

In Reaction to an Ideological Other: Why Secessionism in Scotland is Left Wing

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Abstract

Secessionist movements have been found historically on both sides of the political spectrum, and sometimes have tried to remain apolitical completely, but because of the rise of partisan politics, secessionism has inevitably become politicized. Variations in Western European secessionism can be noticed, and as such, explanations put forward may be deemed insufficient, or incomplete. In my thesis I tested the hypothesis that secessionism varied on the political spectrum because it has been consolidated against ideological Others (in Scotland against Thatcher's Conservatives between 1974 and 1990). I tested this methodologically through process tracing and theoretically by looking at the consolidation of the Scottish National Party through reactive nationalism. Specifically I analyzed the nationalist discourse used to justify ideological positioning in the 1970s and 1980s in propaganda materials and archival documents, and if and how this ideological choice was reflected or interpreted in newspapers (for opinions on how this consolidation was perceived by the electorate).

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Introduction

Secessionism has materialized ideologically and politically in a heterogeneous way, which has led to a questioning of its theoretical assumptions and of its origins and stances with respect to political issues. Different criticisms may arise from the heterogeneity of secessionism, which may include the strength of its ideological, or philosophical, foundations, and how well they can be adapted to real-life and politics; the cohesiveness and symbolic nature of the concept; where on the left-right ideological continuum, if one believes in an ideological continuum where theories and doctrines nicely fit one in relation to another, would secessionism fit, if at all. I will use throughout my theses “Ideological continuum” interchangeably with “ideological spectrum” to reflect the left-right division within the political arena, and specifically in respect to the national politics of the case study analyzed. From this last difficulty, another issue follows, more specifically if secessionism can even be placed at all as a unitary whole on one side or the other of the continuum. Ideologically, this has not been proven so.

Secessionist movements wrapped in nationalist parties can be found on both the left and right side of the ideological spectrum all over the world. To clarify, secessionism has been adopted as a more radical and militant form of nationalism demanding specifically the complete severing of ties between two collectivities, while nationalism is the more general idea encompassing ethnic, civic, cultural, socio-political representations. One of the assumptions behind this connection is that secessionism is included under nationalist representations, being one form/kind of nationalism among others. Secessionism would develop under an acute sense of national identity, which would have already benefitted from some form of pre-existent nationalism in one way or another.

Because of this assumption on the relationship between nationalism and secessionism and their partisan divisions, generalizations cannot be drawn about the strength and breadth of the overall ideological nature of secessionism, and in its less radical form as nationalism, regarding its place on the ideological spectrum. Regional or national secessionist movements nonetheless, somehow find their individual places to the left or right of each other. It could be inferred from this that without overarching universalist claims on secessionism, the concept may be perceived by some as weaker or unfinished, and thus less worthy of appraisal, or study. Contrary claims, however, may also be made regarding the broad applicability of secessionism particularly for lacking a homogeneous structure and philosophy, universally applicable.

Secessionism has been amply researched and analyzed, from its emergence and causes to its effects and results. However, very little has been written on the differences between left or right-wing secessionist movements, their partisan translations, and inclusion of non-secessionist-related issues in the form of partisan/ideological matters. In addition, even less has been written specifically on the conditions that have led secessionist movements in different countries to adopt specifically left or right-wing ideologies and how these conditions came about. This results also in the inability to recognize, or establish secessionism wholly as a left or right-wing ideological concept. Examples of left and right-wing secessionist movements can be found all throughout Western Europe. Scotland, Wales and Catalonia can be found on the left of the political spectrum, while Flanders, Padania and Ulster represent right wing ideologies. Out of these, Scotland will be the case study for my research based on reasons that I will explain further on in Chapter 1. The importance of this curious weakness in the research on

secessionism lies in the fact that without a unitary, homogenous, developed theory of secessionism, the comparison between case-studies takes precedence and the variability of secessionist movements makes generalizations difficult to compile if not outright impossible. As an example, Canada is often compared to Belgium in its successful accommodation of linguistic and cultural differences and the relatively low level of popularity of secessionism, even though differences between the two secessionist movements, without going in detail, outnumber their similarities, including their positions on their national ideological continuums.

The purpose of my thesis is not to tackle this weakness, since it is greater than the scope of this research, through which I am not attempting to build a grand scale theory. Instead, the topic of my thesis will concentrate on how a specific secessionist movement adopts a particular ideological stance, if any concrete proof or justification of such an adoption even exists to support the research question and exploratory hypothesis I will put forward further on. The relationship between the topic of this thesis and the lack of a homogeneous ideology of secessionism is that through my hypothesis I will try to provide an explanation, or illustration, as to the ideological heterogeneity of secessionism through one case study (why secessionist movements adopted left or right wing ideologies). The importance of this topic thus will lie in the fact that by focusing on one movement, specifically Scottish secessionism, the conditions around it will help illustrate the circumstances that can influence secessionist claims, and whether the adoption of the ideological stance affected or shaped, or *was* affected/shaped by pre-existing conditions/factors. Analyzing the ideological consolidation of a secessionist movement

also sheds light upon its structural characteristics and evolution, and may be telling of its present stances, strategies, discourse, and electoral successes.

It is easy to affirm that the lack of a uniform ideology of secessionism can have an impact on the overall value, or strength, of secessionism. What is difficult, yet more important, is to try to dig into the causes that prevent this uniformity from occurring, if such an idea is even desirable, or analyze the socio-political factors that stir secessionist movements to usually opposing ideological directions, often because of electoral politics. The rise of party politics has made it hard to disprove that political life and culture have been affected by partisanship and that secessionism has also been (un)consciously moulded by the advantages and constraints of the political game and electoral cycles. However, the opposite may also be true, that weak political parties may have been affected by the political culture(s) of their electors, as shaped by “issue waves” that regularly shake politics and affect their core values and beliefs. Indirectly, this also leads to the influence or visibility of instrumentalism, or situationalism as described by David Brown (2000), on political parties and secessionist movements more broadly. This affects their primordial claims and credibility with their broad spectrum of (potential) supporters, and the frequency and ease of incoming attack ads and criticisms against them.

The reason for choosing this topic lies in the noticed ideological discrepancies between numerous secessionist movements, which drew my attention to the fact, as repeated before, that secessionism as a whole cannot be placed on the left or right side of a general ideological continuum with respect to some of the philosophic borders of such a continuum. Furthermore, the noted ideological differences led me to question the explanations that led secessionist movements to adopt opposing ideologies- why would

Scottish or Catalan secessionism be on the left side of the political spectrum, while Flemish secessionism is arguably virulently right wing? Would it be because the inclusion of socio-economic stances on issues politicizes the discourse of secessionist demands? Would there be other explanations involved such as relying on the predisposed political culture of the majority for the broadest support for secession? Alternately, would a secessionist movement adopt an ideological stance in protest to a cause, or more? Some of these questions were the starting point for the research that will unfold in this thesis beginning with chapter one, which will include a brief review of the empirical explanatory literature available on Scottish secessionism that led me to develop the research question and my exploratory hypothesis, as well as the theoretical framework and the methodology used. Chapter two will present a theoretical overview of Margaret Thatcher's political economy and historical context for its emergence, as well as for the SNP, while chapter three will put forward the results of my research, with my interpretation of them. Finally, the conclusion will provide an evaluation of my thesis, its findings, and suggestions for improvement or further analysis.

Chapter 1: Research Set-Up

Literature Review

While very extensive and complex, the literature on secessionism does not address the ideological placement of secessionist parties in a satisfactory manner, beyond conventional explanations of reflecting political cultures, very few authors addressing it in the first place. A complete survey of the literature employed in this thesis would touch upon too many domains, each with an extensive body of research. Thus, only one section of the literature will be presented from the research body upon which my thesis findings rest, others including the genesis of secessionist parties, general literature on ethnonationalism, left/right ideology and reactive nationalism will be referred to as needed, for context, support, or clarification.

What follows is a non-exhaustive review of the empirical literature not even specifically on secessionism, but on nationalism in Scotland, given that most authors blur the distinction between secessionism and nationalism and consider the former an intrinsic part of the machinations of the latter. Scholars have acknowledged, as stated earlier, that nationalist movements and parties have been incoherent ideologically, and that one of the distinct features of nationalism has been its un-ideological nature (it has been arguably difficult to label nationalist theory as a whole as ideological). As such, some scholars have agreed that nationalist parties have been difficult to classify in the conventional left-right dichotomy (Hamilton 2004, Lynch 2009; Hix & Lord 1999, De Winter & Tursan 1998 (both quoted in Lynch 2009)). These claims aside, nationalist parties have nonetheless chosen to adopt ideological stances within the left-right political dichotomy, as they entered the arena of national partisan politics to advance their strategic goals.

With this assumption in mind, there have been a few different direct and indirect explanations for why nationalist parties¹ have adopted left wing ideology in Scotland, and these will be presented both chronologically and thematically. Chronologically, nationalist parties have adopted their ideological stances because of the saliency of socio-economic issues post-World War Two, and because of the extent to which they championed these issues as inescapably about independence, becoming more visibly issue parties (Scotland: Pittock, 1991; Lazer, 1977; McCrone, 2001; Thomsen, 2010; Mitchell 2009). Political elites as well as institutions have also been reasons for the ideological stances of nationalist parties in Scotland (Lynch, 2009). Lecours (2001) stresses the role of the bourgeoisie more specifically out of the socio-economic classes (but not in Scotland), while Lynch (2009) includes the policy preference of party membership and an electoral strategy to challenge the dominant party in the region (Labour) as important factors in the “choice” of the Scottish National Party (SNP) to adopt a left-of-center stance. From this it could be suggested that “the policy preferences of party membership” could indicate a deliberate adoption of left-wing ideology, the justification of party membership remaining however unknown.

Despite these more specific arguments, the bulk of scholars agree that nationalist movements have been shaped in their ideological stances by their respective political cultures, mirroring their regional identities and increasing the saliency of regional and linguistic cleavages (De Winter, Swyngedouw & Dumont 2006). Nation-building (Pinxten 2006), linguistic and cultural recognition claims (Rocher, Rouillard & Lecours,

¹ The reference is made to “nationalist parties” in plural as opposed to a single nationalist party because I acknowledge that partisan secessionism did not start in the 1970s with the Scottish National Party (SNP) and that several attempts were made before the SNP to institutionalize the movement and explore partisanship and parliamentary politics as avenues to legalize secessionist demands.

2001), and an organic view in favour of “natural” group affinity against artificially-created nation-states (Swyngedouw & Ivaldi 2001) contributed, more specifically to the ideological positioning of certain European nationalist movements. Swyngedouw and Ivaldi (2001) explain the “natural” bonds of the community based on traditional familial economy (12), and that state borders “should be drawn from existing ethnic boundaries [...] defined on the grounds of ethnicity” (17). Pinxten (2006) “blames” political history more generally, and nation building processes more specifically for the discriminatory policies favouring certain groups over others as factors in choosing left/right wing ideologies for secessionism (125-127). The values and interests of the electorates, which had to be represented and defended, also contributed greatly to the ideological stances adopted by nationalist parties (Studlar & McAllister 1988, Pittock 1991, Henderson & McEwen 2005, Connell 2004, Hamilton 2004). In Scotland, these values included egalitarianism, social justice and collectivism, which ended up being the social pillars of the Scottish National Party (SNP) after World War II, even though in the first half of the twentieth century the SNP was a right wing movement. These Scottish values were reinforced even more concomitantly both institutionally and regionally with what became known as Thatcherism.

Margaret Thatcher has brought with her a redefinition of “Britishness” preferred to a greater extent by the English than the Scots, which focused more on “self-reliance, thrift, enterprise and personal responsibility” (Henderson and McEwen, 2005, 184), arguably leading to a divergence/incompatibility between the prevailing conceptions of Britishness and Scottishness (Henderson and McEwen, 2005). Contingent with this view is also the theory of (internal) colonialism developed by Michael Hechter (1975) with

respect to the Celtic/Gaelic peripheries of the British Isles, contributing as well to some extent to a sense of differentiation between the various groups inhabiting the Archipelago, especially given the disparity in representation and decision-making between Scotland and Westminster (until the 1990s). This noted sense of distinction between Scotland and England, through apparent internal colonialism, has been argued that could have benefitted solely a nationalist political agenda and not much else (Connell, 2004). This also led me to question if the reasoning behind the adoption of a left-wing stance could have possibly been in relation to, Margaret Thatcher's right-wing Conservative ideology given the opposition between them.

The specific topic of my thesis has been addressed most directly in the past by Jan Erk (2002, 2003, 2005b) but with respect to other case studies than Scotland. In his research regarding Belgium, Erk (2003) combined general explanations as to why Flemish nationalism ideologically opposed the Socialists- the religious divide, the cultural division of labour pre-World War Two, with specific ones regarding the involvement of the Catholic Church vis-a-vis the dominant political power nationally at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth one (2005b). Erk (2002) assumes an opposing relationship with the Catholic Church as the connector with another secessionist movement, that of Quebec. In Quebec, the nationalist movement reflects the ideology of the secular left (2002). The indirect assumptions arising from Erk's research are that the nationalist parties have reflected the socio-demographic composition of the region and have been affected by critical junctures, an explanation also present in Scotland but to a lesser extent put forward by Pittock (1991) as illustrated by the review of the literature.

From the brief review above another observation arises, that in Scotland the accent was laid on economic circumstances, due to the arguable belief that “Scottishness ought not to be tied to a particular linguistic group or cultural expression (Hamilton, 2004, 659), while in right wing ideological cases (such as Flemish secessionism in Belgium), more emphasis was put on the linguistic and cultural cleavages, as well as on the economic disparities. From this, one could argue and prove that the emphasis on certain values over others could and will influence the political “color” of the party into which nationalism translates.

In light of the explanations provided by some of the authors above, the research question that this thesis will aim to answer is “what determined secessionism to manifest left-wing political ideology in Scotland from 1974 to 1990, as illustrated by the secessionist party consolidated around this time (the Scottish National Party)?”. Some of the reasons for this question include a weakness in the literature, as mentioned before (scholars did not directly address this question with specific reference to secessionism as opposed to nationalism more broadly, and also to one sole period of analysis, the bulk of the explanations provided being that they reflected the political cultures of their electorates over extended periods of time). While Erk (2002, 2003, 2005b) did ask this question with respect to Flanders and Quebec, he did not look specifically at Scotland. In his research, too, Erk (2002, 2003, 2005b) followed a path-dependency approach by looking at critical junctures at the end of the nineteenth, and beginning of the twentieth century. Furthermore, with respect not just to his case-studies but for most if not all secessionist movements, circumstances have significantly changed since then, including in some the social categories of those in favour of secessionism. To put it differently,

Erk's explanation of the research question appears to be incomplete in light of the social, political and economic transformations that took place since his period of analysis at the global, regional, and sub-national levels. That being said, I acknowledge from the beginning that I do not claim or hope for my own explanations to be complete or even satisfactory, the purpose of my research being merely to try to step outside the conventional explanations of why secessionist movements adopted certain ideologies over others and look for alternative answers. One such answer to the research question above, and the broader topic of my thesis, is the initial hypothesis that I will try to prove through my research, which is that secessionism in Scotland developed its left wing political ideology starting with the 1970s out of its respective ethnic dialectic constructions, in contrast, or opposition, to a political Other (specifically in reaction to England's Thatcherism). I will be evaluating this hypothesis through a theoretical lens of nationalism, which implies that identities are constructed in reaction to a perceived threat, or foreign Other (also known as reactive nationalism). This hypothesis will also answer indirectly, and more generally, the question of whether political parties construct or reflect identities, which in turn can have repercussions that reflect on the way national identity can be interpreted or influenced by insiders and outsiders alike.

I chose Scotland as the case study for my research, partially because of the perceived variation existing between the ideology of the Scottish secessionist movement and the right wing Thatcherism of the national Conservative party, in power during the consolidation of the Scottish National Party, which made me question if there was any (reactive/contrasting) connection between them, since before the 1970s the SNP did not display a vehement, consistent left-wing ideology. This puzzle started contouring for me

given that socio-politically Scotland had been on the left side of the spectrum post World War I, but pre-1970s Scottish secessionism at times refused to get entangled in ideological warfare, or reflected right-wing views. Since the 1970s, however, the SNP has become the local champion for Social Democracy. The popularity of the SNP also started increasing (sometimes in the double digits) when the party started regionalist campaigns in the 1970s with the discovery of oil in the North Sea off the Scottish coast. Thatcherism thus, will be argued, provided the domestic trigger against which the SNP was reactively but purposefully rebranded.

Theoretical Framework

Even though the object of my research is partisan politics, more specifically analyzing the consolidation of a secessionist party, I will not be employing an institutionalist approach, even though that may be useful, since my hypothesis will try to illustrate a nationalist theory, specifically reactive nationalism as stated previously, but at an institutional level. Reactive nationalist scholars state that ethnic nationalist movements “develop as reactions against threatening others”, or their origin “is in assertions of an identity demarcating the *us* from the *them*” (emphasis added, Brown, 2000, 65). This is because nationalist causes do “not rely on self-identification alone”, having also to incorporate “the dynamics of differentiation”, relying on a “strong sense of demarcation between the national self and extra-national ‘others’” (Thomsen, 2010, 12). While the Other is often accepted as ‘perennial and problematic’ (Day, 2000), it is also acknowledged to be in fact “*required* to create a simulation of wholeness for the [national] Self” (Day, 2000, 34). Often times, too, what exists is a “silent, Invisible Self group that chooses to give, or not to give, gifts of recognition and self government to noisy, Visible Others”

(Day, 2000, 216). Thus, direct or implicit perceptions of “‘natural’ national differences and ‘inherent’ historical rights [can] act as vehicle[s]” for secessionism (Thomsen, 2010, 12).

The idea of perceptions, of how “the way members of a certain group perceive themselves and their situation in relation to other groups”, is consequently, key for any secessionist movement, with the acknowledgement that “changed perceptions of the relationship between the stateless nation and the supranational state do not arise *out of the blue*” (emphasis added, Thomsen, 2010, 13). What is often the case too is that the stateless nation can/will portray itself consciously as a dominated minority, and the supranational state as a dominant majority, demographically or socio-politically. Usually, these categories are “constituted in an antagonistic, dialectic social relationship, where ‘dominants and dominated can neither empirically nor intellectually (neither in concrete nor symbolic terms) conceive of themselves without the respective other’” (Winter, 2011, 63). In line with this, the “supposedly ‘natural’ groups only exist by virtue of the fact that they are so interrelated, that effectively each of the groups is a function of the other”, being created almost always “within asymmetrical relations with respect to power, social honour and the social norm” (Winter, 2011, 63-64). The relationship between these groups (stateless nations and states in the case of reactive nationalism) is constituted when they are “socially constructed as ‘different’ with respect to a referent, a dominant category that remains unmarked [temporarily], or is vaguely defined by the positive equivalent of each of the marks that draw the boundaries of minority groups” (Winter, 2011, 64).

According to Walker Connor, the very “essence of a nation is a psychological bond that joins a people and differentiates it, in the subconscious conviction of its members, from all non-members in a most vital way” (1996, 70). Max Weber also argues that “only when mental representations of commonality (*Gemeinsamkeit*) lead to the mutual orientation of their behaviour that a process of group formation begins”, this commonality being “mandatory for the mutual orientation of individuals’ actions towards each other” (quoted in Winter, 2011, 65-66). If thus we define ‘identity’ to be the “relational, contextual, and temporarily limited ‘identification’ with perceived commonality (shared situation, common interests, common ideas and/or values, common memories, common future etc)” (Winter, 2011, 66), it can be claimed that indifferent of the ideological slant that it is given, the concept itself is intrinsically political. This is so not just because upon its emergence it can be “mobilized, negotiated, represented, reinvented, distorted etc, but foremost because without [it...] there would be no (meaningfully oriented) collective action” representing and forging a means of individual and collective feeling of empowerment (Winter, 2011, 66).

Reactivity arguments can also be supported anthropologically. Thomas Eriksen, stated that “every social community or identity is exclusive in the sense that not everybody can take part [and] groups and collectivities are always constituted in relation to *others*” (original emphasis, 1993, 62). One of the key collective elements of a nation to exist will consequently be the “necessary distinction between those who belong to the national community – those who are inside – and those who are seen as belonging to another national community – those who are outside” (Thomsen, 2010, 18). A nation’s boundaries, whether imaginary or real, will reflect “histories and material conditions, and

[will] allude to the nation's position within inter- and intra-national power relations [...being] deeply relational" (Winter, 2011, 71). Thus, one of the ways in which boundaries can be created is through "discursive struggles that can neither abstract from outside perceptions and images (external dimensions of the nation's boundary) nor evacuate internal controversies over group representations and interpretations of who 'we' are (internal dimension of the nation's boundary)" (Winter, 2011, 71). From the standpoint of discourse analysis, national identities can also be constructed by "simultaneously projecting distinction and/or difference to the outside and emphasizing [the] sameness/shared belonging within, both techniques together producing the uniqueness of the nation, [and] constituting its individuality" (Winter, 2011, 104). The interaction with outsiders also helps to "downplay the internal heterogeneity of collectivities and thereby supports the emergence of a [single] collective identity" (Winter, 2011, 106).

At the individual level, the reactivity arguments follow a similar path. Not just with national identity but also for that matter with "any kind of identity, the self needs an *other*, as it is impossible to define oneself against nothing [...since] one cannot perceive the other without including a perception of the self" (Thomsen, 2010, 18). The foundations of our assessment of others will thus lie in "'our' values, because in producing an image of the other, we judge and compare what 'they' have with what 'we' have [while...] the image of the other becomes an interpretable statement about the self" (Thomsen, 2010, 18). On the other hand, according to Thomsen, "images of self and other are dependent on the context", since "political and economic images of the other, for instance, may be generally positive, perhaps even characterised by envy, while at the

same time cultural images of the same other may be negative, characterised perhaps by condemnation” (2010, 18). One empirical example of this can be seen in the creation of the Pakistani identity, the state having to acknowledge the lack of a positive national identity (unlike India’s). At the same time, the Pakistani state had to construct its own “culture, a culture which would not only be different from the Indian culture but that the whole world would acknowledge” as different, given the existing strong nationalist feelings directed against India (Jaffrelot, 2002, 7). Given that these reactive arguments are part of my exploratory hypothesis, that the reaction to an threatening Other was what caused the ideological stance of the Scottish National Party which represents the object of my analysis, it is only natural, and most helpful, that reactive nationalism should be my theoretical perspective, especially since its focus is precisely on identity and difference.

Some of the authors who researched reactive nationalism or ethnicity, or have used this framework in their analyses, include Walker Connor (1996), David Brown (2000), Steven Grosby (2005), Alain Dieckhoff (2000), Hugh Poulton (1995), Linda Colley (2009), Michael Brittingham (2007), Charles Ragin (1979), Julio Fernandez (1966), Christophe Jaffrelot (2002), Hector Grad and Lisa Martin Rojo (2008), Mei Li Lean and Stella Meng Hui Lee (2008), Elke Winter (2011), Robert C. Thomsen (2010) and Jan Jindy Pettman (1998), among many others. Thus, reactive arguments have been employed not just within identity politics, but also with respect to social mobilization, sociological cultural studies (Winter), political history (Colley), and even International Relations (Brittingham), and I will employ a reactive nationalist theory with respect to ideological partisanship, on which it has not been used much.

Methodological Approach

One way in which my research question can be answered to test the initial hypothesis through a reactive lens is through process tracing, in order to verify the connection between the ideological stances of the SNP and English Thatcherism. Process tracing refers to within-case analyses to evaluate processes of decision-making (in my cases regarding the ideology of secessionist parties) and tracing the causal processes through which initial conditions are translated into outcomes (Reilly). The method focuses on the evolution of a case subject to change, as well as the responses of actors in their context, and tracing events from static points to necessary end-points (Reilly). Individuals' behaviour can be essentially explained through "well-defined causal mechanisms that are consistent with the available process-tracing evidence" (Bennett & George, 1997). The starting and ending points are thus not to be randomly chosen, and the justification for my time frame of analysis is presented further on. The general method of process tracing is to "generate and analyze data on the causal mechanisms, or processes, events, actions, expectation, and other intervening variables, that link putative causes to observed effects" (Bennett & George, 1997). Process tracing differs from historical narrative in that it "requires converting a purely historical account that implies or asserts a causal sequence into an analytical explanation couched in theoretical variables that have been identified in the research design" (Bennett & George, 1997). The nature and logic of historical explanation make it, however, of direct importance to the use of process-tracing (Bennett & George, 1997).

In identity politics process tracing can be used to analyze various triggers to which different actors react, in light of changing internal or external conditions influencing the

object of focus. Process tracing will thus be very useful in analyzing the saliency of ideological positioning of secessionist parties and if any justification is presented for these decisions. In Scotland, then, the emergence and popularity of Thatcherism will be considered as the trigger that set the SNP to actively adopt opposing socially democratic stances. Another reason for the choice of process tracing is that the data used is qualitative and will include press accounts (on which my research will partially rely). Process tracing also requires multiple data streams, which will enable me to diversify my sources. Process tracing is a scientific, positivist method of research, which is why I established an exploratory hypothesis as the beginning point of this research, and did not leave the possible answers to the research question as open-ended.

One of the acknowledged dangers/downfalls of using process tracing as my methodology is that researchers may lose sight of the implications of larger societal forces (missing the bigger picture). Process tracing also can serve as an epistemological trap for researchers. Qualitative data invokes “constructivist epistemological assumptions (i.e. subjectivism)” while process tracing has “strong roots in positivist or post-positivist traditions, suggesting the method brings a philosophical assumption of objectivism into the analysis” (Reilly). Process tracing is thus unable to generate grand scale theory (which is not the object of my thesis in the first place), but its strength lies in “its ability to examine interactions and questions of ‘how something came to pass’ using qualitative data sources, generating mid-range theory” (Reilly). Thus, the findings of “single case studies can only be contingent generalizations that apply to typologically similar cases, but even then, cases that appear to be typologically similar may differ in an as-yet unspecified causal variable that leads to different outcomes” (Bennett & George, 1997).

Process tracing also provides a “strong basis for causal inference [but] only if it can be established whether an uninterrupted causal path existed linking the putative causes to the observed effects, at the appropriate level(s) of analysis as specified by the theory being tested” (Bennett & George, 1997). Another potential problem with using process tracing is that there “may be more than one hypothesized causal mechanism consistent with any given set of process tracing evidence [and] when this problem of indeterminacy arises, there is no absolute standard for excluding alternative hypotheses that may be spurious” (Bennett & George, 1997). A final issue with process tracing is that it does not guarantee that a “study can establish internal validity, or that it will uncover only relationships that are truly causal [since] both false positives, or processes that appear to fit the evidence even though they are not causal in the case at hand, and false negatives, processes that are causal but do not appear to be so, are still possible through measurement error or under-specified or mis-specified theories” (Bennett & George, 1997).

Despite these acknowledged pitfalls, the primary research that will be analyzed includes party policy statements, electoral platforms/manifestos, secessionist propaganda, archival documents of SNP politicians and of the party, SNP press releases, and journalistic accounts (articles, editorials etc) in *The Scotsman*. The partisan (non-journalistic) documents were chosen specifically to qualitatively analyze the discourse, or explanation for the choice of ideological stances of the SNP. *The Scotsman* is the journalistic publication of choice because of several reasons, one of them being that it has not undergone name changes throughout the twentieth century (lack of confusion in analysis). It has also had a liberal, anti-establishment view, while at the same time its bias not allowing the quality of the paper to decrease by overpowering it. Also, during the

period that I am concerned with, the paper was owned by a Canadian magnate. This is relevant because it can be claimed that no local interests could have been served/imposed on it, even though Roy Thomson, the owner of the newspaper was also involved in a consortium that searched for oil successfully in the North Sea. The editors of the newspaper never outright advocated for Scottish secessionism, however in the campaign before the 1979 Referendum for a Scottish Assembly, the paper took a firm and open pro-devolution stance, even going as far as nailing “its devolution battle ensign to the mast” (Morris). After the referendum, when the results were discarded because less than 40% of Scots casted their vote and the Scotland Act was repealed, *The Scotsman* “attacked the ‘doubting cries of the faithless’ and pointed out that had the normal rules of British politics been applied, the Act would have been enforceable by the narrow majority” (Morris). Finally, *The Scotsman* is considered as one of the higher-quality/serious-minded dailies, and not the Scottish edition of a UK newspaper, which could focus more on national issues, unrelated to Scotland.

The time frame to which I will limit my analysis is 1974 to 1990, with special consideration to be given to national election years (1974, 1979, 1983 and 1987). The first year represents the greatest pre-devolution breakthrough of the SNP in Westminster elections, the party having eleven MPs elected in the October election with their greatest popular support of 30% in Scotland (until the 1990s and the creation of the Scottish Parliament). The start point was chosen despite the fact that Margaret Thatcher becomes Prime Minister only in 1979 and as such her vision starts to be implemented as of then. From 1974 until 1979 the focus will be on the SNP more so than on Thatcherism, which between 1975 on it is merely taking shape as Margaret Thatcher is the leader of the

Official Opposition (in 1975 she defeats Heath in the Conservative leadership race). The end year represents the departure from office of Margaret Thatcher, after being ousted as Party Leader, as well as the SNP electing a new party leader, Alex Salmond, with a clear left-wing bias. Between these years I will not be looking at the saliency of partisan issues, but at the contents of the documents mentioned above, and more specifically at the discourse surrounding the ideological establishment of the parties and the creation and justification of the policies promoted, if any is present. As well, the newspaper editorials will provide a mass interpretation of the political circumstances and events surrounding my research focus, specifically why the Scottish secessionist party adopted the ideological stance it did. In effect, I will be analyzing ideological discourse but only in a qualitative manner, and not through the help of a counting software.

What follows is a breakdown of the theoretical components of Thatcherism, to provide a comprehensive foundation of the reactionary views I looked for in my research from an ideological standpoint, and the implied distinctions between the two conflicting philosophies that emerge when looking at the policies discussed in the following two chapters. I will also provide a brief historical context of the emergence and background of Thatcherism and the SNP, for a clearer picture of the relationship between them and their roles and influence in relation to the politics of the time. In the third chapter, I shall present the findings of my archival research alongside my interpretation of them, tracing the evolution and noted instances of value for my initial hypothesis. I shall conclude with an evaluation of the scope and findings of my research, as well as suggestions for improvement or further analysis, not just for myself regarding this specific topic, but for other researchers too.

Chapter 2: Contextual Background

The concept of an ideological continuum with left and right boundaries is a construction of the modern, post-Enlightenment and post-Industrial Revolution era encompassing political stances with respect to established norms and conditions, in favour or against the status quo. In the Anglo-American world, this was best encompassed by the traditionalist versus liberal centuries-old division, which included distinctive views on religion, power accumulation and distribution, rights and responsibilities, continuity and change, or individuality and collectivity, among others. This division materialized even more with the rise and entrenchment of partisan politics and was deeply affected by the emergence and historical impact of Karl Marx' and Friedrich Engels' writings on socialism, which led to an ever-increasing left-right polarization based on upgraded fault lines. In this equation, Thatcherism did not bring with it anything new to the debate. On the contrary, its acknowledged merit was a return to the traditional values and principles of Conservatism seen as lost or compromised in the decades post-World War Two to a politics of consensus with various stakeholders' interests, especially workers and trade unions. In contrast with this, the SNP promoted an active defence of the welfare state, which it saw as being under threat in the 1980s (Papillon & Turgeon, 2003).

This chapter will present a rounded view of Margaret Thatcher's Conservatism as perceived by secondary sources. I will not comment on the merits of her policies or views, or provide a personal evaluation of her successes, merely I will try as objectively as possible to break down Thatcherite views and politics with respect to some of the socio-economic policies implemented and values that reinforced these decisions and views. Secondly, I will touch upon the conditions that led to the establishment and

consolidation of the SNP, since more ideological specificity on the party will be found in some of its electoral platforms from my time frame, discussed and commented in the following chapter. While focusing on the philosophical background of Thatcherism, I will also discuss the historical context of Thatcher's policies and views, as well as that of the rise of the SNP.

Margaret Thatcher brought with her to the political arena a redefinition of "Britishness" preferred to a greater extent by the English than the Scots, which focused more on values of "self-reliance, thrift, enterprise and personal responsibility" (Henderson and McEwen, 2005, 184), arguably leading to a divergence/incompatibility between the prevailing conceptions of Britishness and Scottishness (Henderson and McEwen, 2005). Coincidentally or not, increasing electoral successes of the party came from "constituencies south of Birmingham, changing and narrowing the base of the Conservative parliamentary party and reflecting general economic and demographic shifts in the country, as employment and population trends followed the decline of Britain's old industrial heartlands" (Green, 1999, 41). An explanation for this was the increase in "service-sector activity or what was once termed white-collar and black-coated employment; many of these occupations being non-unionised, and even if they were, employees showed a greater degree of 'economic instrumentalism' in their voting allegiance than workers in the older industrial communities" (Green, 1999, 41). This shift occurred in parallel with the "decline of the staple industries of central Scotland, southern Wales and northern England", with unemployment being the most clear indicator of these regional differences, after "1918 always being appreciably lower in southern England

than elsewhere and in 1976 increasing with distance from London and the English centre” (Urwin, 1982, 37).

Scotland, even before Thatcher’s first term, was considered a “development area eligible for government investment subsidies” as regional assistance, making it “dependent on fiscal transfers from England” (Keating et al, 2003, 145). During the early 1980s however, the industrial landscape in Scotland was severely affected by the recession, which wiped “out all the plants brought to Scotland under the special initiatives of the 1960s, eliminating a large part of the remaining indigenous Scottish-owned industrial sector” (Keating et al, 2003, 145). Compared to its contributions to the Exchequer, Keating et al. noted that it did appear that Scotland’s unbalanced “expenditure levels were appreciably higher than those in the English regions” (2003, 145). An explanation for this is suggested to lie in the fact that Scots have retained a “‘moral economy’ in which there are common understandings of what is fair and the acceptable limits to socially divisive policies” which provided “moral resources for resistance to measures like Thatcher’s poll tax” (Keating et al, 2003, 148). This moral reliance did not fit with Thatcherite views of self-reliance, the Conservative governments of the 1980s breaking the “consensus on regional development and insisting that Scotland was suffering from a ‘dependency culture’ born of excessive reliance on the public sector” (Keating et al, 2003, 150).

According to E.H.H. Green, Thatcherism had its “ideological origins post 1975” but it can be best described as the totality of policies that “Thatcher’s party implemented after it came to government” (1999, 18). Even before her ascent to the highest electoral position in the UK, Scotland had been a “hotbed” for left-wing ideals for decades, with

the 1920s Red Clydeside movement, and as such, this philosophical clash would have come as no surprise to anyone. After the Second World War, Britain overall relied on a series of “compromises from which emerged a new understanding about the constraints within which government operated and a new conception about the relationship between the public and private sectors” (Gamble, 1988, 2). What would be labelled as the politics of consensus was described as an “enlargement of the functions and responsibilities of the state”, with the public enterprise sector being “substantially increased through the nationalization of major public utilities such as gas, electricity, coal and the railways” (Gamble, 1988, 2). Both Labour and Conservatives accepted this view, which is where the term describing this period, and its politics, came from.

Some of the policies implemented under the politics of consensus led to a consolidation of the welfare state. Thus, collective welfare provisions were extended, the National Health Service was established, public “housing programmes were expanded, state education was restructured and the Government accepted new responsibilities for planning the economy and the environment” (Gamble, 1988, 2). This culture of state responsibility represented the enemy of Thatcherite policies, ideals and values, but not exclusively, Mrs. Thatcher taking on as her enemy not just “social democracy as a whole, but that of previous Conservative as well as Labour governments too” (Dixon, 1983, 170). She acknowledged that her personal enemy was not a particular form of government or ideology but “bad habits”, that being the only thing she wanted to break down (CBC archives, 1983).

Before the 1970s however, consensual policies appeared to have “succeeded in overcoming the defects of capitalism and blunting the social challenge to it” (Gamble,

1988, 2). Pre-Thatcherite Tories accepted, or had to accept that “as long as the private sector remained vigorous and competitive, the existence of a large public sector was not troubling [...] the collective funding of education, housing, health and social security being regarded as a necessary responsibility for government in a modern industrial society” (Gamble, 1988, 2). Some Conservatives saw this as the government having played with “the fire of ‘creeping collectivism’” (Dixon, 1983, 170). Thatcher disagreed with these views, and in the 1980s her governments dismantled many of these institutions under constructed notions of “‘overload’, adversary politics, legitimation crisis and fiscal crisis through a variety of political and theoretical perspectives” (Gamble, 1988, 3). By the end of the 1970s, many policies and ideas of the politics of consensus had been “discredited, and British politics and government had clearly reached an impasse”, the framework being seen as no longer “facilitating solutions to the problems confronting governments” (Gamble, 1988, 3).

Given the regional and international situation in the first part of the Cold War, and with the oil crisis and world recession of the 1970s, managing the economy to “secure stable prices, full employment, rising living standards and balanced trade had become much harder” (Gamble, 1988, 3). Some of these international conditions affecting the ideological shift in Britain and economic progress included the “decline in the ability of the United States to perform a hegemonic role in the world economy; the exhaustion of old technological systems and the emergence of new ones; changes in the pattern of the world division of labour; the growing internationalization and interdependence of the world economy; and the development of different occupational and work structures” (Gamble, 1988, 3).

In this geo-political context, and in addition to the decolonization process that took place after World War Two, Thatcher's discourse that Britain needed to be great again found its supporters, even though her rhetoric of conviction politics proved to be "much more radical than the policies which were adopted in opposition or pursued in government" (Gamble, 1988, 4). Thus, in light of the perceived negative effects of rising unemployment and rapid inflation, as seen caused by Keynesian economics principles implemented, it has been suggested that Thatcher's political economy was a "product of the economic context of the 1970s, and part of a larger, international re-birth of interest in liberal-market and monetarist economics" (Green, 1999, 19).

Thatcherites saw their aim to "'roll back the frontiers of the State' by replacing the mixed economy with a private-sector dominated market economy, which was to be complemented by a reform and reduction of the welfare state, by a lowering of direct personal taxation and the encouragement of wider property-ownership" (Green, 1999, 19). The forces tampering with the "operation of the market, in particular trade unions, were to have their powers and legal privileges curbed and finally, low inflation rather than full employment being the central goal of Thatcherite economic policy" (Green, 1999, 19). Thatcherism sought to "strip away the encroachments of the state on market exchanges between individuals, and restore the tarnished character of the British liberal polity by closing the gap between the theory and the practice of the British constitution, bringing back limited politics by drastically restricting the scope and number of the decisions made by public bodies" (Gamble, 1988, 15).

Thatcher went so far as to call the politics of consensus before her essentially socialist, since one had to surrender more than usual power over to the state, the state

being entrusted to spend money better than the people could (CBC archives, 1983). She believed that the state could not run everything, nor should it try to do that since it would create expectations that the state would solve people's problems and would do things for them, and when the state would start doing everything for you, it would soon be able to take everything from you (CBC archives, 1983). In an interview with Barbara Frum for the CBC, she also expressed her opinion that, under a "nanny state, looking after its citizens from cradle to grave" (Jacobs, 1985, 1262), one has no basis for personal freedom, political freedom, nor economic freedom, the state never having to substitute for personal responsibility nor private initiative (CBC archives, 1983).

Socially, Thatcherism encouraged a new relationship between state and civil society, given that a "state tradition in the European sense never developed in Britain, and civil society was not regulated by public law, the state having preferred to rule through public bodies and informal networks" (Gamble, 1988, 14). In theory, there had been a clear "separation between the public and private sectors even though in practice the line became increasingly blurred" (Gamble, 1988, 14). This had taken place because of a "network of public agencies with varying degrees of autonomy from the centre, and the gradual accumulation of precedents and guidelines which helped define a consensus on the objectives and the implementation of policy between the different actors involved" (Gamble, 1988, 14). Thus, under Thatcherism, institutional continuity and the "formal character of the British state were preserved even while the substance and reach of government were altered substantially [...] to a much simpler relationship between state and civil society, in which the government's role was only regulatory and enabling, not interventionist and executive" (Gamble, 1988, 14).

Thatcherism and Privatization

The rollback of the state was to make government “thinner and more effective” through the implementation of reforms in areas such as privatisation, local governance, labour rights and various welfare policies. These were seen as “visible proofs that collectivism could be turned back” and of them, privatization, or “selling nationalized industries back into private ownership” (Gamble, 1988, 4) was one of the most stringent policies of Thatcherism stirring great dissatisfaction amongst Scots. Even though plans with respect to privatization were not publicly included in the 1979 electoral platform, Conservatives initially committed to reform “industrial relations and run nationalized industries as commercial concerns, but not necessarily to sell them off” (Gamble, 1988, 4).

Full-blown privatization was not implemented until mid 1980s with British Telecom, becoming “one of the most distinctive policies and themes of the Thatcher Government” (Gamble, 1988, 7), after the government “successfully piloted the sale of a few small publicly-owned industries and assets” (Gamble, 1988, 4), such as the sale of shareholdings of the National Enterprise Board. Privatization did not simply resort to “denationalization, or the reversal of earlier measures of nationalization” which occurred with British Telecom and British Gas (Gamble, 1988, 9). It came to refer to all “withdrawals from direct state involvement in the provision of goods and services” and to the new “relationship which the Government wishes to see between the state and civil society” (Gamble, 1988, 4, 9).

Thatcherites understood privatization as encompassing both that of assets, as well as services. The former included the “sale of nationalized industries and government

share holdings in private companies, government land and property, and council houses”, which is where the “shift in the balance between public and private sectors was most marked” (Gamble, 1988, 9). The latter was less “dramatic and more complex and often much less clear-cut than in the case of denationalization” involving the “reorganization of the state sector, and changes in the responsibilities and tasks of different agencies” (Gamble, 1988, 10). Thatcher herself acknowledged that there had to be a trade-off between bigger pay for the public sector or public services, people having to face public and responsible choices (CBC archives, 1983), which is where the second form of privatization came in place.

Privatization had as its main objectives the “extension of freedom of choice; efficiency and the elimination of waste; the reduction of the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement; the control of public sector pay and weakening of the power of public sector unions” (Gamble, 1988, 11). Other objectives included the “removal of many decisions from the political process; the widening of share ownership both among citizens and employees; the promotion of liberalization and competition; and the enlargement of active citizenship and the contraction of state dependency” (Gamble, 1988, 11). It could actually be claimed that these objectives were not solely of privatization, but of Thatcherite policies more broadly in all socio-economic areas.

Public services were privatized under Thatcher in four ways, by charging, contracting out, liberalization, and withdrawal. Charging involved making “users pay for services, although the provision of the service remains in public hands”, the main change lying in how the service was financed, individual contributions replacing central or local taxation, charges being sometimes imposed for the first time or raised to ‘market levels’

(Gamble, 1988, 10). The role and burden of the individual was changed under this policy from a taxpayer to a consumer, accessing education, health, pensions and housing differently after privatization through charging was implemented (Gamble, 1988, 10). Contracting was more radical given that the service was contracted to, or provided by the private sector, the state changing its role from one of provider to one of enabler of services (Gamble, 1988, 10). The state remained a “client for the service and invited bids from private companies” and then chose the best bid to contract out the service (Gamble, 1988, 10). If unsatisfied by the performance, it reserved the right not to renew the contract, the public being able to “select the contractor who offered to provide the required service at the lowest possible cost and the highest possible quality” (Gamble, 1988, 10). The greatest implication of this was a very “large reduction in the number of people directly employed by the state and other public bodies, and the curtailment of the role of public sector managers, so that they became concerned primarily with assessing rival tenders rather than with the direct provision of services” (Gamble, 1988, 10).

Liberalization was manifested through the “introduction of competition in order to break up monopoly power, whether exercised by a company, agency or a profession” (Gamble, 1988, 11). It could in theory permit competition between “different agencies within the public sector, but in practice it was more likely to involve the injection of competition by the licensing of private sector companies” (Gamble, 1988, 11). Through liberalization, the state forced all “institutions to submit to market criteria by withdrawing its protection and legislating to enforce competition” (Gamble, 1988, 11). Some of the British industries where the government promoted liberalization included the telecommunications sector, broadcasting, transport and the optician service (Gamble,

1988, 11). The final form of Thatcherite privatization, withdrawal, involved the abandonment of state “responsibility for the provision of a particular service, shifted to the private sector, either to voluntary organizations in the civil society or more often to families” (Gamble, 1988, 11). For example, by removing community care from the “formal to the informal sector, the Government assumed there was a strong informal sector capable of taking up the burden, which in some, or most cases fell on women” (Gamble, 1988, 11).

Economically, Thatcherism was influenced ideologically by the conservative segment of what was known at the time, and since then as the *New Right*, which focused on market fundamentalism, while establishing and maintaining state authority. This was seen as necessary because a free market “in the sense of a private domain in which individuals owned and enjoyed property was an important component of state authority, but not an end in itself” (Gamble, 1988, 16). Free market was seen part of a wider “system of institutions which made social order possible and found its highest expression in the state, and in the past, these institutions included education, public housing, social security, and community care” (Gamble, 1988, 16). The free market fostered individualism, at odds with a “solidaristic national culture with a restricted set of approved life styles” (Gamble, 1988, 16). Thus, while the Thatcher governments advocated “increasing censorship of the content of television programmes, picking up demands long urged by campaigners against permissiveness, it also pushed ahead with the deregulation of television, which would make the control of the programme content ore difficult” (Gamble, 1988, 16).

As the government wished to restore the traditional character and authority of major public institutions like “universities, in applying free market criteria and subordinating these institutions to consumer demand, it threatened to destroy what conservatives regarded as most precious about them – their ability to safeguard and transmit a particular tradition of learning” (Gamble, 1988, 16). Even as the *New Right* promoted libertarian individualism and self-reliance in the socio-cultural sphere, it affected the British institutional legacy/memory as well as obliterated the “paternalistic” and consensual Conservatism of Edward Heath after the Second World War (personal translation, Tanasescu, 2009, 106). Interestingly, it has been suggested that market liberal ideas were subordinate to the “calculation of the political interest of the Conservative party, with restoring the authority of the British state and the dominance of the Conservatives within it as the most important consideration in the development of policy, rather than the abstract commitment to a free economy as such” (Gamble, 1988, 16).

One of the perceived roles of the government was to weaken the “autonomy and legitimacy of all intermediate institutions, to remove the institutional basis for any opposition to policies determined at the centre”, the emphasis on the decision-making epicentre lying in the centrality of power (Gamble, 1988, 17). Under Thatcherism, the legitimacy of authority rested in the concentration of power at the centre, since a weak government would be forced to seek approval and “consensus for its policies, and rely on collaborators among the organized interests of civil society and at the local and regional levels of the state” (Gamble, 1988, 17). This was seen as accepting a puppet government at the centre, one that would be too entangled in, and preoccupied by, the interests of other societal stakeholders, instead of focused on the one-dimensional relationship

between itself and individuals. A successful government would be “genuinely limited to a few minimal functions, and civil society reorganized so that those forces which supported limited government gained an unassailable position, while those forces in favour of extended government were permanently subordinated” (Gamble, 1988, 17).

Thatcher’s Trade Unions and Welfare System

Intertwined with privatization there is another policy that proved just as controversial and radical, namely trade union reforms. In this regard, Thatcherites aimed to “remove unions from the realm of economic governance” which implied a treatment of “benign neglect” (Green, 2006, 117). Before even getting in power, trade unions occupied a lot of the time dedicated to policy making for Thatcher and her circle of advisers and strategists. In 1978 they concluded that a future Conservative government would “supervise ‘a return to free collective bargaining in the private sector, pay bargaining for the public corporations... governed by the amounts which could be afforded and ... no subventions from the Government to finance excessive pay deals and bargaining within cash limits” (Green, 2006, 112). Trade unions were seen to have led Britain “down the path of corporatist/Socialist economic governance” and in order to change that, Thatcher aimed to withdraw the government from “any direct involvement in questions related to pay, since wage levels, and most other aspects of working life, were a matter for negotiation between management and union/workers” (Green, 2006, 113). This would include if not the complete “depoliticization of trade unions, then at least the removal of their interests and activities from the centre of the political stage” (Green, 2006, 115).

Some of the specific policies Thatcherites implemented with respect to trade union law included the mandatory use of secret-ballot votes before any industrial action could

be taken; restricting lawful picketing to the place of work of those involved in a dispute; enabling employers to take injunctions against unions; narrowing the legal definition of a trade dispute; and reducing social security payments to strikers' families (Green, 2006, 117-120). These policies were backed by rhetoric that people in the UK knew that "you cannot strike your way out to prosperity, you can only strike your way out of business" (CBC Archives, 1983). Thatcher's view of trade unions was that they had to be confined to their "legitimate role of representatives of their memberships' industrial and workplace interests" (Green, 2006, 125). Unions were seen in terms of their "origins, apolitical, voluntary, civic associations that had been hijacked by political militants" (Green, 2006, 125).

Thatcherites saw themselves as protecting people's rights to protest, since they would not have the right to criticize the government, or protest if they were behind the Iron Curtain (CBC Archives, 1983). Public opinion changed as Thatcher's trade union law reforms were implemented, in 1978 polls showing that "78 percent of the British electorate felt that trade unions had too much power and that trade union leaders were the most powerful figures in the country" (Green, 2006, 123). By the time Thatcher left office, only "17 percent thought this was the case" (Green, 2006, 123). The first figure could be explained as emerging after turbulent times in which successive governments collapsed because of an inability to agree on solutions in dealing with trade unions and their industrial actions. By 1990, the low public opinion could have reflected the fact that Thatcher's goal of "removing the trade unions from the political stage had largely been achieved" (Green, 2006, 126).

Not just trade unions were greatly reformed under Thatcher's successive governments; the welfare system was also reviewed in the mid 1980s, based on four social security proposals, regarding pensions, low-income support, family allowances and housing benefit (Jacobs, 1985, 1262). The rise of welfare costs in the decades preceding Thatcherism led to the state finding itself "with a simple problem of financing it, since in the 1980s the social security budget was 40 bn pounds, nearly one-third of all government expenditure" (Jacobs, 1985, 1262). In the first half of the 1980s alone, the welfare budget had risen "30 percent in real terms, and the trend seemed to remain upwards", up to half of this rise being attributed to the "three-fold increase in unemployment since Thatcher came to power" (Jacobs, 1985, 1262). The direct cost of unemployment benefits for over three and a half million people out of work was over "7.5 bn pounds, while the rest was due to a rise in low-wage-based-poverty" (Jacobs, 1985, 1262). Contributing to these costs were also the 38,000 staff in charge of administering social security services. Despite these figures, the rationale behind reforming the welfare system was not solely a fiscally conservative one, but also an ideological antipathy to the overall concept of state welfare since it was seen as a "system which encouraged idleness and irresponsibility and discouraged initiative and enterprise" (Jacobs, 1985, 1262). Thatcherites considered social security as reducing the "incentive to work, many of the unemployed being better off on the dole than in a job" (Jacobs, 1985, 1262).

Some of the specific actions that the Thatcher governments took against the social security system included the replacement of the "Family Income Supplement to low-paid workers with children with the Family Credit paid through the wage packet, acting like a subsidy and encouraging employers to set lower wages" (Jacobs, 1985, 1262). Income

support for the “poor (in and out of work) was to be based on net gross income, reducing the high marginal rates of tax experienced by workers coming off the dole into low-paid jobs” (Jacobs, 1985, 1262). The universal maternity and death grants were abolished and replaced with discretionary means-tested payments, while other grants paid to the poor were cut, such as for “heating, special diets, laundry and basic furniture, these being claimed, with a separate means-test, from a discretionary Social Fund, sometimes in the form of loans” (Jacobs, 1985, 1262). In addition, and in an “explicit throwback to the Victorian values of blaming the victim”, claimants were given “help by social workers and psychologists on how to manage their budgets” (Jacobs, 1985, 1263). Child benefit was not raised, while the state earnings-related pension scheme was abolished essentially having occupational pensions privatized. This scheme had particularly benefited lower-paid workers who received a “higher proportion of their earnings than the higher paid, and those who changed their job, or who were made unemployed, since the pension was based on the best twenty years of employment” (Jacobs, 1985, 1263).

Thatcherism and Nationality(ies)

Thatcherism extended beyond political economy, its rhetoric including also changes to the concepts of nationality and immigration. The British Nationality Act of 1981, the “cornerstone” of this policy did not refer to the nations forming the United Kingdom, but to the British nationality overall for newcomers to the country. The Act was meant to dispose of the notion that “Britain was somehow a haven for all whose countries we once ruled” (Dixon, 1983, 164), while attempting to reconstruct Britain’s national identity as the basis for a “Britain emancipated from the past” (Dixon, 1983, 164, 173). This was considered important since some Thatcherites believed that Britain’s crisis

was not necessarily an economic one but more so one of national identity, having turned socially democratic and in favour of the state at the expense of individual freedom.

Individual freedom and personal responsibility was what bounded people together, not “unions, classes and affiliation to the state”, with the populist motto that “the things in common as a nation far outnumbered those that set us apart” (Dixon, 1983, 171).

The 1981 British Nationality Act introduced three new categories of citizenship corresponding to the “distinctions between groups of citizens of the UK and colonies made by immigration law” (Dixon, 1983, 162). Specifically the previously adopted broad citizenship of the UK and its colonies was replaced with three distinct categories: British citizenship for those “closely connected to Britain”; British dependent/overseas territories citizenship for those “with a similar connection to one of the remaining dependencies; and British overseas citizenship, for those not falling into “either of the previous categories (in particular including many East African Asians)” (Dixon, 1983, 163). The emphasis was placed on an explicit and exclusive British citizenship different from the rest of the Commonwealth, while denying most Hong Kong-born ethnic Chinese the Right of Abode (residency) in the UK (Dixon, 1983).

The Act also modified *ius Solis* by which previously entitled any person born in Britain to British Citizenship (Dixon, 1983). Under the Act, at least one of the parents of a UK-newborn had to be a British citizen or a settled immigrant/resident of the UK. Those previously categorized as British subjects were called, after the 1981 Act, Commonwealth citizens, while the Right of Abode was abolished for non-British citizens (Dixon, 1983). Commonwealth citizens had to apply to become British citizens through naturalization,

and could no longer do so simply through registration while British citizenship was not granted anymore to women marrying British men (Dixon, 1983).

Intrinsic with the views exposed by the British Nationality Act lied the idea that Great Britain should not be emphasised as a state but as a single nation, subnational identities being “discounted as misplaced sentimentalities or obsolete provincialisms, devolution being staunchly resisted as another tier added to an already overblown bureaucracy” (O’Neill, 2000, 73). Regionalist policies figured in Thatcherism as “little more than a strategy for improving macro-economic management and had nothing whatsoever to do with acknowledging ethnic identities” (O’Neill, 2000, 75). British national regeneration was concerned with “enhanced indicative planning, increased inward investment, better land use, improved economic development, reorganized transport, efficient resource allocation and scale economies” (O’Neill, 2000, 75). Local government reform was the only concession Thatcherites were willing to make to subnational governance. Specifically with respect to Scotland, the Scottish Office gained additional competences in “industrial support, further and higher education, care in the community, the Scottish Arts Council, and responsibility for supervising European Social Fund expenditure” (O’Neill, 2000, 76). The Scottish Development Agency was renamed Scottish Enterprise and lost its “social responsibilities, while being also largely decentralized to Local Enterprise companies under business leadership” (Keating et al, 2003, 150).

In London, on the other hand, the parliamentary Scottish Grand Committee was further empowered to hold debates on “third as well as second readings, with Cabinet Ministers rather than just the Scottish Secretary being encouraged to attend its meetings,

put motions and reply to questions, though not to vote” (O’Neill, 2000, 76). The frequency of the sittings of the Scottish Grand Committee was also increased, extending “parliamentary scrutiny of Scottish bills, with more opportunity for informed debate” (O’Neill, 2000, 76). Opportunities for questioning the Secretary of State in the Scottish Grand Committee were increased, creating in the opinion of some “a mini house of Commons for Scotland within the orbit of the UK Parliament, arrangements being also made to hold special standing committees of Scottish bills in Scotland” (O’Neill, 2000, 76).

One other way in which the national Westminster presence was felt in Scotland was through the attempts to bring the Scottish Office “closer to the people by holding its meetings throughout the country and setting up information points in key urban centres” (O’Neill, 2000, 76). Despite the limited and incomplete albeit supposed good-natured attempts of Thatcherite governments to enhance local governance, these only had the effect of bringing out the flaws of a rule from a distance from the Scottish perspective, reinforcing the democratic deficit that Scots had been complaining about in different terms for decades. Moreover, the changes affecting Scottish local institutions were associated with the “governing party, the Conservatives, which had very limited support, and hence legitimacy in Scotland in the first place” (Papillon & Turgeon, 2003, 321).

These changes to local governance came after decades of differential regional development and the evolution of a separate political culture in Scotland based partially on a “territorial distribution of classes following industrialization” (Urwin, 1982, 20), as well as external factors such as the emergence of the Irish Free State in the 1920s, the collapse of the Liberal party, and the electoral successes of the Labour party. Locally, the

anti-Capitalist, anti-Conservative and anti-English Red Clydeside movement after the First World War also contributed to the distinctiveness of the Scottish socio-political landscape. The institutionalized home rule movement was not at first directly impacted by Red Clydeside or the Irish Free State, the feelings of empowerment of those involved, or supporting them however leading to the creation of Lewis Spence's Scottish Nationalist Movement in 1926, and the National Party of Scotland (NPS) in 1928.

The NPS merged with the devolutionist Scottish Party in 1934 forming the non-ideological Scottish National Party (SNP), which immediately started running candidates in general elections until 1974 when it also became involved in local politics through regional, district and local council participation. The party gained its first parliamentary seat in a general election in 1970 when it broke through the double-digit popular vote, having made small electoral successes in the 1940s and 1960s in by-elections. Until then, and in the decades following, the popularity of the secessionist cause was divided with the non partisan moderates who aimed for devolution, or home rule. The stagnation of the party in popularity and electoral gains in its first decades led to internal divisions also due to a lack of focus and agreement over the all-around nature for an independent Scotland, though not of the principle itself, or strategy.

In the first decades of existence, the SNP did not seek to "present itself as an ideological party, being seen as governed by a 'ruling myth' that it was neither of the left or the right, but constituted a new politics that sought to put Scotland first" (Lynch, 2009, 623). Party elites had at first agreed to promote a "unique place for the SNP within the electoral marketplace, rather than advance the same ideological position as the Unionist parties" (Lynch, 2009, 623), but this did not last for much of the party's history.

Continuous philosophical debate took place in the party not by left/right fault lines but about the distinctive character of its cause, about the SNP being a “national movement with new politics rather than another UK-based party of sectional interests” (Lynch, 2009, 624). This is representative of the existential and formative debate of the SNP between continuing as a “national movement for independence containing all shades of political opinion, or a political party with detailed policies” (Lynch, 2009, 624).

The “ideological” division between party members was reinforced by the “‘independence nothing less’ view within the SNP, especially evident with the old guard from the 1950s, which saw detailed policies as a distraction from independence” (Lynch, 2009, 624). This debate continued well into the 1980s, despite the consolidated and official views of the party, with the internal factions of The 79 Group and the Campaign for Nationalism in Scotland, representing the politically radical, respectively non-ideological secessionisms of the party. As the subsequent chapter illustrates, the latter stance with respect to the institutional character of the cause prevailed amongst its members, even though the “distraction argument” emerged from readers of *The Scotsman* in the 1980s.

Chapter 3: Findings and Interpretations

Some explanations are required regarding the interpretations I will put forth with respect to my results and how the research was conducted. I began my research under the assumption (wrongfully held, or not) that my hypothesis was true. While I did not solely look for evidence to confirm it, that the ideological stance of the SNP had been adopted or consolidated in reaction to Margaret Thatcher's policies, I was more concerned with any, and all, explanations more generally put forward regarding the party's ideological positioning. In order to be confident in the solidity of the proofs confirming my hypothesis as I had assumed it was true, I aimed to find consistent evidence not just in one sole instance, but more widely accepted and agreed with. Such an example would include the minutes and publicity of a policy conference where consensus would be reached for the party to react ideologically to Thatcherism, in conjunction with other documents confirming the deliberateness and complexity of this choice, such as correspondence, circular letters between party headquarters and local associations, newspaper editorials commenting on such a decision etc. Thus, I would not consider finding one sole clear evidence to be sufficient proof that my hypothesis was correct, nor did I only aim or look to find one instance on which to consider my supposition proven. I did not set a clear benchmark for what exactly would sufficient evidence be, because I was not sure how much evidence there would be in the first place, and as such, I did not establish a set number of instances I would need to rely on, or to ground my analysis on.

The resources I analyzed were chosen in accordance with some of the guidelines set up by process tracing. First with respect to their diversity of types and samples, second given the variety of the points of view presented both journalistically and politically, and

third their source availability were collective factors in moulding my analysis based on their content and structure. The knowledge acquired was not solely from archival and press accounts. Secondary sources were also consulted for complementary, filtered, or simplified versions of the detailed historical process that the archives and newspaper provided me with. While it may seem somewhat simplistic, I read the sources (both primary and secondary) with questioning whether they were helpful for my hypothesis, or, on the contrary, if they would provide an alternate explanation, or possibly disprove it. *The Scotsman* proved to be the most helpful. It exposed a variety of opinions in one place, while following local, national and international events very closely. The personal archives offered useful snippets that were often without strong links to other documents available, understandably so not forming coherent and complete narratives.

The personal archives consulted provided an overwhelming bias and partisanship that the newspaper did not. The paper offered the general context in which these isolated instances could be placed. *The Scotsman* did not follow closely enough the activities of the SNP, or its evolution. It was treated more as a sidekick, as one component in the greater picture of the Home Rule movement or secessionism. The party was awarded less attention and ink than expected. Their policies and reactions were sporadically covered during the time frame, with more space and focus than usual being saved for the secessionist agenda during electoral campaigns and post-general elections. My interpretation of the findings and the sources will thus be both contextual and intuitive, to various degrees/extents. As required at the macro, or micro level, I will link findings with other sources or the historical context, or focus specifically on rhetorical devices and the importance of key words chosen to inflict emotional reactions from people. Where

possible, I tried to find similarities and common themes between my findings, and group them together, in chronological order, to structure the findings as well as my interpretations.

My research to prove my initial hypothesis of secessionist ideological reactivity took place in two major phases, which included archival research and journalistic analysis. Of these, by far the lengthier was the latter, which involved going through archived issues of *The Scotsman* on microform, available only from 1974 to 1986 from the McGill University Library². Phase one of the research took place at the National Library of Scotland (NLS) in Edinburgh during the summer of 2010, while *The Scotsman* was analyzed from the fall of 2011 onwards. This chapter will present my findings first from the political archives consulted at the NLS³ and second from *The Scotsman*, providing interpretation and analysis of my results along the way for each, then altogether as a body of research, at the end of the chapter.

Archival Findings

My research at the NLS included both sources belonging to the SNP generally as well as individually to some of its politicians, including Dr. Robert McIntyre and Prof. Gavin Kennedy. Robert McIntyre was a Member of Parliament, Chairman, and then President of the SNP, occupying the latter position for part of my time frame (until 1980). Gavin Kennedy, on the other hand, was a parliamentary candidate and member of the National Assembly, National Council and National Executive Committee of the party

² Digitally, *The Scotsman* lacks in its official archives the issues published during my period of interest and I got access to them in microfilm format.

³ Due to NLS privacy concerns and regulations, I will not be able to reveal or otherwise make public specific names of individual authors/owners of quotes/instances referred to here from the personal archives consulted.

between the years in case. These two inventories were amongst my choices of personal archives consulted due to their comprehensiveness, availability, diversity of accounts and materials, and relevance to my period of interest, given that the NLS houses many other archival documents, including of other SNP politicians, but with involvement from before the 1970s.

The accounts consulted from Robert McIntyre's inventory included conference papers, personal correspondence, National Council and Assembly documents, press cuttings, miscellaneous speeches, numerous and various committees' minutes and reports and election files. The Gavin Kennedy papers included similar or overlapping accounts of conference papers, minutes and reports of committees representing the bulk of the archives, leaflets and publicity material, circular letters and SNP research department documents. An interesting overlap worth mentioning due to its relevance is the presence of documents such as minutes, newsletters, discussion and other papers pertaining to The 79 Group of the SNP. In one of these archives related to The 79 Group, I found probably the most blatant link of deliberate encouragement for the ideological positioning of the SNP with respect to my hypothesis in all the archival documents I consulted at the NLS.

The 79 Group was an internal ideological faction of the SNP formed earlier that year (1979) which sought to persuade the party to take active left-wing ideological stances under the assumption that it would receive more support, from the working classes for a Scottish socialist republic. The socialist character of the group was not debated or defined and its broad, internal goal was to "attack the old guard and the 'ruling myth' [of non-ideological secessionism] while targeting the Labour electorate" (Lynch, 2009, 630). By 1981, and with some support from new SNP members and former Labour

Party officials, such as Jim Sillars who later left the SNP altogether, part of The 79 Group had been elected to the SNP National Executive Council. The Group was expelled from the SNP in 1982, after some of its members led public “campaigns of civil disobedience” even though the historic official stance of the party had been that of non-violence, non-demonstration, purely electoral campaigning. Furthermore, leaked minute meetings showed an emerging connection between Sinn Fein members and The 79 Group. With IRA violence ongoing in the United Kingdom, such a link would have harmed the popularity of the SNP in Scotland and the credibility and legitimacy of its MPs at Westminster. Some of the leading members of The 79 Group were subsequently readmitted into the party and later obtained senior positions in the Scottish Government, with Alex Salmond, one of the original leaders of The 79 Group, being Scotland’s First Minister since 2007, under the SNP banner.

The specific instance referred to above was part of the minutes of a 79 Group meeting that took place in Glasgow on August 18, 1979. In said meeting, a motion was passed unanimously by those attending, which urged the SNP to “lead a campaign of *opposition* to job-cutting decisions in Scottish Shipyards and other such Tory attacks on the living standards and jobs of the people of Scotland” (emphasis added, Gavin Kennedy archives). This quote is crucial for several reasons, none of which include its relevance to my initial hypothesis. First, it is important to note the fact that someone inside the SNP, and specifically from within The 79 Group, actually thought about developing political stances in reaction and opposition to an enemy. This is interesting, again not because of my hypothesis, but because it shows the deliberate and premeditated intent of a reactive ideological stance on behalf of one of the members of the party itself. Second, it is also

worthy the fact that the motion passed unanimously, implying the agreement of those present and willingness to subscribe to such an instrumentalist stance with respect to the ideological guidelines of the party. As to the numbers, roles and influence within the SNP of those attending, these were not specified in the minutes, given that the motion itself was not part of recorded/transcribed minutes, but more so a highlight of the meeting. Third, although unclear from official discourse (often with contradictory evidence) that the SNP had officially and strongly adopted a left-wing ideology by 1979, the wording of the motion, not to mention what is known of the character of the faction, indicates a socially democratic tendency (“job-cutting decisions”, “attack on living standards and jobs”).

With the exception of this singular instance however, I did not find any follow-up in the archives consulted as to how the motion was received by the National Executive or other senior party officials. This made me speculate that the motion was passed on verbally, and probably rejected or condemned as vote hunting. Any possible written proof of the influence of it was not included in the papers submitted by Gavin Kennedy or Robert McIntyre, which were the only two personal archival records consulted. That is also not to say that their inventories may not have been complete, nor would they necessarily have contained everything that they wanted to leave behind, or have publicized. Although both politicians’ inventories contained minutes of The 79 Group, nothing else was found that could link this result to anything else available, neither in *The Scotsman* nor in the SNP archives consulted. An alternate scenario to the lack of traces is that since The 79 Group fell into disarray before the next general election of 1983, when the party’s ideological stance was consolidated further as illustrated by its electoral

manifesto analyzed later on, the motion/idea never concretized, knowingly or deliberately, given the lack of archival evidence pointing to this.

In the McIntyre and Kennedy archives there was no conclusive evidence found to confirm my initial hypothesis, or support the motion made above. While this made for an unsuccessful archival research, in hindsight it should not have been surprising at all. The personal correspondence did not reveal anything to justify the ideological placement of the party other than strategic explanations and competition with Labour, which for some would assign the social democracy adopted as part of reflecting the political culture of the electorate (the conventional explanations of the majority of researchers on Scottish secessionism). Even less surprising, although not completely unexpected, was that in sixteen years of press releases of the SNP, from 1974 to 1990, there was absolutely no ideological explanation, or justification for the policies adopted, the rhetoric in some of them mirroring that of the electoral platforms elaborated below. Amongst the archives of the party itself, I had access only to one account⁴. That account included miscellaneous party leaflets, election addresses and leaflets, none of which provided evidentiary support for my hypothesis; electoral manifestos analyzed later on being the sole “useful” knowledge being gained from them.

Some notable mentions in the Gavin Kennedy Papers can however be made regarding the seldom instances of deliberate hunt for votes that included rhetoric on strategic objective-setting, the rationalization of independence (as opposed to the unionist demagoguery), and narrowness of electoral marketing. This is the closest to a possible explanation, albeit indirect, from the archives that could be interpreted as justifying the

⁴ A second SNP archival account at the NLS required written permission from the party headquarters, which I did not receive in a timely fashion during my field research there.

ideological positioning of the party. Thus, the oil campaign was seen as an example of “what the Party can do with *imagination*, sound research and good design – even on a thread bare budget” (emphasis added, 1974 Annual Conference minutes). “Imagination” is an interesting word choice for the fact that it implies the deliberate creative complementarity between the North Sea oil and independence. Strategically the aim for 1975 was to “build the SNP vote”, and the only way this was seen to work was through the successful promotion of the “concept of self-government and complete devaluation of ‘devolution’” (1975 Annual Conference minutes). Devolution was seen as an incomplete solution, a compromise that would diffuse the real goal of the movement, that of complete independence. By 1977 it seems that it was becoming “increasingly easier to rationalise and justify in our opponents’ eyes the case for economic and political independence”, with the caveat that this was supposed to have continued in a positive way (1977 Annual Conference minutes), which it did not always happen. Also at the 1977 Conference, strategists had identified the requirements for “guidelines regarding the different political situations from which Independence can result”, which could lead one to assume that the tactics included the manipulation of various circumstances, the North Sea oil included, for the promotion of independence.

After the 1979 elections, the strategy of the party was that “it was not enough to have voters believe that the SNP thought independence would solve these huge political problems” but that they also had to “spell it out”, exactly “how independence would help to solve them” (original emphasis, 1979 Annual Conference minutes). The Unionists were seen to have won on the “economic and industrial policy front” where it was a “bit more difficult to make the constitutional question relevant” (1979 Annual Conference minutes).

A strategic shift thus emerged, which could also be seen in the distinctions between electoral platforms from 1977 to 1983, in that the party's "ideas on how Independence would be obtained had become too narrow [believing] that only by electing MPs to Westminster would Scotland become Independent" (1979 Annual Conference minutes).

A widening of electoral base, which can also explain the detailed policies in the electoral platforms of the 1980s, was suggested at the 1979 Annual Conference, because the narrowness was seen to be detrimental to the focus and success of the party. While none of these had any direct connection to the deliberateness of the ideological choice of the SNP in reaction to Thatcherite Conservatism, they were important to note for the general instrumental character of the party, which, like any other partisan organization, found itself in the conundrum of vote-hunting to get into power. Despite this electoral catch-22, the party agreed as early as 1979 to get Scotland on the best road ahead not through the traditional ideological continuum of left and right, but through a distinct third-way, "the SNP's way". This could make contemporary readers think of the more recent "new political third way" approach and rhetoric that Tony Blair used before the 1997 general election, which he won. However, this, of course, is no indication or suggestion that there is any connection between these two rhetorical cases.

Propaganda Analysis

The rhetorical, internal ideals of a third-way did not translate into the electoral platforms/manifestos⁵ of the SNP between 1974 and 1989. A survey of the party's three platforms for the 1979, 1983, respectively 1987 elections revealed positive as well as escalating negative discourse regarding its own promises and goals, respectively

⁵ To clarify, in my analysis I refer to electoral platforms, electoral manifestos, or election leaflets interchangeably to avoid repeating myself.

Westminster's failures with respect to Scotland in favour of England, but no specific and explicit justification of ideological stances or reactivity to Thatcherism (from 1979 onwards). Only these three electoral platforms are directly included here in the analysis, due to their availability as these were the only ones from my time frame that I had direct access to.

The 1977 platform was admittedly published two years before the general election of 1979, however, in addition to a supplementary manifesto, both were used as electoral materials for the election that would bring Margaret Thatcher's Conservatives to power. Thus in the 1977 SNP platform entitled "SNP & you: aims and policy of the Scottish National Party", the overall tone was more on the idealist side, with verbs only in the future and present tenses: "as the prospect of self-government draws closer..." (SNP, 1977, 2); "a Central Bank will be established..." (SNP, 1977, 12). Even the title of the manifesto, in comparison to the rest, was more supportive, yet still passive and static, not containing any verbs, compared to the subsequent two platforms. The manifesto was divided also in static and predictable categories, including aims, finance, oil, and housing, among others. With respect to foreign policy, the emphasis was placed on regional and international "co-operation". An independent Scotland was to remain a part of the Commonwealth, immersing itself in international and organizations such as the UN and even recommending the establishment of an Association of British States for the "other parts of the British isles" to co-operate "on matters of common interest" (SNP, 1977, 2).

The anti-Westminster rhetoric in this platform is scarcely utilized and in milder terms, such as "the *dismal* legacy of London Government" (emphasis added, SNP, 1977, 11); "the great wealth from oil will be used by a Scottish government to redress the

economic and social *injustices* from which Scotland has *suffered*” (emphasis added, SNP, 1977, 13); “so long as we are without self-government, London will *continue* to take the oil wealth from us as fast as possible, and, at the end of the day, *leave us with nothing* except the *mess* and the unemployment arising out of a *boom-slump* situation” (emphasis added, SNP, 1977, 13). The implication behind these sentiments is solely, one of populist victimization (one would argue rightfully employed/justified) in order to stimulate the emotions of the electorate into taking action for the benefit of the SNP electorate.

In domestic matters, the SNP outlined its plans for achieving self-government: winning a majority of seats in the UK Parliament that would draw up a Constitution which would then be negotiated “for the orderly transfer of power from Westminster” (SNP, 1977, 2). The Constitution would then have to be adopted by a majority of Scots through a referendum (SNP, 1977). In the same section, the SNP described the roles and function of a Scottish unicameral Parliament whose members would be elected via a proportional representation voting system (SNP, 1977). The relevancy of this lied in the perceived fairness and equality of both the unicameral legislative as well as the proportionality of the electoral system.

Economically the emphasis was placed on national self-management, with “control of natural resources and the opportunity to adopt monetary, taxation and industrial development policies designed to suit the Scottish economy, and meet the needs and aspirations of the people” (SNP, 1977, 11). An accommodating approach best describes the way the SNP advised to stimulate the economy given that “financial incentives to industry would be flexible; tax incentives may be more appropriate to many larger enterprises and loans and grants to smaller ones. Special aid would be given to

assist the establishment and expansion of industry based on the use of our resources, and of manufacturing companies” (SNP, 1977, 11). Workers would be *encouraged* to join trade unions, while a central/national bank would be established (emphasis added, SNP, 1977, 15).

Energy-wise, a great deal of attention was paid to the oil and natural gas reserves in Scottish waters. A Ministry of Housing would be created, to deal “with both private *and* public housing policy, and with effective long-term planning for house building” (emphasis added, SNP, 1977, 15). Not in explicit terms and without much detail of policy implementation presented, one can see that a socially democratic, left-wing ideology started to emerge in the SNP, at least based on the party’s electoral platform, before Margaret Thatcher even became Prime Minister in 1979, anti-Westminster rhetoric being utilized also against the Labour government that had been in power since 1974. The implication here is that Scotland would not benefit from any of the national parties indifferent of their political colours, but only from a home-grown movement.

The 1983 SNP Manifesto, entitled “Choose Scotland – the Challenge of Independence” came after a first mandate of Margaret Thatcher being in power, with stronger yet sombre rhetoric, as the title itself pointed to, including a verb in it, and a burdening prospect of independence. The manifesto included increased tonal and frequency of negativity against Westminster specifically and England more generally. The platform was divided into categories, the politically-loaded titles of which are worth enumerating: the *democratic* road to independence; Britain *isn’t* working; a *safe* Scotland in a *peaceful* world; *safeguarding* Scotland’s identity; *caring* for the community; rural *regeneration*; and good *for* Scotland (emphasis added, SNP, 1983). The platform also

included introductory and concluding remarks from the SNP Chairman, respectively party President, who pointed to “Scotland’s crisis – and Scotland’s opportunity”, the “advantages of breaking the British connection”, and the lack of any hope of improvement under the British political system (SNP, 1983, 1&24). The remarks, too, indicated that the Scottish economy was “*decimated* by the policies of successive London Governments” without distinguishing the Tories from Labour” (emphasis added, SNP, 1983, 1). However, it was noted that a “further term of Thatcherism [...would] *devastate* [Scotland...], concentrating more wealth and power in the South-East of England”, since whichever “*English* party wins the election, regional aid will be redirected to the Midlands of England to Scotland’s disadvantage (emphasis added, SNP, 1983, 1).

In the 1983 manifesto, Scotland was said to be in a “state of crisis” with unemployment soaring by 130% during Thatcher’s first term and by 90% under her Labour predecessor, and thousands of Scots being “forced to take the well-worn path of emigration in an effort to find work” (SNP, 1983, 1). At this point, it is interesting to point that 1983 represents more broadly a curious benchmark of past alternate governments with the Conservatives under Heath from 1970 to 1974, Labour under Callaghan from 1974 to 1979, and Thatcher’s Tories from 1979 until 1983, with roughly equal number of years in office for each of them. From here on, the rhetoric against the Labour government and party started decreasing, since the Scottish socio-political entity began to be affected more by the Tories, the long term effects of Labour policies no longer being felt “north of the border”.

The dialectic discourse was more definitive throughout the 1983 platform, that the “British system *failed* Scotland” (SNP, 1983, 4), Scotland having been “under London

rule”, with all “British Governments [failing] to solve Scotland’s economic and social problems” (emphasis added, SNP, 1983, 14). Notable in the platform was that the party rejected the [Conservative] belief that “mass unemployment was inevitable, and produced a detailed, fully-costed plan to reduce unemployment” (SNP, 1983, 4). This proposal was to have a “net cost of less than one-tenth of revenues from Scottish oil [which were still speculative at the time], would aim to create 220,000 new jobs within three years, reducing Scottish unemployment to about 5% [...and create] an additional 40,000 places in higher education and establish a National Apprenticeship Scheme to give real jobs to young people” (SNP, 1983, 4). An independent Scotland was to be comparable demographically, economically and resource-wise, with prosperous states such as Norway or Austria, the former benefitting from its oil management, while the latter maintaining a low unemployment despite lacking the many natural resources that Scotland has (SNP, 1983, 5). Policy-wise, from the beginning, fewer abstract goals could be seen with a much more specific idea as to how to get them, as compared to the 1977 manifesto.

In reducing poverty, another matter for which successive Westminster governments were blamed, the SNP also had a plan to put Scotland’s resources to good use, introducing “an improved level of benefits related to the national minimum wage, and a system of tax credits to create a unified system with a guaranteed minimum income” (SNP, 1983, 14). The party also proposed to “reintroduce earnings-related unemployment benefits, increase child benefit, increase maternity benefit to at least £120 and old age pensions to at least £53 per week for single persons and £82 for married couples” (SNP, 1983, 14). The SNP had suggestions with respect to caring services too, as well as with meeting Scotland’s housing needs, and improving and protecting the

environment. The implication from all these proposals was that not just a majority of SNP MPs would have to be elected to Westminster in that specific general election, but that these policies would be implemented if, and when the SNP would eventually be asked to form government after a free and fair election would take place in an independent Scotland.

The specificity of the SNP plans was a welcomed addition and could be seen more broadly as signs of consolidation, partisan growth and maturity. However, the scope of the suggested policies in the platform would be a long-term one, applicable if all the pieces of their secessionist agenda would fall in place, counting on a majority of popular support at home and resignation/acceptance from the English parties. As early as 1974, the editors of *The Scotsman* also admitted that SNP aims, “many of them laudable, could be achieved only in an independent Scotland, in which the SNP *might not be the governing party*” (emphasis added, September 24, 1974, 10).

While both Conservative and Labour parties were attacked for their Englishness and their cutting records while in power, with respect to local government and local democracy, the Tories were slammed more so than Labour. Thus, “under this Conservative government, local democracy had all but *ceased to exist*, its legislation putting local authorities in a *straitjacket*, and cuts in Rate Support Grant leading to higher rates and cuts in services” (emphasis added, SNP, 1983, 16). On the other hand, “Labour’s record was a little better” in that while they also steadily cut local government expenditure, Labour first “gave the Secretary of State powers to penalise councils” (SNP, 1983, 17). A specific instance of regional resentment could be seen in regards to fishing, which was claimed to be “no longer important to Westminster because it was no longer

important to England”, the Government having “sold Scottish fishermen short over the Common Fisheries Policy negotiated with the EEC” (SNP, 1983, 22). With respect to fishing, too, the SNP had a plan to address the shortcomings of the British government in defending the interests of Scottish fisheries. This would include the establishment of an “exclusive 100-mile zone and overall control up to 200 miles”, introducing an effective policy of stock conservation, legislating the protection of the interests of static gear fishermen and promoting the development of fishing co-operatives, while increasing funding for fish marketing and the number of fast vessels (SNP, 1983, 22).

The 1983 SNP electoral manifesto stood out when compared to the previous platform, in light of the diversity of plans and ideas that the party had available for implementation. While this should not be taken as cynical, it arguably seemed that there were answers in this programme for all the failures of the successive British governments, or otherwise put, the SNP appeared to have had a plan for everything. Again, after a first term of Thatcherism, more specificity and clarity in policy-making were welcomed and probably not surprising. This could be seen as such given that the stances taken by the Conservative government were perceived as a clear break with the past, based on principled stances, which would have provided the SNP with a clearer line of demarcation for its own defensive policies and solutions in contrast to the Conservative offensive.

The last of the electoral platforms available, the 1987 SNP manifesto entitled “Play the Scottish Card” continued with the active imagery in the title. The manifesto also incorporated more positive policies that a SNP Government would enact, and even stronger negative language against the Westminster government, and England in general. This should not be altogether surprising given that this platform came after two

consecutive terms of the Thatcher government. The divide between the two regions was accepted as a fact, and indirectly blamed on the British government for its policies. Thus the SNP called the “North/South divide [being] really a Scotland/England divide [since] never before have our two countries moved so far and so decisively apart” (SNP, 1987, 5). This was attributed to a great extent to the fact that “as England’s unemployment failed by leaps and bounds, the Scottish totals hardly budged”, as “poverty was reduced in England, the crisis in Scotland became graver” and as “the English economy boomed, Scotland stagnated” (SNP, 1987, 5).

The 1987 platform, like the previous one, also included introductory and concluding notes from the Chairman, respectively President of the party, and the substantive text in the platform was divided into categories that comprised democratic policies, international affairs, rebuilding the economy, rural initiatives local communities and other social issues (education, arts, social welfare, health, housing etc). The biases in the titles of the policy chapters were much more subtle than in the 1983 manifesto. Some of these titles included: Who will speak *for* Scotland?, A Constitution for a *new* Scotland, Putting Scotland *back* on the map, Energy – Safe *and* plentiful supplies, Local Government – *Returning* power to people, Environment – Scotland clean *and* safe, Social Welfare – caring *for our* people, Health – providing a service *for all*, Housing – Improving *our* living standards (emphasis added, SNP, 1987, 2).

This manifesto also implied that Scotland was powerless as part of the United Kingdom and that electing a majority of SNP MPs “would bring power back to Scotland” since it was repeated here again as in the previous platform that “the British system had failed Scotland” (SNP, 1987, 5). The priority of the SNP in this election was to make sure

that the “wasted years of decline and decay are brought to an end”, and to allow the Scots to have the party that they elected as a majority, in power in London (SNP, 1987, 6). A repetition of yet another Conservative government, a third since 1979 was called the “Doomsday Scenario” (SNP, 1987, 6). In such a case, which as we know it did occur, SNP MPs would be willing to “cooperate with a majority of other Scots MPs in using their ‘mandate’ [...] to set up a constitutional convention to give domestic and international legitimacy to Scotland’s right to self-determination” (SNP, 1987, 6). It was suggested that the need for a Scottish government was just “one example of the failure and injustice of the British system” (SNP, 1987, 7). This could indicate that had the London government paid more attention to the Scots, a movement of secession may have used a different rhetoric to justify its claims or would not have existed at all. Apparently, on purpose, decisions taken at Westminster were “designed to divert Scotland’s energies away from gaining real political power” (SNP, 1987, 7). This claim could make one think critically about it and wonder how it is that politicians are aware of this deliberate intent on behalf of the London Government.

In the 1987 platform, there was also the mention of a Scots-Welsh Alliance between the two nationalist parties, which would exclude any support in forming government during a “hung” parliament to the Conservative Party “owing to its record in Scotland and its stated hostility to the issue of Scottish self-government” (SNP, 1987, 6). According to the SNP, in case of a majority of SNP MPs at Westminster, Plaid Cymru would “support us in securing independence for Scotland” (SNP, 1987, 5). It was not specified in the manifesto what the benefits for Plaid Cymru would be if the party supported Scottish independence, or what the Welsh movement would have gained out of

this. The parliamentary alliance was concluded in 1986, despite previous repeated denials from both the SNP and Plaid Cymru as reported by The Scotsman after the 1974 elections that no official “nationalist alliance” was ever, or would ever be in the works, since unofficial co-operation was already taken for granted at that point (March 8, 1974, 7).

The hostility of the English government was an issue repeated several times throughout the platform, in addition to other negative remarks against both the government and England. Thus, in less than two years, Scottish manufacturing capital was halved, with certain traditional companies being “successively swallowed up by English *predators*, [and] far from safeguarding Scotland’s interests, [the] London government stood back in total *complacency* at the *devastating* effects of *broken* promises” (emphasis added, SNP, 1987, 12). Education was also one of the areas that “suffered the *heavy* price of working within the bounds of London under-funding” (emphasis added, SNP, 1987, 15). Overall, “callously, the neglect by the British government had resulted in many of our people being forced to exist in conditions which are *unbearable*” (emphasis added, SNP, 1987, 18), leaving Scotland to pay a “heavy economic and industrial price during the years of Thatcher Government” (SNP, 1987, 11).

Scotland was presented in the 1987 platform as an “appendage of London” being denied membership in the European Economic Community, greater representation in the European Parliament and a place on the European Commission, among many others (SNP, 1987, 9). The overall trend of Westminster hostility thus revolved around the ideas of failings, injustices and powerlessness to which Scotland was subjected as part of the UK. The frequency of the hostile rhetoric also decreased throughout the platform as the

negative discourse gave room for more positive policies that the SNP would implement if it formed government in an independent Scotland.

For example, a SNP government was to promote “cooperation and friendliness between countries in the preservation of peace”, welcoming “the current dialogue between East and West” and the “building of bridges between [the global] North and South” (SNP, 1987, 9). Also on the international arena, the SNP was to “adopt a principled stance opposing nuclear weapons, in line with the opinion of the Scottish public” (SNP, 1987, 9). This was an indication that the policies of the SNP were still malleable at this point, depending on popular opinion, or on the contrary, that the party would align itself almost naturally or instinctively with the known, or accepted, view of the public on the matter. In foreign affairs, the SNP stance was in favour of nuclear disarmament, increasing aid to the Third World and demanding economic sanctions against South Africa’s apartheid regime, with the former taking up the bulk of the party’s international view as the predominant foreign issue of the election. On the domestic front, the SNP again presented multi-faceted plans to reduce unemployment, guarantee an adequate supply of energy, ensure an integrated national transport system, improve the education system and its accessibility, reduce poverty and meet the housing needs of Scots.

The jobs plan of the SNP, among others, was to reduce unemployment “by over two-thirds within a period of five years [...] by introducing a special Scottish Employment Premium halving the level of National Insurance contributions made by employers, reductions in VAT” and by investing in the economy to create jobs (SNP, 1987, 11). The investment would come from a “Scottish Oil Fund, directly emanating from oil revenues

expected to reach £5bn per year by 1987/88” (SNP, 1987, 11). This was one of the very few instances in this platform in which the North Sea oil was mentioned.

The focus of the SNP energy-policy broadened to include investments in coal fields, energy conservation, and other non-traditional forms of energy, such as wind, wave, tide and peat sources, and preventing any more nuclear power plants from being built. In the transport section, an overall increase and upgrade in infrastructure connectivity could most succinctly summarize the suggestions of the SNP. Education would need a thorough re-examination of its funding, with more money invested in resources, equipment, teachers’ wages, and in providing a better pupil-teacher ratio (SNP, 1987, 15). The SNP proposed the establishment of grants committees for universities, colleges and increasing the “financial assistance to post-school students to ensure they are supported by a system of maintenance grants which provide for adequate living standards” (SNP, 1987, 15).

For housing, the SNP wanted to establish a “target of house building and modernisation”, set an “immediate target of 50 sheltered homes per 1000 pensioners”, and to increase “grants for home insulation and modernisation” (SNP, 1987, 19). A SNP government was also to provide “help for first time house purchasers”, expand the “availability of special housing for the disabled and the single homeless” and provide for a “greater role for tenant elected Housing Association while rejecting wholesale privatisation which would not provide the environmental and housing improvements” needed (SNP, 1987, 18).

With respect to social welfare, the SNP planned to “introduce an improved level of benefits related to the national minimum wage”, as well as a “new, national household

minimum income” (SNP, 1987, 18). The SNP also wanted to extend “education on eligibility for benefits”, and implement “cold climate provisions to give extra heating payments to those who live in the colder parts of the country” (SNP, 1987, 18). Finally, a SNP government would have increased the “child benefit to £10 per week, social security benefits by 10% and pensions for single persons to £60 per week and £90 for a married couple” (SNP, 1987, 18). A noted weakness here was that despite the specific targets aimed for, there was no specification, however, where the funding for all these welfare improvements would come from, if from the Oil fund, or elsewhere.

Comparing and contrasting, both structurally and textually, the three electoral platforms brought out interesting similarities and somewhat expected differences between them. None of the three platforms was a complete repetition of the other despite the fact that the core socially democratic values and ideas were recycled and adapted to the issues at stake at the time, whether they were the oil deposits in the North Sea in the 1970s or nuclear disarmament in the 1980s. This of course was not surprising, but it was worth mentioning since the first of the platforms analyzed, from 1977, was not the first one produced in the examined time frame, nor the one that “brought” the party its highest popular vote and number of MPs. In full disclosure, pre-1977 electoral manifestos were not directly consulted to confirm this suggestion, given their lack of availability, not just in the personal archives of Kennedy and McIntyre but also in the party inventories housed by the NLS.

Through second-hand sources, a little can be said about the 1974 election manifestos, the “dominant and interrelated themes [of which] were socio-economic considerations and a lack of democracy/political influence” (SNP, 1974, quoted in

Thomsen, 2010, 68). The February 1974 platform rhetorically asked “what it considered to be a straightforward question: ‘Do you wish to be *Rich Scots* or *Poor British*?’ (SNP, 1974, quoted in Thomsen, 2010, 68) indicating the ethnic alternative between one or the other and economic strings that came with each. The manifesto also foresaw that ‘the desirable Scotland would never be created by a government from Westminster ... successive Tory and Labour governments completely failing to create living conditions like those in S-E England’ (SNP, 1974, quoted in Thomsen, 2010, 68).

As early as 1974, and probably before my start date too, the SNP tried to link in people’s minds that only if they “demanded a Scottish government [...] they could make Scotland a place of which to be proud” (SNP, 1974, quoted in Thomsen, 2010, 69). Such a Scotland would include “full employment, fairly distributed wealth, opportunities for education, protection from exploitation, compassionate social services, and a share of international responsibilities” (SNP, 1974, quoted in Thomsen, 2010, 69). Despite some of the policies just mentioned, some readers of *The Scotsman* remained confused as to the political colours of the party, acknowledging however the emphasis on the “emotionally charged issue of independence” (March 9, 1974, 8), or that no one seemed to “know the shade of the SNP’s politics apart from their being Scottish” (March 11, 1974, 6). The policies from the platform were seen as thinly described and made readers wonder whether a “SNP-controlled Scottish Parliament would pursue Labour or Conservative policies? Communist or Fascist? [since] some of the people of Scotland, on reflection, might like to know who they are voting into power behind the flag of St. Andrew” (March 9, 1974, 8).

While the title of the 1977 platform indicated an expected formality, almost by the rules, announcing the contents of the platform (aims and policy), the following two documents saw a break with past conformity by employing populist imagery with the electorate. In the 1983 platform, the title encouraged voters to choose Scotland, referring also to the fact that independence would not be easily achieved hinting at its challenges. The 1987 manifesto simply asked Scots to “play the Scottish card” providing implicit value on an electoral gambling, or political card game, over Scotland. Structurally the platforms increased in size and length as the years progressed which was not an indication that more pages were better but that in more pages, more policies could be tackled, indicating, as mentioned before, a sign of political maturity given the comprehensiveness of the party’s suggestions. However, the inverse may also have been true, that aiming to solve all the possible needs of Scots without concentrating particularly on a few important ones or overarching issues, could have been indicative of a lack of focus on behalf of the party.

Textually, while the frequency of anti-Conservative, or anti-English rhetoric did not necessarily increase by much in the span of ten years of electoral platforms, during Margaret Thatcher’s rule, the intensity/harshness of the descriptive terms used increased, without a direct proof of any connection with an ideological reaction to Thatcherism. However, the dialectic ethnic relationship between the Scots and the English/British could also be seen to have increased from 1974 onwards in the electoral platforms, starting with the “Your Choice- Poor British or Rich Scots” slogan, taking the focus away from Scotland and bringing Britain into the oil and separatist equation, since these two had become inextricably connected by the middle of the 1970s. Even though the SNP was

inundated with “accusations of anti-English selfishness, [...] opinion polls suggested that a good many Scots seemed to think that the Nationalists had a point” (Harvie&Jones, 2000, 100), which goes back to the idea that the SNP tapped into the popular feelings existent in Scotland with respect to Britain and the asymmetric relationship between them.

From 1977 onwards however a more explicit and consistent victimization exuded from the SNP proposals, a common thread of the failings, injustices and powerlessness experienced under British governments appearing in all three platforms. Despite the connotations that a label such as “victimization” include, I do not use it here in negatively, but in order to convey the more precise and effective emotional imagery that in my opinion the SNP tried to instil in its supporters. The negative rhetoric was distributed evenly in the first platform from the beginning to the end, while in the following two it phased out towards the end of each, as it left room for more positive discourse with respect to policies that the SNP would implement once in power and in the independent Scotland that the party envisioned.

As stated before, one of the main criteria that differentiated one platform from the next was the sheer specificity and policy overview that they displayed, with the 1977 manifesto lacking details and exhibiting more abstract goals that the party wishes to see implemented overall. The 1983 and 1987 platforms included introductory and concluding remarks from the Chairman and President of the party, which gave the documents a more finished look and implied a more complete structure substantively. Both platforms also presented their policies through detailed plans with specific figures and suggestions, indicating a more grounded, adaptive and less idealistic approach of partisan politics. Rhetorically, again without meaning to repeat some of the interpretation already provided,

the 1977 platform attacked both the Labour and Conservative governments, while the 1983 manifesto specifically questioned their English character, not just their record while in power. The negative rhetoric was employed chronologically, especially in the 1980s with a doomsday nuance, both explicitly and implicitly. Thus, there were instances of crises and straightjackets, with the Scottish economy being decimated or devastated. A possible image that could tie all of this rhetoric together would be that of a natural disaster coming over Scotland, which it would seem Thatcherism was most likely seen as.

Journalistic Evidence

A survey of *The Scotsman* between 1974 and 1986 did not yield any direct/conclusive evidence of any explicit reactive links between the SNP and Thatcherism per say. However, in this period, the newspaper abounded with anti-Westminster and anti-English images, not exclusively, but enough to reinforce public opinion, from columnists, citing SNP politicians, as well as from readers' letters to editors. This last "variable" proved to be unexpectedly rich of resources and findings regarding samples of popular opinion on regional discrepancies and the ethnic dialectic relationship between Scotland and England/Britain, which proved to be useful in acquiring a view from the "bottom", the electors, and not just from the top, from politicians.

Some of the pertinent common themes noticed while surveying the paper were negative views of Westminster and/or England/Britain, favourable SNP and secessionist opinions, but also electoral analyses of parties' successes/failures, and Margaret Thatcher's rise to power. While individual policies, decisions and bills could also be included, I stay away from analyzing the stances the SNP took with respect to these

individually because of their overwhelming number, and relative importance of one with the other, or in the grand scheme of politics. From the analysis of electoral successes or failures, I limited my findings and interpretation only to the SNP-relevant ones, so as not to lose the focus of my research. I will deal with some of the common themes mentioned above more specifically with the negative anti government/English rhetoric and the SNP-related materials. Admittedly, the themes “chosen” do not directly reflect my hypothesis, but merely are the closest to a dialectic reactive relationship between the two peoples, if not necessarily between the two parties. The only two themes that appeared intermingled in the newspaper were the negative rhetoric against the British Government, often without distinction between Labour and Conservatives, and the anti-Englishness/Britishness expressed by the paper’s editors and readers’ letters, and as such these will be tackled together.

Within my time frame, various and numerous signs of this negativity and dialectic opposition could be seen as early as January 1974, with SNP partisan claims that “Scotland was ‘likely to be *sacrificed on the high altar* of Westminster party politics’ during the present energy crisis”, and that “for too long Scots have seen their own economic priorities *sacrificed* to those of England” (emphasis added, January 4, 1974, 6). This antipathy could also be seen in signs posted on doors and windows stating that the “English pigs have our oil”, or “English out. Up SNP” (March 6, 1974, 12), or party officials rallying their supporters with the slogan that “We beat the English before. We can do it again” (March 6, 1974, 12).

Letters to the editor from the same month (January 1974) also resonated with this theme, the section being entitled “Britain or England?” in one of the papers, voicing

questions about the Britishness of the English as opposed to that of the Scots. Thus, the British “ideal, it often seemed, was more revered north of the border than south of it, where the continued adherence of Scotland and Wales was important only in so far as they lend stature to England herself” (January 9, 1974, 10). Abroad too, in the opinion of the author, it was not surprising that “Scotland was regarded worldwide as being an English fiefdom” (January 9, 1974, 10). For the English it seemed that “Great Britain equalled England; this ‘sceptred isle’ was England, and this pure concept was unfortunately sullied by the misty, rather unreal, presence of the Celtic fringe; truly misty, and truly almost not there” (January 9, 1974, 10). National British values were “expressed as being Anglo-Saxon, never Anglo-Celtic, despite a considerable ‘Celtic’ contribution to Anglo-Saxon stature; nice foreigners were anglophile, not britophile” (January 9, 1974, 10). This was one of the few instances, and not surprising enough it comes from a reader and not a politician, that the idea of cultural distinctions was brought in discussion, between the Gaelic tradition of Scotland and the Saxon character of the English.

Even after over “200 years of union, Englishmen still regarded themselves as being English, and were proud of the fact [...that] they did not call themselves Britons: only the ‘Daily Express’ using that expression” (January 9, 1974, 10). The author of this letter found it “sad that some Scots were prepared to be called Britons when Englishmen still staunchly held themselves to be English” (January 9, 1974, 10), clearly the British identity not being seen as applied, adopted, or embraced, both north and south of the Celtic belt. The author even revealed that in his experience with World War Two historic fiction, “‘English’ bombers bombarded German cities; that the English Navy was still manned by Englishmen – Scots and Welsh being allowed to appear in strictly lower-deck

roles, never commissioned; and the Army was still officered by English gentlemen – there were it seemed no British gentlemen, or Scots gentlemen” (January 9, 1974, 10). The author concluded in a resigned, yet sarcastic tone that it was no wonder that Scots lacked

national self-confidence! No international responsibilities, no power to decide for ourselves; sometimes we are kindly allowed to be ‘heid o’ depairtments’ but never managing directors or chairmen. Ah well! There’s always Big Brother to mis-manage us into being a depressed ‘region’ (not a nation, mark you) on a par with Calabria and Sicily (January 9, 1974, 10).

Amongst the instances in which “anglophobia” was present in the paper, English academics taking up positions at Scottish universities was also seen to be indicative of the inferiority complex of the Scots, with the nation “standing to lose both ways if the appointee was English” (January 4, 1974, 8). The rationale was that “if he was good he was likely to move sooner or later to a chair nearer home and this was the more certain if he had an English wife [...but] if he was poor, we had him for 30 years plus – what a sentence for a department” (January 4, 1974, 8). The argument made was that Scottish universities were not able to retain, or attract “the most able Scots pupils” and the only way to “reverse the trend was to show that they [the universities] had confidence in their own product by appointing their own men – not forgetting of course a leavening of aliens from England and overseas” (January 4, 1974, 8). What was most indicative of the trend more generally was that it was not a “two-way exchange, while the proportion of professors of English origin increased dramatically in Scotland in the last 15 years, the proportion of Scots-trained professors in England having declined just as rapidly” [...] the message for young Scots academics being to go South (January 4, 1974, 8). While some of the points of the author may have seemed somewhat anecdotal or exaggerated, I found this important as an illustration of the perceived trend in Scotland at the time, not just

with workers, but with most socio-economic sectors. So much so this was seen as a worrying trend due to above average unemployment that “the whole of Scotland, with the exception of Edinburgh, continued to be classified as a development area”, while the living cost was the second highest in the UK after the south-east of England (January 7, 1974, 6).

During the 1970s more so than in the 1980s, the oil issue dominated with respect to almost all the negative rhetoric addressed against the government, the points of contention being raised on the ownership of the oil and where the benefits from it would end up, which would not have been in Scotland alone, but distributed throughout the British Isles. *The Scotsman* published regular supplemental files on Scotland’s oil, most likely to draw awareness, or add to the debate of its importance. In this respect the paper took a devolutionary view, that Scotland and a Scottish Oil Agency more specifically should have been in charge of its distribution and revenues. Oil policy was said to have become “a sad story of missed opportunities which could be used to regenerate the Scottish economy” (February 1, 1974, 8). Instead of Scotland “acquiring more economic and political power, its autonomy was being diminished by the oil takeover of the Energy Department”, with the people getting the “industries that need coastal sites, construction and servicing jobs and other by-products, and as much or as little of the rich oil revenues as Westminster decides” (February 1, 1974, 8). Not just with respect to oil but more generally and repeatedly, the government was seen to be “still balancing Scotland’s claims against those of English regions” and “without political power, Scots could only rely on the benevolence of those who control our resources” (February 1, 1974, 8).

According to the SNP, Westminster needed to “exploit the oil with the greatest possible speed in order to reduce the UK’s balance of payments deficit, the London smash and grab causing the maximum social and environmental damage while bringing the minimum of economic benefit” (September 24, 1974, 6). An accelerated extraction process of the North Sea oil would have quickly depleted the reserves “within ten years because of the rate of extraction necessary to achieve London’s target of self-sufficiency in oil by 1980” (September 24, 1974, 6). The revenues from oil would have had to be “used to pay the interest on the massive loans the London government had already started to raise abroad to cover the accumulated deficit on the balance of payments” (September 24, 1974, 6).

Even international oil companies apparently treated “Scots as ‘kilted coolies’”, while the English parties seemed to consider Scots as ‘political coolies’ according to SNP spokesmen, under the leadership of which Scotland would have continued as a “depressed region, dependent on handouts from London, while the enormous benefits of oil are drained away south” (February 12, 1974, 9). The English parties were also accused of failing to “create living conditions in Scotland comparable to those existing in south-east England or in neighbouring countries” (February 15, 1974, 9), as well as for not letting the “oil bonanza interfere with Westminster’s policy of treating Scotland as a region, incapable of looking after its own affairs” (February 15, 1974, 12).

The ethnic dialectic identities could thus be seen very vividly illustrated also through a dispute with respect to Scottish children’s behaviour in public schools towards English children, a case involving this showing repeated hostility, bullying and ostracism of children for being English by their Scottish counterparts. This situation affected both

the children's view of Scotland, seeing it as "spoiled only by the people who live there" as well as the parents who had acquired the perception in England that the "Scottish were a proud and great nation; a nation that had helped to make Britain great" (February 16, 1974, 8). The author of this particular readers' letter did not discourage Scottish nationalism, but advised that it should be encouraged to display "dignity and good manners to 'foreigners'", since England "was the friend and admirer of Scotland and that to lose such friendship and admiration might be to their disadvantage" (February 16, 1974, 8). Needless to say, the letter triggered an avalanche of replies of the most diverse colors and beliefs, illustrating among others, the parent's hypocrisy, the rightfulness of Scottish views on the ethnic dialectic relationship between the two peoples, as well as empathy for his situation as well as others'. One respondent even suggested, as a solution, for the parents to vote SNP in the election in order for independence to be achieved so that "friendly relations with our next-door neighbour" can be maintained (February 20, 1974, 12), or for their children to be taught to speak with a Scottish accent to avoid such happenings again (February 21, 1974, 8). Scottish nationalism was also blamed for this situation, given the fact that "very large numbers of the rank and file who supported this movement were quite ignorant of Scottish history" (February 20, 1974, 12) and as such held misleading beliefs that affected their judgement and open-mindedness.

Children's hostile behaviour was claimed to emulate that of adults' and in one respondent's eyes, part of the blame for this ethnic dialectic also lied in English nationalists. Their habit of referring to Britain as "England and the British people as English having become the accepted practice south of the border, and unless BBC interviewers, journalists and others made an effort to broaden their outlook", similar

behaviour in children would continue (February 20, 1974, 12). The same unpleasant situation was also experienced by a Scottish family living in England, their children being subjected to a “similar treatment ranging from stoning and being spat upon, to verbal (e.g. obscene) insults and general thumping” (February 23, 1974, 8), illustrating that the behaviour was by no means one-sided. One respondent not only did not seem apologetic about the situation of the children but (s)he also attacked the English parent for “taking up jobs and opportunities which should belong to our own people, thus forcing an excessively high proportion of our youth to make their way elsewhere” (February 21, 1974, 8). This explanation made such resentment only natural and it may have only been that “children were more basic and biological than adults, and more assertive in their territorial instinct” (February 21, 1974, 8).

Despite the parent’s insistence of the good natured view between the two peoples, a letter from a former Scottish serviceman posted to an English regiment showed that while in the army, his merits were discredited due to his origins. His fellow officers had often complained about a “‘Scotchman’ being sent to educate them, disapproving of everything about me to such an extent that the younger officers felt confident enough to cut the rank badges from my spare uniforms to signal that I should never had been given the Queen’s Commission in the first place” (February 22, 1974, 10). The author of this letter also pointed out the disbelief of the English to discover that “somehow the Scots, Irish, Indians etc” did not love them after all”, since “ordinary English people did not know much Scots or Irish history and were cocooned from the effects of centuries when at home [...while] up here they felt the cold blast” (February 22, 1974, 10). Other similar accounts however mentioned that such “banter” was also returned and the “chaff” was

received with light-hearted humour (March 1, 1974, 12), but all in all, ethnic dialectic behaviour could be seen to have included a wide variety of socio-economic situations, classes and ages, a bitter-sweet mixture of feelings “exploding” on both sides of the Scottish/English border.

I also noted, intertwined with Anglophobia, repeated resentments towards the first-past-the-post electoral system in place in Great Britain, which hindered the choices and voices of the Scottish electorate. Thus, numerous complaints after the general elections of 1979 and 1983 pointed to the fact that Scotland’s choice did not matter, nor did it reach Westminster, the votes being discarded with respect to who actually got to power and in whose advantage they legislated. National elections underlined “the need for devolution, not to say independence, since Scots elected a Labour Government, but because Scotshire is merely a province of Great England, we were to be ruled in fact by an English Tory Government” (May 9, 1979, 12) that got elected with less than 40% of the popular vote in Scotland and yet claimed a national legitimate mandate. Given the low popular vote in favour of the Tories, claims were moreover made that a Scottish Assembly would and should have been deemed legitimate, since less than 40% of Scots had also voted in favour of one at the 1979 Referendum.

After a first term of Thatcherism, the 1983 election saw points of view actively fearing a second premiership of the Iron Lady, and even readers advocating the tactical “mustering of the anti-Tory vote”, out of fright for her “increasingly fascist postures, eg on unemployment and education” and her lack of commitment to Scotland (June 2, 1983, 12). If this had any appeal amongst other readers, or editors of *The Scotsman*, no further evidence was found, neither in subsequent letters to the editors, nor in journalists’

editorials themselves. SNP politicians however encouraged such a tactic, Gordon Wilson, the Chairman of the party advising that since “the Tories were heading for a landslide victory in England, we had to stop Mrs. Thatcher at the border, Scotland stamping *its distinct hostility* to Mrs Thatcher on this election” (emphasis added, June 4, 1983, 1).

A second term of Thatcherism was not expected, at least on behalf of the editors of the paper, to bring “any specially kind treatment [for Scotland] from a Prime Minister whose economic policies had reduced parts of the English Midlands prosperous and full of Tory seats, to unemployment rates on a par with Scotland’s” (June 7, 1983, 8). It was also not expected for a second term of Margaret Thatcher to de-emphasize the “political differences between Scotland and England” given that there was not to be a Tory landslide in Scotland, unlike in England, which would influence the government’s regional and economic policies (June 7, 1983, 8). A second win for the Tories would bring, it was also feared, a shift towards a “presidential form of government whose plebiscitary authoritarianism would only mask the purposes of multinational finance and the United States; centralism would be less and less moderate by political convention and alternative power-centres” (June 9, 1983, 8).

Repeated letters to the editors around the 1983 election were grouped in the paper under titles such as “The case for despair”, “The case for being alarmed by Tories” (June 15, 1983, 12), “What anti-Thatcher unity exists?”, “Tories offensive enough” (June 17, 1983, 12). Such titles could only be indicative of common sentiments among Scots in the face of an explicit, cynical and “profound contempt of Mrs Thatcher for the Scottish people” (June 16, 1983, 10), but they also show a common/public acceptance of such feelings amongst the electorate and politicians alike. Another trend worth noting in light

of these observations was that while in the 1970s, the focus was placed on “Anglophobia”, or the ethnic dialectic relationship between the two peoples, in the 1980s the bulk of the negative rhetoric was addressed in regards to the government more so than to the English people themselves. This of course could be due to the repeated victories of Margaret Thatcher, elections in the 1970s having resulted in alternate governments between the two main English parties, the blame thus being dispersed from one particular ideology to the perceived Englishness of whichever government was in power, indifferent of their ideology.

An editorial in 1986 went so far as to directly blame the Conservatives for the terrible state of the Scottish economy in the 1980s claiming that there was a lack of “people, from all political parties in Scotland, actually doing something, in cooperation with each other, to improve the situation. [...] If this miracle were to come about, it would be far too late to rectify so much damage that has already been done to the national economy by the seven years of Tory Thatcher reformationist and centralist rule” (December 8th, 1986). The Tories were accused more so than anything of misunderstanding and unreceptiveness of the Scots in the way in which they “ruled” Scotland. This was important not just to indicate a distinction between the Scottish political culture and the ideological impact of Thatcherism, but also on the emphasis of the editors not on the ideological divide and values of Thatcherism per say, but their misguided intentions and applications with respect to Scotland. Thus,

claims that Scots were Thatcherites before the term was invented and that Scotland only blossomed under the impact of the union were Government missives designed for the wrong target. They betrayed how badly it had misinterpreted not only Scotland’s history but also its present discontents. None of this would help change the colour of Scotland’s electoral map. Nor were repeated applications of policies devised to fit conditions in the

comfortable South-East. As these traveled north they became more ill-suited; when they finally crossed the Tweed they had been translated into threats to the Scottish ethos, a means of Englishing Scotland's institutions and way of life (*The Scotsman*, November 12, 1988, quoted in Thomsen, 2010, 167).

While the paper's editors themselves did not directly express anti-English or anti-governmental ideological values, they did severely criticize Westminster for imposing English values upon the Scots "in the shape of ill-fitting policies", declaring the UK to have become "an authoritarian and restricted society" (February 4, 1989, quoted in Thomsen, 2010, 167). This came about more so due to the view that the policies meant to "fit conditions in the comfortable South-East" would also work well across the Tweed, which would not be the case given the different socio-demographic make-up between the regions, the distinct political cultures between the two peoples, their geographies and economic capabilities.

The editors' pro-devolutionary stance repeatedly referred to continued until the end of the 1980s too when they affirmed that the "freedoms Mrs. Thatcher had removed could only be restored by the decentralisation of the power she had pulled to the centre" (February 4, 1989, quoted in Thomsen, 2010, 167). The distinctions here were important to be noted and understood to avoid misunderstanding the bias of the paper. This could easily happen, misunderstanding the editors' views, given that the rhetoric used with respect to the Thatcher government such as "threats to the Scottish ethos", "Englishing Scotland's institutions and way of life" could make one think of the deliberate/forceful creation of a new "British" Scot, closer to English and Thatcherite values than its popular socially democratic values.

Another important common theme observed in *The Scotsman* referred to favourable SNP pieces, without making the paper too biased towards the secessionist

cause, which it was not. In fact, as I stated earlier, the paper did not favour the SNP *over* other parties, the party not being paid much attention during non-electoral periods, given its limited, and declining, importance and influence at Westminster, its ability to effect change and consistently and legitimately advocate its agenda successfully. The attention paid, however was not limited solely to party candidates discussing SNP agenda and policies but also to a number of editorials and countless readers' letters to the editors' expressing their support for the Home Rule cause and secessionism, or defending the party against unionist/English attacks.

The paper did not just dedicate its space to praises for, or clarifications over, the secessionist cause, also publishing anti-SNP letters and opinion pieces, especially with respect to the electoral tactical failures of the party. The reason why I included this theme in my analysis was not because its findings were of any relevance to my hypothesis, because as stated previously, there was no direct or explicit justification published for the ideological positioning of the party. However, with respect to the dialectic relationship between the Scots and English, it was important to break down the arguments made in favour of home rule and secessionism, and how an independent Scotland was envisioned by the SNP complementary to their electoral platforms presented earlier, since the opposite, anti-British/English/government sentiments have already been illustrated and analyzed above.

From the very beginning of my time frame, in January 1974, the SNP promoted an "action programme that would control inflation by reserving the right to revalue [its own] currency to bring down import prices", if a Scottish government would implement its own currency and have control of its resources to be able to regulate import prices (January 28,

1974, 7). An independent Scotland with a SNP government would also have the means to build as many houses as needed, cut “income tax, double pensions, cut mortgages and abolish local authority rates for a five-year period, while reforms are being made” (February 15, 1974, 9). If in power, the SNP was to regulate the “pace of oil developments according to Scottish needs” and create a “Ministry in charge of oil development [to deal with] all taxes and royalties on the production of Scottish oil”, while companies operating the “oil or gas fields would be allowed to earn post-tax profits appropriate to the capital, expertise and risks involved” (February 15, 1974, 12).

Oil revenues were to be spent by a SNP government on the “social priorities of housing, health and welfare, especially the welfare of the old and of disadvantaged groups in the community such as the disabled” and on the “economic reconstruction of Scottish industry to provide it with the technologically sophisticated base it has lacked in the past” (February 21, 1974, 8). All policies were said to cost about £2000 million in total even though the costs of specific proposals were not known (September 25, 1974, 9). The party also suggested the creation of a “Ministry of Industrial Development with overall responsibility for encouraging development, for stimulating the capital investment programmes of the nationalised industries and for developing a range of incentives to encourage investment by the most appropriate Scottish and foreign sources” (September 13, 1974, 9).

Still in the industrial area, the SNP advocated for an “Industrial Development Corporation, financed by Government and by Scottish savings and investments and enjoying wide powers of initiative to pursue active promotion of new and existing industries” (September 13, 1974, 9). Finally, in the economic sphere, the party advocated

for the “establishment of a [self-sustaining] Government-sponsored capital fund to identify and invest venture capital in new companies or develop existing ones [to] provide the capital and management and marketing skills to develop the new ideas, products and processes of the innovators” (September 13, 1974, 9). At the 1974 elections, the SNP encouraged voters to support it “whatever your political allegiances”, since the main “arguments for self-government were moral, not economic, [with] the right and duty of any people to manage its own affairs [and] and the privilege and responsibility of participating in the international community” (February 28, 1974, 9).

While in parliament, the priorities of the SNP included pushing for a “directly elected Scottish Assembly with control over Scottish economic expansion, Scottish oil and fisheries; a referendum on the Common Market and a freeze on rents, domestic rates and basic food prices” (March 8, 1974, 7). The SNP parliamentary contingent openly refused to compromise on any issue “considered to be vital to Scotland, and if the interests of the Scottish people were jeopardised, they would not hesitate to vote against the Government”, despite attempting to “force the issue of devolution at an early stage” (March 8, 1974, 7). This uncompromising stance was curiously enough shared with Margaret Thatcher’s Conservatives, who also remained ideological once a position was consolidated. SNP MPs also made it clear, if the case arose, they would vote against “any attempt to nationalise North Sea oil resources on an all-Britain basis and they would also oppose the takeover of land for oil-related developments” away from the Scottish people “without consideration of the quasi-judicial procedures contained in current planning legislation” (March 8, 1974, 7). This political intransigence may have been interpreted as parliamentary inexperience, or naivety, with respect to party politics and re-electability,

but it could have also emphasized a strong commitment to principles without diluting them through political compromise.

Before the 1979 general election, the SNP was paid less attention than in 1974, not to mention that except for a few instances in these five years when the reactions of party officials were referred to in the paper, the SNP was almost completely ignored. The emergence of The 79 Group was mentioned in *The Scotsman*, but its allegiance to the SNP, despite the openly Socialist character of the faction was not questioned or analyzed. After the election, however, SNP rhetoric of tactical votes appeared, specifically against Margaret Thatcher's Conservatives, people having "voted in a 'negative' fashion because they had been terrified of having a Thatcher administration" (May 4, 1979, 1). This was one of a handful of instances in which the SNP was dedicated front-page coverage, given the decline in electoral gains in this case, most of the articles covering it throughout my time frame being found towards the middle of the paper, and end of the political sections of *The Scotsman*.

After the 1979 election, the SNP allowed its wounds to heal, William Wolfe, its Chairman, believing that Scottish secessionism would be revived once Scots experience the Thatcher government (May 5, 1979). This could be seen as implying my initial hypothesis that Thatcherism affected Scottish secessionism through ideological reactivity, but at the same time there is no further direct or supporting proof for this except for the remark made by Wolfe. Thus, a shift in electoral tactics was announced by party officials in the newspaper, without much detail provided as to what this would entail, or further analysis as to the differences in strategies from one election to the other.

In 1979 the SNP is also seen as the victim of the first-past-the-post electoral system which gave them “fewer seats than the Liberals” even though the latter gained half as many votes” (May 5, 1979, 7). The editors found two obvious truths in the 1979 election results, first that “Scotland followed a track diverging from that of England” and second that “the SNP were comprehensively slaughtered” in a move in which “Scotland expressed its national separateness and rejected nationalism in a single convulsion” (May 5, 1979, 7). The sympathy of the editors could be seen not necessarily due to ideological preferences but because of the belief that the SNP was fundamentally what *rightfully* distinguished the Scottish party system from the rest of Great Britain. As such, the party should not have been decimated, or have its vote split by the two traditional national contenders, which always got to power not thanks to Scotland per say, and the SNP should have reflected the popular opinion fairly (despite the electoral system in place).

Letters from readers in 1979 focused on empathetic and sympathetic feelings towards the SNP with encouragements and suggestions as to how the party should have proceed from thereon. A pro-nationalist newspaper should have been prioritized to “back up campaigns on land, housing, employment and poverty” and the party, in the opinion of a reader needed to “demonstrate that it was more radical and caring on burning issues than Labour [...] and not a band of tartan Tories” (May 10, 1979, 14) which is what they had been called by some critics. The SNP thus was encouraged to forsake “the middle ground and do much more to convince a Left-wing electorate that it was more radical and caring than the decrepit and cynical Labour Party” (May 10, 1979, 14). While the reduction to two seats was not an ideal result for the cause of Scottish secessionism, the same reader considered it a blessing in disguise for “keeping the SNP MPs away from

Westminster for the next five years [since] London was a distraction and a trap [and] the SNP's proving ground must be in Scotland" (May 10, 1979, 14). While the party was seen and accepted as imperfect, it was agreed nonetheless that it reflected "the people of Scotland, their needs and their ambitions" (May 10, 1979, 14), which was important to note in light of the "conventional" explanations presented in the literature review in Chapter 1 with respect to the ideological positioning of secessionist movements.

An interesting situation arose after the 1979 election, specifically the questioning of the partisanship involvement of the secessionist cause from readers of *The Scotsman*. Given the electoral failure of that year for the SNP, and its subsequent decline in the 1980s, readers advised that faith in secessionism should not diminish, and the cause should simply stand over and above 'petty' partisan politics (November 8, 1985, 14), since election campaigns were rarely about issues and more about personalities and parties competing for power (May 11, 1979, 14). This way, adherents of Scottish secessionism would be spared a "cruel and unnecessary choice between two good causes, the choice demanded by the SNP" (May 15, 1979, 10). This is so because secessionism should not be identified with any particular party but should be seen as an overarching Scottish issue that all parties and supporters should advocate, and did advocate to different extents in the 1970s and 1980s. Secessionism was accepted as a "powerful force but when confined to narrow channels, or used for limited purposes, it could be indiscriminately destructive of friends as well as foe" and it was seen as the "healthiest when diffused throughout many or all institutions of a culture" (May 15, 1979, 10). And in this particular instance, secessionism should be fought on all fronts not solely and most ardently in the conventional political arena.

The idea that secessionism should return to be apolitical, or non-partisan, continued throughout the 1980s but less frequently, the partisan division and unwillingness to cooperate over devolution and secessionism continuing and being seen as the main reasons for the failures of these causes, both politically and popularly. It was seen even to be “disastrous if any single political party or group of politicians in Scotland attempts yet again to turn this into a party-political issue” (June 15, 1983, 12). The division that led to these questions was represented first “externally” by an Alliance between the Liberal and Social Democratic Parties in Scotland, which advocated for self-government in conjunction with electoral reform, to a proportional representation system. This proved to be more popular and “sensible” than the outright simplistic secessionist target of the SNP that in the 1980s was perceived as unfeasible. Second, internal divisions over the expulsion of The 79 Group from the party ranks as described earlier were seen by insiders and outsiders alike as allowing ideological discord to diffuse, and tamper with, the secessionist goal. This is why several readers in 1983 asked the party, in the pages of *The Scotsman*, to radicalize itself and repudiate its moderate stances which were seen by some to have only harmed it and put it in the middle of the political road, swinging left, or right, depending on how the winds of opportunity blew.

On the other hand, readers also praised the party for never accepting “extreme views akin to Fascism or Communism” and for allowing an open “democratic” future for Scotland, with whatever “kind of government the Scots would vote for” presumably from an ideological standpoint (November 8, 1985, 14). The SNP was also asked, however, to switch its strategy to “no more splitting, no more clinging to meaningless Westminster aspirations, no more partisan principles that leave Scotland defenceless” (June 15, 1983,

12). The SNP as institutional representative of secessionism should not have been “‘for sale’ to any one particular ideological tendency, whether it be Left, Right, or even Centre, within a conventional British political spectrum” (November 8, 1985, 14).

The party’s unqualified allegiance was also argued by some readers to have been focused only to the “‘Scottish dimension’ – or to the ‘Nationalist Tendency’; and that in consequence any attempt to substitute essentially ‘broad church’ ideological character with a narrowly ‘socialist’ and ‘sectarian’ image was doomed to abject failure, and had better not be made [again]” (November 8, 1985, 14). Party members had been seen as putting “‘subsidiary policies above increasing support for independence” which turned “‘upside-down the aims of the party, as set out on the membership cards” (November 8, 1985, 14). In the 1980s, voters turned to the SNP supposedly only as the most “‘viable recipient of the ‘protest vote’”, and not in many Scottish constituencies either for that matter (June 11, 1983, 8), since the Alliance also received a great share of tactical votes against the two established traditional parties. However, what happened overall in Scotland, is that the anti-Tory vote increased, from 69 percent in 1979 to 72 percent both in 1983 and 1987, indicating a shift in popular opinion towards the Left but one from which the SNP did not benefit much electorally.

Looking at the overall body of research consulted, a few conclusions can be drawn, with respect to the findings, as well as the irregularities noted. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the assumption that guided my field work has been that my hypothesis regarding the ideological reactivity of the SNP towards Thatcherism, was true. While I was aware that substantive, unquestionable proof to support it would not simply be available immediately or easily, since other researchers would have already uncovered

it, what I did find was surprisingly thin and scarce, merely indirectly related to my hypothesis. In other words, without a clear hypothesis and set idea in mind that a reactive link *could* exist between the SNP and Thatcherism, the evidence presented merely brushed off the tip of all Scottish secessionist-related archives and materials available, and did not, directly or conclusively, support my initial supposition. The reasons for considering my limited evidence relevant, as stated before, have solely been that they represented the closest pertinent information to my general topic and specific proposition of reactivity. That being said, the one-time unanimously-approved reactive motion of The 79 Group is not being dismissed or disregarded as indirect or irrelevant evidence, however I see it as insufficient, given the lack of supporting proof for it, to rest the validity of my hypothesis on it. What it does show nonetheless, more roundly than some of the archival quotes brought up, is the utilitarian character of the party and the secessionist cause as ideological and its members as strategic vote hunters, despite some of the principled and uncompromising rhetoric employed by SNP officials regarding the legislative and parliamentary aspect of politics. This of course is not a surprise, given the nature of the partisan political game, despite the meagre evidence indicative of it.

The common theme of my findings, however, which is linked to part of my hypothesis and the bulk of the literature on Scottish secessionism, is made up of the ethnic dialectic construction, or ever-evolving reconstruction, of Scottishness compared to, and distinct from, Englishness or Britishness. This includes the anti-government discourse mentioned throughout the party platforms, archives, and *The Scotsman* editorials and letters from readers, in addition to the sometimes radical dislike of England as a geo-political entity, seen as benefitting from all the policies of whatever English

party is in power in Westminster. Thus, some of the specific instances referred to in this chapter included the experiences of military servicemen, children in schools, academics, oil of course and the electoral system disadvantaging Scots. These were chosen for illustrative purposes, and for the indicative, and abundance of opinions presented, as well as representing very diverse issues that showed how multifaceted and ingrained this regional resentment was, north of the border. Scottish hostility seemed to be accepted almost as common knowledge, and those entertaining sympathetic views towards the English were regarded as having lived in a bubble, expected to burst at anytime due to the English superior behaviour or government policies.

This accepted dialectic identity did not, however, translate into partisan secessionism, the SNP's popularity not increasing substantially under Thatcher's three consecutive governments. While journalistic and popular sympathies were, however, present, due to the acknowledged agreement that the SNP rightfully represented some views of the Scottish electorate, these did not convert into many electoral successes for the party. What also came about, as supported by readers' letters, was the questioning of the ideological representation and partisan involvement of the SNP and the secessionist cause ultimately. This partially resulted from the fact that the party had been sidetracked by internal disagreements over its own ideological leanings, with the involvement and breakdown of The 79 Group, which led to a perceived weakness in the determination and cohesiveness of the SNP. The overall split of the left-wing parties also did not help the secessionist cause, with Labour as well as the Liberal and Social Democratic Alliance, and the SNP splitting the anti-Thatcher vote in Scotland. Thus, despite Gordon Wilson's resentful declaration in 1979 that secessionism would bounce back after a term of

Thatcherism, the faith of the party throughout the 1980s proved not to depend solely on the policies of the right wing. The SNP also had to rely on its own strength and marketability, and of the greater secessionist cause, which it had to rebuild after its electoral success in 1974.

Given the lack of a strong body of irrefutable evidence to support my initial hypothesis, I believe that my findings could, on the other hand, support, or fit in with some of the other, more conventional justifications put forward by scholars. More specifically, my research could also be used to show that the SNP played the political culture card to appeal to the greatest number of electors possible, and based its ideological stance on popular values and beliefs (reiterated in the literature review). However, the lack of evidence should not automatically also mean that the SNP could not in fact have refined or consolidated its social democratic stance also in reaction to Thatcher's Conservatism, merely that no evidence could be found of this deliberate choice, if there was one ever at all agreed upon. Without substantive evidence proving my hypothesis, the ideological reactivity of the party will remain in the end a baseless supposition formed on a perceived spurious correlation of contrasting partisanship between Thatcherism and Scottish secessionism.

Conclusion

Asking “why” questions is not always popular or easy and leaves one open to a myriad of unexpected answers, valid combinations of explanations, or spurious correlations. Analyzing the causes of secessionist movements is part of this, more so when partisanship is involved and it affects the character of the secessionist cause, which initially had emerged as a social grass roots movement. Involvement in the political game has affected and divided secessionism overall, if one believes that it could/may have once been a united, homogeneous and philosophic whole. This division occurred according to ideological “colours”, or the left/right political spectrum, secessionist movements adopting left or right wing stances. Conventional explanations for this split have included the influence of party elites or members, or reinforcing the political cultures of their electorates.

In my research, I have tried to go beyond these theories, which had already been over-analyzed from a variety of theoretical perspectives, and through countless methods, by looking at a single case study through a reactive lens. It may be argued that my suggestion was simplistic, reducing the ideological choice of a secessionist movement to a reactionary cause, but given the perceived opposition and the timing of the ideological consolidation of Scottish secessionism, my hypothesis cannot be dismissed too easily. The research question around which my thesis centered, asked what determined Scottish secessionism to manifest left-wing political ideology from 1974 to 1990, as illustrated by the Scottish National Party. My initial hypothesis, which guided the findings unveiled in the previous chapter, stated that secessionism in Scotland developed its left wing political ideology starting with the 1970s out of its respective ethnic dialectic constructions, in

contrast, or opposition, to a political Other (specifically in reaction to England's Thatcherism). To break down the hypothesis according to my results, while there was ample evidence supporting the dialectic ethnic relationship between Scotland and England, I did not find any conclusive substantive evidence proving the validity of my supposition. The odd discovery of that proposal as suggested by radical members of the SNP, without follow-up from party officials do not represent enough proof to accept the hypothesis as valid and confirmed, merely that there seems to have existed a spurious correlation between the socially democratic stances of the SNP and Margaret Thatcher's Conservative philosophy.

One of the conclusions I drew from my findings was that the party seemed to have been affected by the political culture of its electorate, reflecting Scottish identity and not necessarily constructing it, or affecting the broader public opinion in and of itself. Also, despite the fact that no connection was found in the archives consulted or the journalistic source surveyed, I do not rule my hypothesis as false or invalid, given the contextual relationship between the SNP and Thatcherism, but I merely declare it unsubstantiated given the lack of proof to support it. That being said, I acknowledge the incomplete nature of not just my research but also of my findings, given the variation existing between the sources analyzed (chronologically and argumentatively) and the lack of public, or attested causal links between events and decisions surrounding the ideological consolidation of the SNP.

From this, numerous suggestions for improvements or further areas/topics of analysis can be made, the first being with respect to the sources analyzed. The inclusion of personal interviews with life-long SNP politicians or strategists in addition to the

personal archives consulted, and the ones that will be made available in the future, given the thirty year wait-time for releases, would enhance and possibly change the scope, if not the findings of my research if replicated. Discourse analysis from the comparison of more than one Scottish newspaper, in my time frame, or a shorter period of analysis, would also reveal more about the perceptions on the ideological consolidation of the party, or if the contrary, then various regional opinions would at least show how the NSP was viewed at the time throughout Scotland. Another methodological suggestion could lie in the consultation of the Westminster House of Commons Hansard and archives with respect to the anti-Conservative rhetoric of SNP speeches made during the parliamentary debates taking place during Margaret Thatcher's rule. Also, if available, the archives of SNP officials, including its MPs but also strategists, excluding those of Gavin Kennedy and Robert McIntyre at the NLS, could perhaps yield some evidence with respect to the decisions taken throughout the 1980s of adopting more and more explicit left-wing policies. What could also be helpful would be to consult Labour or Conservative party archives, or even those of the Prime Minister herself, to identify from the opponents of the SNP how the performance and ideological substance of the latter was perceived in the opposite political camps.

Theoretically, given the reactive nature of my hypothesis, an institutionalist theory could help direct the perspective of one's further analysis to trace the evolution of the SNP from 1974 until 1990, but it would also exclude the reactivity argument of the ideology of the SNP. More broadly, and in the scope of a different context (PhD dissertation, multi-annual research), more than one case study could be added to this research with respect to reactive ideological consolidation, either focused regionally (with

Wales, or Northern Ireland), continentally (with Flanders, Catalonia, or others), or even transatlantically with Quebec secessionism. A more complex analysis could even more specifically choose a right wing secessionist movement to compare and contrast the similarities and differences between any possible ideological reactivity in those respective cases. On the other hand, two or more completely different secessionist movements, excluding Scotland, could just as well be analyzed and more concrete and substantial evidence could be located in those respective sources. My findings and interpretations clearly are limited to Scotland alone and not secessionist movements in Europe or anywhere else given the scarce evidence available both from the archival documents consulted, as well as the single newspaper surveyed.

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