always been a number of smaller political parties wishing to participate in the political process. So the number of political parties is not something that is new, what is new is their popularity. I exclude from that UKIP, which is a slightly different case now. (I will come back in a short time). For many decades, the political system in the UK has really been in the mean about the Conservatives and Unionist Party and the Labour Party with to some extent some involvement from the Liberals or the Liberal Democrat Party, depending on what they have called themselves through the last century or so. I think increasingly the policies and the political perspective of the two main parties, the Conservatives and the Labour Party, does not set well with the population. So I think both of those parties are moving to the right, the political right, and they are leaving behind then the majority of the population who do not share their right wing political views and thinking.

[00:02:14.28] Me: You mean the neoliberal economic policy?

[00:02:18.26] Paul Monaghan MP: Yeah. I think, perhaps in the last 10-20 years there has, (?) across the UK, there has been a shift to the political right of the mainstream parties leaving behind them as I have said the population which has meant that the population then started to look for alternative forms of representation. One example of that is the rise of UKIP which although in many respects is quite right wing, it is offering an alternative to the Conservatives and the Labour that is focused around Europe and the European Union and in many respects is a form of grievance politics because it is picking up on things that are wrong with the European Union and emphasizing levels of the size faction. So now respect many people on the left are willing to vote for UKIP because they see it as an alternative to what they believe is that shift to the right, that alignment with Europe, that erosion of immigration laws, the erosion of welfare etc. So they see it as an alternative.

[00:03:48.22] Me: Can we say that the major factor is anti-establishment feeling? The population is complaining more...

[00:03:58.08] Paul Monaghan MP: I think in England, I would say, no. I don't think it is against the establishment. I think what you are seeing in England particularly, to some extent Wales, and to some extent Northern Ireland, is a perpetuation of the philosophy of unionism but with small minded nationalism running through it. So the form of nationalism that you see rising in England, Wales, and to some extent Northern Ireland is about putting out boundaries, barriers, it's about excluding others, and it's about trying to retrench and emphasize some of the perceived positive aspects of the politics of the UK from perhaps the 17th 18th and 19th centuries, when it was about a colonial empire. So they believe that by withdrawing from Europe, supporting the Queen, developing Westminster here, there are to some extent, I believe, ignoring the fact that we are living in a 21st century and we are living in an increasingly international world which they are resistant to, and that they want to go back to something that they perceive was better in the past.

[00:05:26.28] Me: In Scotland, what is the reason for the success of your party? Is that, as you mentioned before, the distance between the population and the traditional parties or is there something else?

[00:05:42.22] Paul Monaghan MP: No. So I am giving you the position South of the Border. I think in Scotland the view is quite different. The people of Scotland always felt quite close to aligned with Europe, and they have had good relationships with many European countries, so in the mean the people of Scotland are international in outlook, they are outward facing and they are welcoming of incomers. I think those three aspects stand in contrast to the prevailing view of the population in the rest of the UK. So we have a different outlook, yeah. That outlook, I think, shapes people's aspirations, shapes their objectives and it shapes their awareness of the world. I think in the last 10-15 years, the population of Scotland in particular has had the opportunity to understand the world and what is going all in the world not through the mainstream media but through social media. I think that has contributed to a growing awareness of the fact that the people of Scotland are not well represented by the UK parliament, and that there is a different way to govern our country. So first of all there has always been a fairly substantial minority of people in Scotland who have been interested in an independent Scotland and willing to promote that outcome. I think it's in relatively recent years that that view has extended to become, what I argue, is the majority of view now in Scotland; that Scotland would be better off independent, it would be better off independent economically, it would be better off socially and it would be better off culturally, and that we would be able to promote our own identity around the world, and adopt the role and develop the role of a good partner to other nations around the world in a way that we are precluded from doing as part of the UK. And again I think it's only in recent years that that understanding has become developed and entrenched though social media which allows access to up to date information that is not influenced by the political bias of the government here in London.

[00:08:32.25] Me: And the media, which is controlled by the traditional parties....

[00:08:38.04] Paul Monaghan MP: Yeah, by the establishment. I think the people of Scotland have always been resistant to that idea of an elite or an establishment here in London. I think that's a majority view and it always has been. Some people were prepared to accept that because it was the only alternative, there were no alternatives to that level of government, and in recent years I think people understand that there are alternatives, there are different ways of doing it, and that is something that we should push for. I think

in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, the people in these countries are still very accepting of the idea of an elite and of an establishment here in London, and they think it's a good thing.

[00:09:25.27] Me: Ok. Can we turn back to the Scottish-EU relations? I looked up the referendum results of 1975, and the lowest support for EU membership was in Scotland. Now, what has changed since that time? It's true that Scotland nowadays is the biggest supporter of the EU. Why wasn't it at that time and why has it changed to this time?

[00:09:57.12] Paul Monaghan MP: I think after the formation of the Common market as it was in that time the information that flowed from Westminster to Scotland was limited and quite pour. The objectives of the Common Market in my view were not fully explained to the population, and the principle of the Common Market was something that I feel was seen to be an issue should have been deliberated upon by the UK government at the time. It comes back to that idea of that elite, that establishment, that some people were made the decisions and needn't be else for us is follow. I think that was very much the model of government in the early 70s. By 1979 the people of Scotland, I think it was the start of the process of real disenchantment with the UK government from the people of Scotland, there was a referendum in 1979 which the people of Scotland won but the analysis was undertaken on the bases of rules that were applied to the vote at the very last moment to effectively ignore the will of the Scottish people. Specifically what happened was, at the last moment, before the vote the UK government said that there had to be majority of 40 %. Which effectively meant that the vote could never be won. So it wasn't a legitimate way forward. That I think encouraged the people of Scotland, or many of the people of Scotland, to start to look at [?] for an alternative model for representation, I think that was back to my original point, that is probably the birth of the SNP and the philosophies of the SNP in the modern era. Part of that, coming back to your point, is about the role of the EU. I think, after 1979, after that vote had been, as we would call it, gerrymandered, you have heard that word?

[00:12:55.09] Me: No. (I am taking notes.)

[00:12:55.09] Paul Monaghan MP: Gerrymandered, it's all one word.

[00:13:02.28] Me: Like this?

[00:13:02.28] Paul Monaghan MP: Yeah. All one word though. After that vote was gerrymandered, shortly after that, oh sorry, before that we had Margaret Thatcher come to power in the UK. She held very strong views about Scotland and very strong views about the nature of neoliberal politics...[?] she has developed. She went on to decimate Scottish industry, Scottish production generally and destroy the Scottish economy and the traditional industries that we had.

[00:13:46.11] Me: Like shipyards...

[00:13:46.11] Paul Monaghan MP: Shipyards, mining, you know, whole range of car manufacturing, a whole range of things. She focus the UK economy on the City of London, and financial markets, not on production, and that's one of the reasons that we have service industry today, but I am coming back to the point that part of her philosophy was the, to some extent the erosion of separate identities around the UK, and she worked very hard at trying to destroy that. That was heavily resisted by the Scottish people. There is a view that the Scottish people have benefitted from the EU in many ways through the development and implementation of European social policy and law.

[00:14:50.00] Paul Monaghan MP: Worker protection?

[00:14:50.00] Paul Monaghan MP: Yeah. That tempered the policies of the UK government. So the some extent, the people of Scotland was protected from that government by the EU. You understand that point?

[00:15:03.22] Me: Yeah, this is the same philosophy that Labour followed, right? They also saw some kind of protection in the EU against the neoliberalism of Margaret Thatcher. Something like that.

[00:15:17.25] Paul Monaghan MP: Yeah, so I think in some respects we benefitted from that, and I think at that time also we had other social influences like foreign holidays increasingly became popular, package holidays. So all of a sudden we had relatively large movements of people around the EU for a whole range of different reasons; business, social pleasure etc. I think that again started to encourage the links between the people of

Scotland and others around Europe. We also increasingly had people like yourself coming to Scotland to undertake research or to attain Scottish universities and again once people have been there that fosters quite good relationships and good links between... I've done it myself, I attended university, I've got friends all across Europe who attended university with because they came to my universities to study, things like that, I think have a lasting pleasure and I think the people of Scotland on the whole feel quite close to others around Europe. We don't feel threatened by them. I think we also welcome people who choose to immigrate to Scotland and I think we see them as an opportunity to contribute to our society, to our communities, to bring new skills, new knowledge, new aspects to our culture. I think that's quite different in the rest of the UK. I think that's resisted and that's not welcomed.

[00:17:04.10] Me: I can agree with you because when I visited Edinburgh I could feel that kind of difference, as well. By the way, I must tell you that I felt this kind of difference in Northern England, as well. So, in the economically less developed parts. I went to Middlesbrough, they were very friendly people there, because nobody wants to visit them. But in Scotland, for another reason people were very friendly with me.

[00:17:33.18] Paul Monaghan MP: Yeah, and I think that's quite common perception. Before being elected, I'd run a charity and I had many colleagues who were from Eastern Europe, all over Europe. Their experience uniformly was that, they came to Scotland because they felt at home, they felt that they have been welcomed, they felt that they were valued in the community and that their children going to school were welcomed and very quickly integrated into this society. Some of them who had lived South of the Border prior to live in Scotland said that they had quite unpleasant experiences. They hadn't been welcomed, they had been shunned, their children had been bullied at school and lots of stories like that. Again what I probably would choose to highlight is the different outlook of the people of Scotland relative to the people in other parts of the UK. You know, we are accused as a party of being nationalistic and people attend to portray that nationalism as being something unpleasant, as being something that borders on racism, on something that borders on occasionally neo-nazism, in the extreme. That's not the case at all. All that we want as a nation is the right to govern ourselves, to promote our culture, to promote

our economy and to implement social policies that are meaningful to the people of Scotland and are aligned with the values of the people of Scotland.

[00:19:27.17] Me: Thank you very much for mentioning nationalism, social policy and other values because that would have been my other question about the ideology and the party line of SNP. Now, I can see that this party is very united in one thing; representing Scotland. It is also united around a kind of social-democratic economic policy. Because it is a broad church, there are lots of different opinions. Do you see that this party line, this central ideology is not shared by everyone and it is a kind of source which can lead to the break-up of SNP, of course in the worst case?

[00:20:29.06] Paul Monaghan MP: I think you are right that the political views within the SNP do represent a broad church, a broad spectrum of views. There are some people in the SNP who are really quite far to the left, and there are some who are quite far to the political right. The uniting factor is the desire for independence. Beyond that obvious aspect, coming back to your idea about social democratic principles, people in the SNP, whether tending to be on the left, or tending to be on the right, do inherently want to see a fair society where opportunity is available to everyone and everyone has the right to free education, to maximize their opportunities in life, and we also, I think, accept the fact that as a society we have a social responsibility to those who are vulnerable whether that's through illness, disability, or age or whatever. So the political views on how the economy should be run are to some extent subservient, it takes second place to our philosophy about how we should manage ourselves as a nation to create a fair society.

[00:22:06.24] Me: Yes, and what about the values, because it seems to me that the SNP is increasingly liberal, so when it comes to values, it shares in many respects the values of the Lib Dems. Well, I am just asking you, are there any difficulties in this aspect? I mean, let's talk about same sex-marriage; that your party supports it very much. Even in 2014, in Scotland at the voting, about 2/3rd or 3/4th of the MSPs supported it. Now what is the situation in the Westminster party group? Is it a unanimous view, or are there people who are more sceptical about these kind of liberal values, about same-sex marriage, things like that?

[00:23:20.28] Paul Monaghan MP: I think the views of the Westminster group are consistent. I am not aware of anybody in the Westminster SNP group who objects to same-sex marriage. In fact, one of our colleagues was married last Friday, same-sex marriage...

[00:23:48.29] Me: in Scotland... Because it's legal there, but not here...

[00:23:54.19] Paul Monaghan MP: I think it is legal here. I think, I am not sure about that. It is certainly legal in Scotland. He was married on Friday, we had our group meeting last evening and he was given a random[?] applause, and welcomed. So it was happy day for us. So the Westminster group, I think, on all aspects of social values, we are absolutely consistent that we want to see a quality in every respect, we want to see the maximisation of opportunity for people. I think whilst we do have a differencism opinion occasionally in terms of views of particular policies that relate perhaps to economic factors, you know macro-economics, I think that does not spill over into social values at all. I think we are absolutely of one mind on that issue. Which I think is interesting because Scotland traditionally has been quite a religious country with strong Presbyterian values and there is very little of that strong Presbyterian culture has carried forward into the modern SNP, very little.

[00:25:22.26] Me: So, there is, what we can see on the Continent that nationalism usually goes together with Christian values, it doesn't happen in Scotland.

[00:25:34.14] Paul Monaghan MP: Not so much, no! Because I think there is a broad range of faiths represented in the Westminster group. For example, I think the majority of the people have no religious adherence, we have some people that are Roman Catholic, we have some people that are Church of Scotland, and we have some people that are Muslim. It makes no difference what their religious background is. Whereas if I went back to my childhood in Scotland, the majority of view would have been Protestant, it would have been quite staunch Protestant, and people would have been very sceptical of other sorts of alternative faith. That's not the case today! I think faith based views, faith based background, I think are no longer as prominent as they used to be. Certainly not in public life!

[00:26:40.01] Me: Can I ask you a question about the electoral system, the reform of the electoral system? Does the SNP, or you personally, support the reform of the FPTP system, knowing that it is not representing well the population, however, it gave you a lot of MP seats, which is very beneficial for your party? However, in Scotland you adopted a PR electoral system. Now, what is the policy on the UK general electoral system?

[00:27:20.11] Paul Monaghan MP: Well, first of all, we don't set the policy on the electoral system in Scotland or in the UK. It's imposed upon us by this parliament.

[00:27:34.03] Me: Really?

[00:27:34.03] Paul Monaghan MP: Yeah. Even in Scotland.

[00:27:38.09] Me: The AMS system is imposed by...

[00:27:38.09] Paul Monaghan MP: Westminster.

[00:27:43.13] Me: OK.

[00:27:43.13] Paul Monaghan MP: So it's not a system that we would choose. So I don't think that the PR system in Scotland serves Scotland particularly well. I think it was designed deliberately by Westminster to avoid the formation or the election of majority governments in the Scottish parliament. It is designed to make that very very difficult, if not impossible. However, the SNP have managed to do just that. We did elect a majority government in Scotland in 2010, and to some extent that was perceived you[?] have broken the electoral system designed by Westminster which was an attempt to preclude that happening. The same in Wales, the same system in Wales. They have never managed to form a majority government. The FPTP system has never served my party well in the past in any election. It conversely [?] is designed to encourage the formation of majority governments here in Westminster by removing the need for any kind of proportionality, and as you know somebody requires 50%+1 vote. I think in 2015 that system worked against Westminster for the first time, and I think that the, meaning the establishment here, is frustrated and worried by that, and is now looking at ways to adjust the system to return it to a situation that they might find more acceptable.

[00:29:40.25] Me: And would you support this kind of change for a more PR electoral system?

[00:29:46.10] Paul Monaghan MP: I think if Westminster is going to revise the voting system, we will have to see what that proposal looks like and we will have to evaluate it to see if it is going to be a fair system, not just to the people of Scotland, but to the people of the UK more generally. My own personal view is that they won't adjust that because it suits the Conservative Party.

[[00:30:22.24] Me: But the big question is the Labour, what they want to do with the electoral system...

[00:30:22.24] Paul Monaghan MP: Yeah, it's a big question for Labour, but Labour was very happy with that until last year.

[00:30:31.04] Me: Yes, but if it happens again and again, perhaps they will make up their mind.

[00:30:39.11] Paul Monaghan MP: That's clearly an issue for Labour. I don't think it will happen again and again and again, because I don't think that Scotland will be part of it for very many more years.

[00:30:50.16] Me: Ok, I can understand that. One of my last questions, if you don't mind, can we talk about the devolution as an institution in the UK? Do you support, generally speaking, further devolution in the UK?

[00:31:09.15] Paul Monaghan MP: Further devolution... do you?...

[00:31:11.00] Me: regional devolution...

[00:31:12.04] Paul Monaghan MP: Yes, absolutely, so localism you may call it. Yeah, absolutely...

[00:31:15.08] Me: Because, when I ask this question, I also think of not only Scotland but also different parts of England, like some people in London want more independence, in

other metropolitan areas also towns want more independence, even some counties. Do you think it's a good idea?

[00:31:38.29] Paul Monaghan MP: I think views differ. I have a relative who is a Labour councillor in the North of England, and I was speaking to her last weekend and she was showing me some work that she was doing politically to create links between six local authorities in North East of England to pull them together to create a new structure that could accept more powers from Westminster. She seemed quite optimistic that that was a good idea. I then asked her if she think it as a good idea why did the people of England vote against regional assemblies in, I don't know when they had that vote, in the 90s I think it was. You are aware of that?

[00:32:28.16] Me: No.

[00:32:28.27] Paul Monaghan MP: You have to look up then, Marton. I think it was in the 90s. Shortly after the, maybe even in the early 2000s, I am not of this sure, you have to look, but anyway, there was effectively a referendum across England about whether they should have what was called at, proposed at that time regional assemblies. So the idea would have been a number, I think it was 6 or 8 regional assemblies across England that powers would be devolved to encourage that idea of localism and distribution of devolution effectively. And the people of England voted against it by quite a substantial margin.

[00:33:21.16] Me: So they didn't want it. But right now, there is a new trend; English votes for English laws.

[00:33:22.13] Paul Monaghan MP: That's a slightly different thing. The vote about the regional assemblies in England, I think as I understand that the analysis was that the people votes against it because they didn't want another tier of government with more politicians taking money out of the system.

[00:33:42.25] Me: More establishment...

[00:33:42.25] Paul Monaghan MP: Yeah. So they voted against it. I think in Scotland, we have had, we've reformed the Scottish Parliament and I use the word 'reform', and now

that is becoming more mature, I think that there are some opportunities becoming evident for devolution of powers from the Scottish parliament to local authorities in specific areas, about specific things and I think that's to be welcomed, and I think it is something that as the parliament grows and develops and receives more powers from Westminster some of those will be passed down to local level to allow local economies to develop in a more effective way.

[00:34:32.01] Me: So just to understand it better, so this kind of all EVEL issue is not about devolution? Or it's a political game?

[00:34:41.15] Paul Monaghan MP: Yes. So devolution, I think to be welcomed. EVEL I think is a different issue altogether I think. You have to go back to the referendum 2014 on Scottish independence.

[00:35:01.21] Me: It's the day after Cameron announced that then there would be the next step for [?]...

[00:35:08.02] Paul Monaghan MP: Yeah, and almost the first words out of his mouth were that there would not be further devolution to, there would not be new powers distributed to Scotland, without the same thing effectively happening to in parallel in England or in [?]... The way that he has chosen to do that is not by forming an English Parliament, go back just a little... One of the promises made in the very last days before the referendum vote in Scotland was that if the people of Scotland voted No to independence that would mean that a federal system would be developed and deployed across the UK. And he presents EVEL as being part of that federal system. So what he is doing is amending the working practices of the parliament here to present a view that federalisms is being developed in the UK. It's not. What he is doing is eroding the rights of Scottish MPs and Northern Ireland and Welsh to participate in the business of what supposed to be the UK parliament. So, I think naively he is actually contributing to the view that Scotland should be independent by removing rights and privileges of Scottish MPs. So he has made us second class MPs in what has supposed to be the UK parliament. If he wanted to ensure that devolution in England took place at the same pace as devolution in Scotland what he should have done is formed an English parliament,

separate from this place, and emphasize the fact that this is the UK parliament, in a federal UK with other parliaments governing devolved powers in the various parts.

[00:37:42.18] Me: Like a senate...

[00:37:42.18] Paul Monaghan MP: Pardon? Like a Senate... Yes. That's what he should have done if he wanted to see [?] the Union. He hasn't done that. He has again undermined Scotland within the UK by removing representatives like myself, removing our rights to participate in certain debates. So he has damaged, I think, significantly the credibility of the UK Parliament.

[00:38:19.22] Me: Ok, I can understand it. Thank you very much.

15.4 **INTERVIEW #4**

Photo source: https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/lords/lord-wallace-of-tankerness/630

Speaker: Lord Jim Wallace

Full title: The Rt Hon. Lord Wallace of Tankerness QC (Scotland).

Party: Liberal Democrats (LD)

Time of the interview: 23rd Oct 2015

Place of the interview: House of Lords, Peer's Office

Summary

He argues that the shift in British party politics from two-partyism to multi-partyism is caused by several factors. However, the most important among them is the 'alienation' from traditional party politics. The EP elections and devolution are less important in this respect, though they exist. A potential contributor to further pluralisation of British politics could be a reformed House of Lords as a 'second elected chamber' for party competition. Nevertheless, right now, it seems rather unlikely and uncertain because it will be quite a long process of transformation.

He thinks that what he calls 'identity politics' play an important role in current political trends. For instance the rise of SNP is a good example for that. Otherwise, traditional roots like trade unions have become less important and overdue.

Between 1999 and 2001, when he was both an MP in Westminster and an MSP in Scotland, he felt no significant impact by the EP and Scottish devolution elections on the Westminster party system. Particularly EP elections don't have an impact at all because the electorate don't care about it (look at the low turnouts.) Perhaps, in the long run, they might have played more importance. However, he underlines again that 'identity politics' and 'de-alienation' are very important.

He argues that the SNP's success is a clear evidence and by-product of devolution. In 2007, the SNP could only form a minority government, however, they showed that they could govern the country quite successfully so they were re-elected, this time with a landslide in 2011.

He thinks, in Britain several multi-party systems exist. It is different from country to country, however, there are usually two main parties which face each other everywhere. For example, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats in South England, Labour and Plaid Cymru in Wales, Labour and SNP in Scotland. Therefore, it is already a multi-party system!

The whole pluralisation process started in the 1970s with the Liberals' emergence as a third party. This change couldn't be revised because the 1950s will never come back again when the two major parties received more than 90% of the total votes.

The 'EU cleavage' will play an important role in future party politics, as well. There will be parties for either IN or OUT. The EU will be a pivotal issue of confrontation if not a mere cleavage.

In sum, in the pluralisation of British politics the most important factor is anti-establishment feeling (or 'de-alienation' or 'identity politics'). In addition to that, devolution and EU cleavage can also contribute to it. The reform of the House of Lords could be a further important contributor, however, it so uncertain that it doesn't worth to count with it.

15.5 INTERVIEW #5

Photo source: https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/lords/lord-balfe/4302

Speaker: Richard Andrew Balfe

Full title: Lord Balfe

Party: Conservative Party

Time of the interview: 23rd Nov 2015

Place of the interview: House of Lords, Peer's Lobby

Summary

Britain is already a multi-party system because the two main parties get less and less combined vote share. The whole process started in the 1970s with the Liberals' rise. Now, it is complemented with other parties such as UKIP, the Nationalists and the Greens.

He argues that one of the major causes for such pluralisation came from the collapse of communism. The pressure on parties to control themselves became less important. However, it is difficult to identify only one key factor; there are rather several little bits of factors everywhere. So there is no one major factor like anti-establishment sentiment.

He argues that anti-establishment sentiment is not new. Labour used to be against the establishment. Now, they make part of it. The incentive behind anti-establishment sentiment is the trend that the two major parties have been becoming increasingly similar and less distinct.

The EU issue wasn't important earlier, however, it is quite important right now. The most importance divide in this respect was 23rd Jan 2013 when David Cameron announced a referendum on EU membership if he was re-elected in 2015. So the EU issue became pivotal after 2013.

In the future, if the electorate vote for YES at the 2016 EU referendum, the EU issue will disappear. However, if they vote NO, the EU issue will remain in addition with further

problems like re-negotiations and conflicts with other EU countries because of ratifications. He thinks that there might be some countries which won't let Britain to leave the EU (eg. Ireland or Denmark). It is very likely that in a NO case, a period of 3-4 years of uncertainty will likely to come.

Lord Balfe accepts my idea about two different party lines within British parties. There are 'pragmatic party lines' inside the major parties (Conservatives and Labour) and there are 'identity based party lines' inside minor parties (UKIP, SNP, Greens.) So the major parties let more ideological difference in exchange for loyalty around certain key issues. In minor parties, ideological diversity is less often and less tolerated. Therefore, it is quite common that MPs from major parties may often speak out, however, when it comes voting, they have to respect party line.

In relation to party line, he also talks about the problem of 'blue Labour' and 'red Tories' inside the Labour and the Conservative parties. (Lord Balfe accepts that he is a 'red Tory.') He argues that both these two group of MPs belong to the 'centre'. Previously, those who belonged to the centre didn't fit into either of the two main parties. In addition to their political views, these MPs were different in sociological and class terms, too. They were from the rest of their respective parties. Nowadays, the situation has been changing because the two main parties equally have been moving to the centre and there is hence less difference between these MPs and their respective parties. It is also enhanced by the less social and class differences between MPs.

Back to party line, he argues that major splits are more likely within the Conservative Party. He thinks that Labour is much more united around a social-democratic state. The only thing which most MPs inside the Conservative Party share is 'small state.' Otherwise, when it comes to economic policies (incentives), they are divided. The most likely is that Conservatives split around the issue of foreign policy as it always happened so in the past.

15.6 **INTERVIEW #6**

Photo source: https://www.parliament.uk/biographies/lords/lord-beecham/4181

Speaker: Jeremy Hugh Beecham

Title: The Lord Beecham (Newcastle, England)

Party: Labour Party

Time of the interview: 3rd Dec 2015

Place of the interview: Royal Gallery, House of Lords, London

Summary

Lord Beecham accepts that pluralisation is going on in British party politics because the two major parties used to get over 90% of total votes, however, now it is only around 50%. So the party system has become fragmented.

In this process, the most important factor is anti-establishment sentiment. A large part of the electorate complains that politicians don't understand them. In exchange, these people don't like politicians. As Lord Beecham puts it, there is a sort of 'cynicism and apathy' among the electorate towards politicians. The second important factor in this process comes from the media. They often misinform people. Lord Beecham argues that the dominant right wing media can be responsible for that. For example as he notes, the right wing media keep telling that Labour is only about welfare state and benefit for those who are out of work. He says that BBC is not independent either.

Talking about the EU issue, he says that Cameron tries to appease the right wing of his party by leaving the EPP party group in favour of the ECR in the European Parliament. He is an isolationist in this respect. He accepts that there is an EU cleavage between the parties IN and the parties OUT. Parties which support the UK's EU membership are the 'awful' SNP, the Lib Dems and usually Labour, whilst the Conservatives are divided. However, a large part of the press is anti-EU. So again, the media plays an important role.

He says that party line is an interesting issue. Jeremy Corbyn, the current leader of the Labour Party, used to vote the most frequently against the party line and now he is the party leader. Lord Beecham adds that party line is different in the House of Lords and in the House of Commons. In the House of Lords, it is less strict and there is more room for dissent. However, in the House of Commons it is very strong which is ensured by sanctions for breaking the party line. These sanctions are (1) that the whip expels a rebel MP from the party faction or (2) the MP's party won't nominate him/her next time at the general election. There is, nevertheless, a well known phenomenon; MPs speak out but then keep the party line at voting.

Lord Beecham supports English devolution in the form of elected regional assemblies. He doesn't talk about an English Parliament because these regional assemblies would cover 8-10 separate English regions. They could be responsible for regional education, infrastructure... However, usually the problem is that the government is 'passing the bucks;' in other words, the government devolve certain policy competences without the necessary financial capabilities. So the local governments get new duties without enough money.

The Northern Powerhouse is heavily influenced by Chancellor Georg Osborn's personal ambitions who has his constituency near Manchester. Lord Beecham says that HS2 is pretty expensive. He adds, instead of bringing up the economy from London, it might pull down the remaining economic capabilities in the North to the South. Moreover, nobody talks about the North East of England which could be hence abandoned.

Lord Beecham doesn't think that a Scottish independence would trigger out a spill over effect into his own region, the North East. However, that's for sure that the North East wants to keep touch with Scotland in the future. There are a great deal of differences between Scotland and the North East. The most important thing is the SNP's embedded position in the Scottish society. He thinks that the SNP are corrupt politically because they use their monopolistic position in the Scottish society to bully others. So Newcastle can't fit into such political make-up. He doesn't think that Newcastle or the North East would join Scotland in case of a successful independence vote in the future. (He laughed.)

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