The New Politics of Autonomy.  
Territorial Strategies and the uses of European Integration by Political Parties in Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia 1979-2005

Eve Hepburn

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining the degree of Doctor of Political and Social Sciences of the European University Institute

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Abstract

European integration has upset many assumptions regarding the distribution of power, functions and authority across and within states. Scholars have bewailed or rejoiced the ‘emptying’ of the state – the erosion of its competences by supranational integration and decentralisation. However, there are few examinations of how substate actors have responded to state and European structural change, and none that have analysed how substate political parties have sought to enhance regional powers and influence during a period in which state boundaries have become permeable. This research fills this lacuna by exploring how substate parties in Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia have pursued territorial strategies to secure autonomy and capacity in Europe since 1979.

The choice of comparing dissimilar regions enables us to explore the uneven effects of European integration in different places, and to examine why some parties have used Europe to advance their territorial projects whilst others have not. Territorial strategies – which include demands for constitutional recognition as well as policy capacity – differ across territories and party systems, owing to a variety of local and statewide factors. They also change over time in response to perceived opportunities for action in Europe. For instance, from 1988-95 the possibilities of a Europe of the Regions led to a convergence of territorial demands, causing nationalist parties to moderate claims to independence and pro-centralist parties to support greater substate autonomy. However, the closing of opportunities for regions from the late 1990s caused some parties to revert back to previous – or more Eurosceptical – positions, or to trade-off autonomy for more access to the state. This indicates that substate party support for European integration is often tactical, whilst pressures for autonomy are motivated by the perception of policy benefits to be obtained, with or without Europe.
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1. Introduction

The fact that territory is a fundamental determinant of politics is indisputable. Territory provides the basis for political action, representation, policy and mobilisation (Keating 1998: 3). It provides a homeland, a sense of belonging and a unique identity. Territorial borders determine the limits of political authority, and territory underpins functional systems and economic production. Yet despite these widely accepted assertions, political scientists have for a number of decades been primarily interested in only one territorial unit: the modern nation-state. Most examinations of territory are based an assumption that the state is a bounded, historically- and geographically-determined entity which, coupled with the modernisation theories of the 1960s and 1990s, entailed the diffusion and standardisation of politics across the territory, the replacement of territorial with functional cleavages and ultimately the ironing-out of any regional variations. Yet a number of scholars have questioned these assumptions, particularly those working in the fields of nationalism, regionalism and political geography. These scholars have instead argued that we must look at the social construction of territory, the emergence of regions as political and economic actors, and substate mobilisation based on claims of nationhood to see how political authority is dispersed. These are important contributions to our understanding of the way in which territory mediates politics at levels beneath, across and beyond the state. But there is still a lot of ground to cover.

The main subject of this discussion concerns the territorialisation and Europeanisation of politics in substate political arenas. Until recently, very little had been written about the main characteristics of regional party systems and competition, either as empirical analyses or theoretical approaches to understanding the interaction between the territorial dimension and other drivers of party competition. This may be explained by the fact that most analyses of party systems and party competition are dominated by the view that ideological division is the fundamental axis upon which parties compete (Sartori 1976; Maor 1997), and that regional political behaviour and competition tends to replicate national (state) political behaviour and competition. This is even considered to be the case in federal and decentralised systems, where there are institutional arenas for substate electoral competition (Padgett and Burkett 1986; Roberts 2000). When there is source for variation, namely the existence of a nationalist or regionalist party with claims to autonomy, that party is often isolated from the party political context from which it emerged, and is sometimes compared to autonomist parties in other countries. As a result, we are unable to understand the effects of the nationalist party on substate politics, the importance of the territorial dimension of competition across the substate political arena, and how other parties address and interpret territorial interests.
The need to examine the party political context at the substate level is ever more pertinent when we consider that territorial interests and identities have been reinforced in recent years by changes in state and European structures. Europe has become an important factor in the analysis of territorial politics, leading to the rescaling of political authority and functional systems, and the transformation of claims and opportunities for territorial mobilisation. New political and economic spaces have been created in which substate territorial actors may operate. This has necessitated the development of territorial strategies by substate parties in response to threats to, or opportunities to advance, territorial interests. These range from pursuing constitutional recognition to the advancement of certain types of socioeconomic development for the territory.

Some scholars have argued that European integration has opened up new possibilities to pursue territorial interests that were once ‘closed’ by the expansion of the nation-state, and the pursuit of alternative territorial interests will inevitably lead to contestation (Bartolini 2004). Regions now operate within a post-sovereign or ‘post-Westphalian’ order in which authority is dispersed (Linklater 1998: Keating 2001), and where European integration has a direct impact on regional policy capacity. Regional actors are now able, and obligated, to frame their interests and demands at levels of authority beneath and beyond the state. Moreover, European integration offers an alternative discursive framework for advancing claims to autonomy. Indeed, the assumption that contemporary European territorial movements universally seek statehood is misplaced. With the exception of the independence platform of the Scottish National Party, minority nationalist parties have long pursued less ‘radical’ forms of constitutional change. Political autonomy is granted in response to territorial demands within state structures, representing the motivation of central governments to ‘territorially manage’ potentially separatist movements (Keating 1988), whilst European institutions, networks and lobbying organisations present certain opportunities for territorial mobilisation (Hooghe 1995: De Winter 2001). To some scholars, it appears that the state has lost its capacity as the only important unit of political decision-making, being eroded by decentralisation from below and European integration from above (Wallace 1994). This has made ‘statehood’ not only an ineffective, but an unattractive option for territorial actors. Parties have begun a new search for forms of autonomy within Europe that amount to something less than secession. These include a place within a Europe of the Regions, Peoples or Small States.

In 1983, Rokkan and Urwin posited that there existed seven paths toward autonomy, including peripheral protest, regional autonomy, federalism, confederalism and secession (Rokkan and Urwin 1983: 141). These categories, however, neglect the supranational – or in this case European – dimension of territorial autonomy, and focus on demands made on the state. Changes in

1 Contrarily, Milward (1992) argues that the European Union has rescued the nation-state by successfully answering its incapacity to guarantee its own physical and economic security.
the political structure of state and European institutions have widened the scope for territorial demands. It is now possible to identify three realms of political decision-making in which territorial actors seek to advance their goals: the state level, European level, and a (trans)regional level. The latter has been referred to as a ‘third’ or ‘meso’ level of territorial politics (Bullman 1997; Sharpe 1993; Jeffery 1997). Scholars have confronted the two predominant approaches to European integration: intergovernmentalism and neo-functionalism, both of which are concerned with the way in which EC decision-making operates at two levels – the state and Europe. Regional participation in European affairs presents a ‘third level’ of decision-making. In the stronger sense, a third level refers to the occurrence of a ‘Europe of the Regions’ whereby a uniform regional tier of government with direct decision-making powers is established alongside state and European institutions. In the weaker sense, a third level is characterised by new forms of territorial engagement and the creation of associational structures across regions and states. Whereas it could be argued that territorial political strategies once focused exclusively on state structures, they are now prone to lobbying at transnational levels to advance their goals, and European umbrella organisations have been formed to represent regional party interests in European institutions.

The re-territorialisation of politics at the substate level raises the question of why nationalist and regionalist parties are not performing better in their respective party systems, and why there has not been a flurry of newly created states since the deepening of European integration since the 1980s. The only way to account for this is to examine the party political context of the substate entity, where non-nationalist parties have pursued territorial strategies that have sometimes elicited more electoral support than those of nationalist parties. To briefly illustrate, in Sardinia, there are no parties that support a centralisation of power at the Italian state level: indeed, all parties can be divided into the categories of federalist, autonomist or separatist. This includes regional branches of statewide parties that have centralising platforms on the national level, such as Forza Italia, Alleanza Nazionale and Partito della Rifondazione Comunista. The pro-autonomy platforms of statewide parties may partially account for why the separatist demands of nationalist parties here have achieved limited electoral success, as their territorial strategies of may have succeeded in accommodating territorial claims.

Whilst there is a steadily growing literature on minority nationalist party responses to European integration (Hooghe 1995; Lynch 1996; De Winter 2001; Keating and McGarry, 2001; Guibernau, 1999; McGarry and Keating 2006) there is, however, a dearth of analyses examining the implications of European integration for the substate political context as a whole. This thesis aims to fill this gap by developing a comparative approach that examines how substate parties in three diverse cases have used Europe to advance their political projects during the period of ‘deepening’ integration. Instead of looking at just one actor in each case – for instance the dominant nationalist
or regionalist party in a given territorial setting – this approach takes a broader view of how Europe has influenced territorial party politics in general. Autonomist claims have never been the exclusive domain of self-styled ‘nationalist’ parties. It is thus necessary to account for the ways in which statewide parties have incorporated territorial demands and have pursued strategies to rival the dominant nationalist vision of autonomy in Europe. The competition between parties on the territorial axis has increased the number of means by which to pursue territorial interests, which may involve claims for ‘formal’ autonomy, such as federalism, decentralisation and independence, as well as demands to increase policy capacity.

I would now like to give the reader an idea of how the thesis is structured. The next chapter provides the methodological underpinnings of the research and situates the research goal within existing theories of territory. It is shown that studies of nationalism, regionalism and political geography cannot, taken separately, account for the way in which parties have used European integration to advance their territorial strategies and, in particular, demands for autonomy. It is argued that more research is needed on the territorial dimension of party competition to help to explain the other fields’ shortcomings. At this point, I develop an analytical framework to examine the impact of European integration on the territorial strategies of political parties in substate political arenas. The rationale behind the case selection is then discussed, along with an explanation of the research methods used. Chapter three explores in depth the types of territorial strategies available to substate parties. In particular, a distinction is made between the pursuit of (constitutional) autonomy from the state, and the capacity to act and control resources. As the latter may require more access to the state, I also consider how parties trade-off one for the other. Chapters four, five and six are dedicated to case study findings. Chapter four examines the territorial strategies and uses of European integration by political parties in Scotland, Chapter five in Bavaria, and Chapter six in Sardinia. Chapter seven offers a comparison of the three cases, seeking to account for and explain the different territorial strategies pursued in Europe. This is used as a basis for developing a theory of trade-offs between autonomy and capacity, and constructing a typology of substate autonomist demands in Europe. In the concluding chapter, I review the findings of this research and consider its implications for the field of territorial politics.
2. Situating the Politics of Territory – Theoretical Considerations and Research Strategy

2.1 Territorial Mobilisation in Europe

European integration has upset a number of assumptions regarding the distribution of power, functions and authority across and within states. A legion of scholars have either bewailed or rejoiced in the apparent ‘emptying’ of the state – the erosion of its competences by supranational integration and decentralisation – leading to its eventual demise or, more realistically, the rescaling of functional systems and political authority (Wallace 1994; Loughlin 1997; Linklater 1998; Keating 2001). This challenge to normative ‘state-centric’ understandings of politics has been accompanied by a renewed emphasis on the role of substate territorial actors, who must also redefine their identities and interests in response to evolving political structures. The changing nature of relations between regions, states and Europe highlights the problematic linkage between borders, national identity and political authority (Keating 2006). Importantly, the European project has transformed the scope and nature of autonomy, creating new spaces in which substate actors operate. This thesis aims to contribute to these debates by exploring how substate actors seek to secure increased autonomy, influence and functional control during a period in which the once-protective boundaries of statehood are becoming ‘fuzzy’ (Batt 2003).

The following discussion explores how several different social science disciplines have analysed these phenomena. Scholars in the fields of nationalism, regionalism, political geography and party studies have questioned state-centred accounts of politics, and have suggested a range of ways in which politics has been informed by (substate) territorial factors. The discussion focuses on how different disciplines conceive of the relationship between territory and politics, and how they explain territorial mobilisation, interests and identity. The aim here is to develop an approach to territorial mobilisation in Europe that synthesises these disciplinary methods. Building on this work, I then construct an analytical and conceptual framework that enables the exploration of the extent to which European integration has influenced the territorial strategies of substate parties.

2.2 Party Competition and the Centre-Periphery Cleavage

Most approaches to party competition tend to emphasise ideology and interests as the critical axis upon which parties compete, and underline that party politics operates at the state level, with statewide parties competing over statewide issues. These two separate, but interrelated, assumptions are inadequate for any comprehensive understanding of territorial politics. This discussion begins by examining some classical theories of party competition, and identifies their limitations in
explaining how party politics is informed by territorial factors. Following this, I consider the ways in which electoral politics have become ‘territorialised’ around centre-periphery tensions, and how one might fruitfully begin to analyse the territorial dimension of party competition. Finally, the effects of Europe on party politics will be addressed, in particular how Europe has reinforced the salience of substate territorial politics.

Political parties are commonly classified and differentiated from one another by their location on a left-to-right spectrum, conventionally ranging from Marxism at the extreme Left, with Fascism at the extreme Right. Contemporary politics has gained the addition of a ‘centre’ position committed to gradual socioeconomic change and constitutional individualism. None of these positions are easily categorised, due to the malleability of parties’ ideological attitudes. Yet attempts have been made to charter the complexities of party interaction, based on ideological divisions. In the late 1950s, Downs (1957) developed a ‘proximity theory’ of party competition. He argued that parties compete by taking diverging positions along a set of issue dimensions. More specifically, they will ‘strive to distinguish themselves ideologically from each other and maintain the purity of their positions’ (Downs 1957: 126-7; my italics). As parties are actors that seek to elect candidates to office to pursue certain policy goals, this positioning is based on the assumption that voters will support a party whose position on an issue most closely resembles their own. The institutional design of the electoral system is an important determinant in how parties interact and compete. In majoritarian systems (where there are two parties competing), party positions converge to the median of voters’ preferences in a uni-dimensional policy space. This means that parties will compete by taking similar issue positions and addressing similar issues in their manifestos. But if there are more than two parties operating within a given party system, their platforms will no longer converge. There is thus greater need for parties operating within multi-party systems to distinguish themselves on ideological grounds and policy goals, to focus on diverse issues in a multi-dimensional policy space, and to clearly differentiate their platforms.

Building upon Downs’ analysis of party interaction, and further emphasising the importance of the ideological positions of parties, Giovanni Sartori (1976) introduced a typology of party systems. Political parties are understood as strategic actors who seek to galvanise the support of wide sections of society, and to translate ideological cleavages into such support through their capacity to raise issues of relevance within a party system. Their failure to control this agenda-setting role leads to party-system change. Party competition arises from the extent to which parties differ on ideological grounds, or in Sartori’s words, the existence of ‘left-right polarisation’. This means that party systems, which are understood as ‘the system of interactions resulting from inter-party competition’ (1976: 44), can be categorised by the number of ideological ‘poles’ upon which parties pivot, and the ‘distance’ between parties on a left-right continuum. Party systems are
'bipolar' if there are two ideological poles around which parties obtain support, and 'multi-polar' if support pivots along various points along a left-right continuum. Based on the dimensions of polarisation and fragmentation (the latter referring to the number of parties operating in a system), Sartori identifies two types of party systems: (1) two-party and moderate pluralist systems, in which parties fight for the centre votes between the poles, leading to a degree of stability; and (2) polarised pluralist systems (more than two ideological poles) that are fragmented (more than five parties) which, together with the potential presence of anti-system parties, leads to instability.

This typology is useful in understanding how party systems function, but its utility rests on an acceptance that left-wing polarisation determines party competition. Sartori himself was aware of the bias inherent in the left-right imagery, and the fact that other dimensions and identifications were important. In his later collaborative work, a distinction was drawn between domains of identification and spaces of competition (Sani and Sartori 1983). Here, Sani and Sartori considered the importance of non-ideological cleavages in determining party competition, including the clerical-secular, ethnic and linguistic dimensions, which were considered to constitute multiple domains of identification that have the capacity to mobilise identified voters. The struggle for support of non-identified voters, meanwhile, takes place in a unidimensional space of competition. Parties can position themselves on multiple cleavages, then, but they are not equally relevant to party competition. Sani and Sartori argued that parties that did not compete on the left-right dimension will conduct ‘defensive competition’ aimed at maintaining identifiers instead of seeking floating voters, thereby limiting their appeal to an isolated segment of the electoral market. As a result, these identifications do not have a strong impact on party competition, because it would require the presence of two or more parties competing along the same dimension for votes available to either party. Whilst there may exist numerous parties with numerous identifications in a party system, this could result in party crowding rather than strong polarisation.

As Daalder (1984: 99) points out, Sartori throughout his work has generally sought to reduce the multidimensionality of modern politics to a mainly unidimensional interpretation, based on the ‘summary indicator’ of the left-right dimension. Many party scholars concur with this approach. Maor, for instance, goes so far as to say that ‘the complete framework of European party systems is determined principally by the predominance of the left-right dimension’ (Maor 1997: 35-36). One problem with this assumption is that there is very little consensus on how to categorise a left-right continuum. For conventionalists, fascism and communism may be seen as occupying opposite ends of the spectrum, with liberal democrats somewhere in the centre. From a ‘centre’ point of view, constitutional individualism may occupy one extreme whilst totalitarian collectivism occupies the other, regardless of whether they fit into neat ‘left’ or ‘right’ categories. The confusion surrounding the shifting nature of ideological poles in contemporary European politics has led scholars to argue
that other dimensions are perhaps more important than left-right distinction. For instance, issues relating to gender, race, sexual orientation and ecology have increasingly gained importance in the analysis of political activity, forcing parties to compete on these multiple dimensions.

Sartori’s framework for party systems has spawned a number of approaches to party competition. For example, Maor and Smith (1993) have outlined four issue dimensions that are salient in West European party systems: (1) the left/right distinction; (2) issues relating to ‘new’ versus ‘old’ politics (the former encompassing environmental, anti-globalisation and women’s issues); (3) nationalistic dimensions (relating to national interests such as immigration and foreign policy); and (4) maverick issues, comprising bottom-up value-related issues. Although Maor and Smith raise the issue of multiple points of competition, like Sartori they still prioritise ideology by arguing that it serves as a ‘multiple-ordering dimension’ under which other issues are accommodated. Thus, parties may try to keep a divisive issue off the political agenda until it can be expressed in line with positions on the left-right scale. Yet other authors contend that the salience of a given issue may be just as important as the ideological distance between parties in determining the way they compete. Robertson (1976) and Budge and Farlie (1983) argue that parties seek to make their concerns most prominent in campaigns, rather than emphasising how their position on an issue is distinguishable from other party positions. They will not draw attention to an issue if their do not expect to benefit from its increased salience. In ‘owning’ certain issues, parties will attract those voters who are concerned with this issue (so left-wing parties are considered to have an advantage over matters relating to social welfare whilst right-wing parties are seen to ‘own’ the issue of law and order, or rural concerns due to their support amongst farmers and landowners).

Aside from the fact that some of the issues that Budge and Farlie have associated with ‘ownership’ by certain parties are in fact universally important to parties, such as welfare and economic development (Pogorelis et al 2005), there is another problem associated with this approach. It does not account for the fact that some issues are not associated with a particular ideology. Territory is one such ‘issue’, whereby constitutional change or the defence of territorial interests may be pursued by any or all of the main ‘class-based’ parties, as well as regionalist and green parties. A growing body of literature in nationalism and regionalism studies has shown that political activity has often pivots around issues of culture, language, boundaries and self-determination (Lynch 1996; De Winter and Tursan 1998; Jones and Keating 1995). Moreover, some comparative party scholars have begun to examine the spatial aspects of party competition at multiple territorial levels (Hopkin 2003; Caramani 2004; Chhibber and Kollman 2005; Pogorelis et al 2005). These analyses indicate that territory has not disappeared from party politics, and that it may in fact be becoming a more pronounced feature in West European states.
This possibility was recognised by Stein Rokkan and his colleagues (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Rokkan 1980; Rokkan and Urwin 1983). Rokkan’s exploration of how territory provides a framework for systems of political interaction challenged the predominant approach of highlighting the integrative functions of political parties. Instead, he argued that centre-periphery cleavages lead to changes in political alignments and redefine interests along territorial lines. Lipset and Rokkan (1967) understood party change to be determined by developments within the parts of the system – that is, the parties – and how cleavages were created therein. They argued that the political map of Europe is the cumulative outcome of determinative Europe-wide processes such as the reformation, the industrial revolution and national revolutions. These produced distinct cleavage ‘structures’ and different patterns of political conflict in different places, owing to the particular form that class-based and religious upheavals assumed in local and regional settings (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Rokkan 1980). Following the first wave of centralising state formation, whereby territories were expanded and governed by a single authority, state agencies faced the existence of relatively autonomous peripheral communities. A centre-periphery cleavage was drawn between the dominant national culture and the ethno-linguistic minorities, who mobilised along territorial lines in resisting assimilation. For Lipset and Rokkan (1967: 50), parties and party systems are formed around such cleavages and have the ability to ‘freeze’ them even when the relevance of the cleavage has declined. Therefore territorial cleavages can structure lasting systems of party competition.

In his later work, Rokkan sought to examine more thoroughly how territory provides a framework for systems of political interaction (Rokkan and Urwin 1983). Due to the diverse effects of European-wide ‘catalysts’ on centre-periphery cleavages, and the differential distribution of economic, administrative and cultural opportunities that they produced, this created tensions between the centre and the periphery. Moreover, as peripheral identities are constantly under pressure from centralizing and standardizing policies from the centre, this leads to peripheral mobilisation and demands for autonomy from the state. Peripheral (regionalist) movements will employ mobilisation strategies that are determined by the territorial, economic or cultural resources available to them. The authors locate the autonomy objectives of peripheral movements along a continuum ranging from separatism to integration. But one limitation of this analysis is that whilst Rokkan and Urwin mention that parties are able to move from one ‘continuum’ to another, their typologies render this movement impossible and their aims static. Furthermore, the authors only examined regionalist parties, and did not consider the territorial strategies of branches of statewide parties. Some of the more recent literature on parties and territory has sought to fill this gap.

Chhibber and Kollman (2005) have examined the distribution of government powers across different levels in determining the shape and formation of party systems. They argue that party systems are aggregated depending on where economic and political power lies – at the regional or
state level. The relative authority of a substate government to control economic and political resources is an important factor determining the success of regional parties in decentralised or federal states. Furthermore, Hopkin (2003) examines the manner in which centre-periphery tensions affect the organisation and behaviour of statewide parties. He argues that shifts in the territorial distribution of power to regions have led to the ‘denationalisation’ of party systems, so that parties must respond to substate challenges. This has led to intra-party conflict as different parts of parties (operating at different levels) diverge in the areas of elite recruitment, party programmes and campaigning, and their activities in public office. Although he does not theorise on the sources of variation in party responses, Hopkin’s analysis brings us closer to understanding the territorial differentiation of statewide parties resulting from institutional decentralisation.

Along with these broader institutionalist approaches to explaining political party change in decentralised and federal states, there are a number of actor-centred analyses of parties and territory. In particular, there is a growing body of literature on ethnoregionalist parties. These have been defined as ‘geographically concentrated peripheral minorities which challenge the working order and sometimes the democratic order of a nation-state by demanding recognition of their cultural identity’ (Muller-Rommel 1998). Although one could argue that these parties – also known as minority nationalist, regionalist, sub-state autonomist and so on – do not only or always seek cultural recognition, it is important to note that their defining characteristic is the demand for self-government. A number of studies consider the organisation, internal and external resources, policy goals, ideological position and electoral performance and ethnoregionalist parties (Lynch 1996; De Winter and Tursan 1998; Elias 2006). These analyses are important for focusing attention on the substate dimension of politics, as well as beginning to theorise about different demands for self-government across this ‘party family’. Elsewhere, attempts have been made to classify ‘substate political parties’. Aguilera de Prat (2002) argues that they are identifiable by three characteristics: (1) they are organised within a given territory; (2) they seek to represent a population which shares a common identity; (3) their strategies aim to secure the highest degree of self-government. He also proposes that parties operating within a substate arena may pursue asymmetric autonomist, independentist or secessionist aims. Although de Prat was referring primarily to nationalist parties, this characterisation could also apply to other parties operating within a given region.

In the approach developed here, the territorial dimension is considered to be an important determinant of party competition, which cuts across ideological and other cleavages. The existence of independence-seeking parties, the establishment of cross-party and civic political movements in support of autonomy, and the policy departure of regional branches from statewide parties have all contributed to an important territorial dimension to party competition in substate arenas. Moreover, the trend towards decentralisation and federalism within European member states means that the
substate electoral arena has gained in importance as a focal point for territorial interests (Jeffery 1997; Loughlin 1997). This necessitates an adjustment to our thinking about how politics and parties are organised at different territorial levels. One important characteristic of substate party systems is that statewide parties must operate in a peculiarly regional context, and compete on regional issues. This ‘territorial dimension’ acquires particular salience in cases where a nationalist party exists whose constitutional goals have won formidable electoral support. Regional branches of statewide parties must adopt territorial strategies to defuse the threat of secession.

It is therefore necessary to consider how statewide parties have responded to substate territorial issues. All of the main party families have both centralising and decentralising traditions. For instance, whilst Liberal (Democratic) parties have at times supported the creation of a federal state, in which the identities and traditions of a territory are recognised, at other times they have opposed ‘particularism’ in any form. Left-wing parties have shifted back and forth between centralism and regionalism, the latter especially when they entered alliances with autonomist movements. Christian Democrat parties advocate bringing powers to local communities in line with the principle of subsidiarity, but still they have chosen to advocate centralism when it suits their needs. And Green parties often find themselves closely aligned to autonomist parties, who share the aims of environmental protection and the control over territory this entails.

As well as operating at the substate level and adapting to regional pressures, parties of all political creeds in decentralised or federal states must also adapt to European norms, structures and processes. Yet there have been few analyses so far that bring the European and substate territorial dimensions together. Much of the literature on Europeanisation focuses on how Europe affects parties and party systems at the state level and thereby overlooks the effects of Europe at the substate level – which may be quite different (Hix and Lord 1997; Mair 2000; Featherstone and Radaelli 2003; Bartolini 2005). As Mair (2006: 3) points out, Europeanisation is usually (if mistakenly) perceived to occur when ‘something in national political systems is affected by something European’. There remains a notable lack of any systematic, bottom-up accounts of how European integration has affected political debates at the state level, let alone at the substate level. Mair hypothesises some of the main implications of Europe for state party competition, which are (1) limiting the policy space available to competing parties by harmonizing policies across the EU; (2) reducing the range of policy instruments of parties as decision-making over major policy issues is delegated to the European level; and (3) limiting the policy repertoire of parties, as standard policy practices become disallowed on the European level (Mair 2006: 10). Owing to these factors, Europe has reduced the stakes of competition between parties, and has opened up space for Euroscepticism and populist parties through the lack of accountable institutions.
While these developments can be identified at the state level, one might posit that a rather different set of findings may emerge when examining the effects of Europe on substate politics. Many scholars have argued that European integration has created a set of opportunity structures for political actors at the substate level (Keating and Hooghe 1996; Jeffery 2000; Keating and McGarry 2001). Others maintain that the development of ethnoregionalist parties is closely linked with supranational integration, through their adaptation to European issues and their involvement in transnational alliances. De Winter and Gomez-Reino (2002) conducted empirical research on the ways in which Europe influences goals and strategies of these parties, concluding that integration offers ethnoregional parties a number of opportunities for political engagement. Whilst such an analysis might benefit our understanding of the impact of Europe on regionalist party interests and identities, it fails to provide an overall view of the effects of Europe on the substate political arena and party competition in general. How have other parties at the substate level adapted to Europeanisation? And has Europe become an important point of competition between substate parties – be they nationalist, regionalist, socialist, conservative, liberal or green?

Returning to Mair’s analysis to consider how Europe might affect the policy space, instruments and repertoire of political parties at the substate level, one might produce quite a different set of findings from a state-level analysis. First, regarding the limitations to policy space, most substate actors invoke the imagery of a Europe of the Regions – which has penetrated regional politics across the EU. However, the way in which each party interprets this concept differs greatly, and some have rejected the concept in favour of stronger demands for autonomy. Second, instead of limiting the capacity of regional governments, integration appears to have opened up doors for substate actors to directly access European institutions, to advance their territorial projects and engage in networks at the European level – thus considerably opening up the policy instruments available to them. Third, as many regional institutions have been newly built or endowed with new competences, such as in the UK, Spain, Italy and Belgium, the stock of policies available to them appears larger than before institutional reforms, and some regional actors are pushing for increased policy capacity in Europe. This analysis necessitates an examination of the effects of Europe on parties at the substate level, where a very different set of political dynamics exists.

Some scholars have considered the importance of effects of Europe on the substate level. Ladrech (2002: 391) broadly defines Europeanisation as ‘the dual process of the emergence of a distinctive European polity as well as the adaptation of national and sub-national political EU systems’ whilst Marks and Hooghe (2000) emphasise the open and flexible nature of the new European system of ‘multi-level governance’ (MLG) that allows room for non-state actors to become involved in decision-making structures at different levels. MLG is defined as ‘a policy-creating process in which authority and policy-making influence are shared across multiple levels of
government – subnational, national and supranational’ (Hooghe and Marks 2001: 2). Their analysis focuses on how regional tiers of government have been brought into the ambit of European decision-making. However, this tends to overplay ‘the significance of central state-EU interactions in catalysing sub-national mobilisation’ (Jeffery 2000: 3), and leaves the question of how regional actors mobilise demands for access to EU decision-making in a bottom-up way unanswered. As with much of the literature, MLG scholars consider Europeanisation to be a top-down process, projecting downwards from the Europe-to-state level, thus ignoring the effects of Europe on regional and substate party competition. As Deschouwer (2003: 213) states, MLG is ‘very much a party-free zone’, and his own research attempts to fill this gap by examining general patterns of party activity in different electoral arenas – what he calls ‘multi-layered systems’. Of these, the regional and European electoral arenas have increased in importance, and have warranted new strategies and responses from political parties that had previously concentrated on state electoral competition. Parties now operate in complex systems in which their regional, national and European components influence each other in ‘three-way interactions’ of a horizontal or vertical nature. Similarly, Dardanelli (2006) focuses on the relationship between the regional and European levels. Instead of considering Europeanisation to be a top-down process, he argues that the main focus should be on the opportunities, incentives and constraints that this presents for regional (and state) actors. In other words, ‘Europeanisation is a strategy employed by political parties to manipulate dimensions of a given political issue’ (2006: 17). Europe can thus be understood as an arena in which parties pursue their goals, whereby Europeanisation is an additional dimension of party competition that parties may exploit to change the perception or salience of a given political issue.

This examination of party literature has shown that there are multiple lines of competition upon which parties compete and multiple arenas in which party politics takes place. The left-right dimension, which is central to classical analyses of party systems, cannot provide a complete theory and is itself an unreliable measure due to tendency to conflate a number of distinct attitudes to political ideology. Some scholars have highlighted the importance of territory, for some defined as centre-periphery cleavages, in determining arenas of political interaction. Others have begun to consider the ways in which decentralisation and European integration have created complex multi-level political arenas in which parties must adapt and respond to different challenges. But whilst scholars have separately begun to theorise on the territorial differentiation of party structures, the emergence of ethnoregionalist parties, the role of institutional reforms in affecting the success of regional parties, and the opportunities presented by European integration for territorial mobilisation, we need to pull all of these strands together to understand how state and European structural change have affected party goals and behaviour, and to explore what types of territorial strategies parties
choose to pursue in different places and at different times. Let us now see whether studies of nationalism, regionalism and political geography can help us answer some of these questions.

2.3 Constructing the Nation

Nationalism is one of the most contested and loaded concepts in the social sciences. The resurgence of minority nationalisms within advanced Western states in the 1960s and 1970s gave rise to a number of theoretical explanations which have since provoked countless debates within academic circles. Nationalism has, for instance, been associated with the existence of a pre-modern *ethnie* (Smith 1981), the culture of modernisation (Gellner 1964, 1983), a modern form of politics (Breuilly 1993), a political religion (Kedourie 1960), economic deprivation (Hechter and Levi 1979; Nairn 1977), the transmitter of culture (Geertz 1963), racist ideology (Van der Berghe 1967), post-industrialism (Richmond 1984), the invention of tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) and imagined communities (Anderson 1991). Arguably, only Anderson’s concept of the nation as an imagined political community has gained acceptance amongst the various schools of nationalism, even though many of these theories converge in practice. It is not, however, my intention to rekindle old (and new) debates about why nationalism has arisen and under what conditions, and what the characteristics of nationalism are. Rather, my aim is to examine theories of nationalism that make the greatest effort to explain recent territorial mobilisation. More specifically, approaches that address the political strategies of nationalist movements, and how these strategies incorporate cultural and economic objectives, are debated. This discussion is by no means exhaustive and I have excluded other theories of nationalism (some of which are mentioned above) for reasons of space.

Breuilly argues that nationalism can only be understood as a modern form of politics. His rationale is that ‘nationalism…is about politics…is about power…is about control of the state’ (1993: 1). Nationalism is a political opposition movement with a set of arguments for justifying possession of the state. It is therefore only explicable in the context of the modern state system, which provides nationalism with its essential political concepts and determines the form it takes. Political nationalism depends on three assertions: that a nation seeks recognition of its uniqueness, that the interests and values of the nation take precedence over all others, and that the nation wishes to be independent. Nationalist oppositions seek an alternative political community that can replace the state. Breuilly posits that nationalist movements are more developed where a modern state form is more developed, and thus the state determines the nature of nationalist movements. Nationalism is viewed as successful because it fulfils basic needs and serves political functions – of mass mobilisation, political co-ordination and ideological legitimisation. These functions are fuelled by the inadequacies of the modern state to address the ‘age-old concern with the relationship between rulers and subjects’ (Breuilly 1993: 368). Nationalism seeks to transform these relations by bringing
together societal and state domains, in other words, entering the state for the interest of the society it claims to represent. Breuilly concludes that nationalism has little to do with the existence or non-existence of a nation – it may just be the most appropriate and pragmatic form of opposition to take.

Can nationalism be explained solely as political opposition? By limiting nationalism to political movements, there is a misleading tendency to equate nation with state. We must bear in mind that some cultural nationalisms have never aimed at political control of the state. Instead of aiming at co-ordination, mobilisation and legitimacy, nationalist movements desire unity, autonomy and identity – and these goals must emanate from the nation (Smith 1981). Furthermore, is it correct to assume that all political nationalist opposition movements seek to create their own state? An important feature of contemporary political nationalist movements is that they do not equate the political expression of nationhood with independent statehood. Instead, territorial movements seeking political control of their own affairs are interpreting the principle of national self-determination to mean different degrees of autonomy. This can be seen as a pragmatic response to the political spaces created by changing state and supranational opportunity structures.

One aspect that is neglected in Breuilly’s elaboration of nationalism as a form of politics is the way in which culture can be mobilised for political purposes, and how political strategies may include cultural aims. With regard to the former, scholars have argued that nationalist intellectuals may pursue the resocialisation of the population to reflect their own cultural attitude (Meadwell 1989), that cultural artefacts – or ‘invented traditions’ – have played a part in elite attempts to manipulate and win the state-loyalty of the masses (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) and cultural meanings of the nation have to be constructed or re-appropriated by political elites to make the idea of a state of one’s own plausible (Horowitz 1985). Political agents may use symbols and language or other resources within the ‘cultural tool kit’ to instrumentally meet political ends (Berezin 1997).

Yet culture may also form the basis of group mobilisation, whereby cultural objectives constitute the central tenets of political strategy. For instance, nationalism may be motivated by concerns for linguistic protection and cultural reproduction (Gellner 1983; Williams 1997). In the latter case, territorial movements may demand the creation of barriers to halt the inflow of immigrants into national communities, which are perceived as the source of ‘dilution’ of traditional cultures. This has famously been the case with the Lega Nord. In seeking linguistic protection, strategies could include demands for unilingualism, which was supported by the Parti Québécois, or effective language legislation, a policy of Plaid Cymru. Here, it is important to note that linguistic and cultural issues are closely linked to economic resources. A major concern for Welsh and Québécois parties is how to secure the survival of their language in a sea of English-speakers (McRoberts 1988; Levine 1990; Williams 1997). Minority-language speakers find it difficult to find adequate employment (in Quebec one could argue that they were institutionally discriminated
against), requiring language legislation that would re-enforce the minority language in the public and private sectors. Thus nationalist goals have included linguistic and cultural policies to alleviate the marginal position of minority language speakers in the economy.

Some scholars of nationalism have argued that the cultural aims of nationalist movements are closely tied with economic objectives. Nationalist strategies are mobilised to face the joint threats posed by competition from foreign cultures and foreign economic activities, and must thus develop policies to protect the market place in order to guarantee cultural survival (Johnson 1965). Other scholars have stressed the relevance of material resources to political mobilisation. Nationalist strategies are intended to alleviate the economic deprivation created by uneven capitalist development (Nairn 1977). A nationalist intelligentsia mobilises the nation in order to initiate radical cultural, economic, and institutional progress to defend the territory against core economic exploitation and cultural annihilation, whereby their cultural identity is threatened by inherited extra-national domination (Nairn 1977: 339). Hechter and Levi (1979) also argue that nationalist goals are developed to address regional economic inequalities and an imposed cultural division of labour, whereby cultural distinctions are super-imposed on class lines. Clearly, there are a number of ways in which nationalists frame economic goals and link these to cultural reproduction.

Contemporary minority nationalism is often characterised by a mix of political, cultural and economic markers. These facets are mobilised differently according to the changing constellations of power at state and supranational levels. Some theories of nationalism are too deterministic to account for variation within nationalist movements. They cannot, taken separately, explain the existence of different economic, political and cultural aims that may be highlighted at different times and in order to pursue different goals, such as cultural recognition, economic resources or political autonomy. Furthermore, as most theories of nationalism assume that the political goal is to achieve statehood, they cannot explain how territorial movements may seek other forms of self-determination. A cursory glance at the goals and activities of contemporary nationalist parties indicates that there is a huge variation both across and within nationalist movements. The goal of autonomy, which has become a popular catchword amongst territorial movements, may be pursued by different actors to achieve different ends. For example, ‘autonomy’ for the Quebec Roman Catholic Church in the 1960s meant *la survivance* of a national culture, for the Quebec Liberal Party in the 1960s this meant institutional and economic modernisation, whilst for the Parti Québécois in the 1980s it meant linguistic preservation and sovereignty-association (Coleman 1984: Bissonnette 1985; Imbeau & Laforest 1991). The variation and flexibility of autonomist goals defies the anachronistic image of nationalists as isolationist, and allows us to include in our analysis substate parties who do not describe themselves as nationalist, as in Bavaria.
Importantly, these parties have not confined their demands to the state, but aim their strategies towards a wider trans-national setting that provides greater scope of recognition of their demands. Scholars of nationalism have recently begun to pay attention to the European dimension as a source of potential usurpation of narrow nationalism. These analyses usually form the closing paragraphs, or even an afterthought, to the theoretical elaboration of nationalist movements operating against state structures. Few approaches to nationalism address the ways in which European integration has been used by territorial movements to advance goals of autonomy. For an examination of the importance of substate entities in European policy-making we must look beyond state-centred nationalism theories to the debates produced by studies of regionalism.

2.4 Regional Actors and Interests

Regional analysis focuses on two central themes: how regions have become objects of state and European policy-making, and how regions have become actors in state and European structures. In both cases, we may separate the economic and political aspects of regionalism, or more specifically, how territorial actors pursue regional development or economic policy goals, and how they seek more control over political decision-making, or self-determination. These themes, however, are intrinsically connected. They are concerned with the creation of new political and functional spaces at state and European levels that allow regions to have a bigger say in political and economic decision-making. There appears, however, to be no systematic analysis of how the regional focus in state and European political discourse has influenced territorial mobilisation. Has the regional dimension given parties greater scope for pursuing their demands? In this analysis I examine these main themes and assess how this literature furthers our understanding of territorial mobilisation.

Let us begin by examining how regions have become objects of state and European decision-making. Since the end of the Second World War, states in Europe have to varying degrees pursued regional development policies in order to integrate poorer areas into the national economy. Regional development was motivated in part by the recognition that the macro-economic regulation of the market was being undermined by markedly different economic conditions obtaining from region to region (Bullman 1997). Central governments advanced sophisticated spatial policies designed to overcome what was perceived as a temporary marginal problem of regional disparity. These included regional planning, growth poles and coordination (Keating 1996b). Underdeveloped regions that were hitherto unable to participate in the economy were bolstered by tactical diversionary policies which created disincentives to invest in richer regions and the channelling of central aid to poorer regions. The aim here was less to introduce redistribution measures within the national economy than to reduce the wage-push inflationary effects of high growth regions and thereby improve the overall input and output of the national economy (Sharpe 1993).
‘Top-down’ regional development policies had limited but significant effects on the political structure of states. In one sense, they accentuated the regional dimension by giving official recognition to regional units and the variation between them. The regional planning system ‘entailed among other things the creation of a regional structure of deconcentrated government where central planning staffs, or missions, linked up with representative elements of the region from local government, industry, trade unions and so forth’ (Sharpe 1993: 12). Although regions were initially viewed as objects of state planning, in time central-planning staffs sought greater input from regional actors. This may have been motivated by the need of central governments to offload the cumbersome administrative apparatus of the state to lower substate levels (Bullman 1994). In any case, such policies contributed to both regional institutionalisation and regional mobilisation that pressed for greater policy capacity and autonomy. In response, European states began to abandon their top-down regional development approaches during a wave of institutional decentralisation in the 1990s, and endowed regional authorities with control over local development agencies, training, infrastructure and regional development grants. Regional policy finally became the domain of regional actors, who sought to develop new ways to address their problems and socioeconomic potential. Released from the pressure to integrate into national economies, regions were free to become competitors in European and global markets, as we shall see below.

Regions were not only the objects of state development policy, as mentioned. Since the mid-1970s the EU has instigated a range of regional policies aimed to rectify spatial inequalities resulting from market integration. Regional problems were first identified following the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy, which was seen to benefit some regions and disadvantage others. The European Regional Development Fund was established in 1975 and entailed the distribution of funds on the basis of member state quotas. This policy was little more than an inter-state transfer mechanism (Keating 1996b) and was criticised for its failure to establish a European-wide distribution of resources, and lack of mechanisms to send monies to target regions. The 1988 reform of Community regional policy altered this situation dramatically. Un-coordinated regional development policies were transformed into a more cohesive regional development programme, which was formulated to improve the competitive potential of deprived regions, in particular regions in industrial decline and disadvantaged rural regions. The upshot of the reforms was to double the amount allocated to structural funds, making it the second largest item on the EU budget. Furthermore, the principles of additionality (EC resources are additional to member state regional policy expenditures), subsidiarity (exercising responsibilities at the lowest possible level) and partnership (involving EU, state and regional authorities in coordinating policies) became the bedrock of the new programmes. So whilst states began transferring responsibility for regional policy to regional authorities, such authorities also began to forge direct relations with European
institutions. The decentralisation and Europeanisation of regional policy opened up direct links to EU decision-making processes and encouraged the articulation of ‘political demands in regional terms and provided objects for political mobilisation’ (Hooghe and Keating 1994: 370). EU regional intervention resulted in a surge of ‘bottom up’ regional mobilisation, with regions pressing for a greater role in state and European policy-making (Weyand 1997).

Resulting from these changes in state and European decision-making processes and regional policies, some scholars have argued that regions have become important political and economic actors in their own right. To begin with the economic dimension, scholars of the ‘new regionalism’ have argued that regions have become major sites of economic development (Bagnasco et al 1978; Piore and Sabel 1984; Nanetti 1988; Storper 1995; Amin 1999). Contrary to standard economic explanations, the increased internationalisation of trade, finance and production towards the end of the twentieth century did not lead to the homogenisation of market norms across territories. Instead, it became apparent that the market assumed different forms in different places. Importantly, these ‘places’ were not necessarily nation-states, but rather regions situated within or cutting across nation-states. Furthermore, new ‘forms’ of markets – such as the replacement of mass by specialised types of production – highlighted the territorially specific nature of capitalist development. Scholars have tended to focus on the experience of affluent regions, whose production systems are dominated by clusters of interdependent small and medium-sized businesses involved in flexible specialisation. These offer an alternative to mass production models and show that companies do not have to be large and centralised to compete successfully on world markets.

The decisive trait underpinning these localised industrial communities is their institutional configuration. It is argued that institutions are responsible for moulding norms and behaviour that fosters co-operation, mutual trust and expectations within specific localities. Storper (1997: 214) has described these social properties of networks as ‘untraded interdependencies’ that ‘are mutually coherent sets of expectations…permitting the actors involved to develop and coordinate necessary resources’. Small businesses are able to thrive in particular regions because they form clusters of cooperation (Piore and Sabel 1984), a result of shared cultural practices and the existence of strong social networks. According to Putnam, a ‘civic culture’ encourages intense associational life and the institutionalisation of collective interests. ‘Civicness’ has fostered new ways of engaging in politics, society and markets, making individual and collective activity more democratic. Social capital – ‘the features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions’ – is a key determinant of economic dynamism in the northern industrial communities of Italy (Putnam 1993: 167).

Although this approach to the construction of regions is valuable in highlighting how the market takes different forms in different places, we need to move beyond theories of economic
sociology to understand the political dynamics of territory, or how regions have become political actors in their own right. The process of regionalisation in European member-states have created new plurinational, regional and non-symmetrical federal-type states, in which regions have gained a new political role. To account for the new role of these ‘intermediate’ regional institutions, the notion of a ‘third level’ has been introduced in studies of regionalism (Bullman 1994; Hooghe 1995; Jeffery 1997). This concept requires us to bring together our analysis of regions as political actors in both state and European structures, as it describes the forms of regional engagement with Europe (Bullman 1997). Many scholars make a clear link between regionalisation and European integration, arguing that ‘resistance to and support for a political role of regions are plausible outcomes of Europeanization’ (Sturm and Dieringer 2005: 282). Aspects of a new regional role are indicated by the proliferation of European-wide regional organisations. Furthermore, the creation of the Committee of the Regions (CoR) in 1994 by the Maastricht Treaty provides a political arena for voicing regional demands. The CoR, which remains largely an advisory body, nevertheless created the first formal recognition of sub-national governments in the EU. In addition to the CoR, over 140 regional information offices have been established in Brussels to lobby European institutions, monitor EC regulations and support regional proposals in European political processes.

During this period of ‘regionalisation’ in Europe, regions soon began to project their interests into European arenas. Regions began to articulate distinct socioeconomic programmes that valorised local traditions and cultures as a strength and resource to be exploited European markets and to raise their competitive advantages vis-à-vis other areas. Many regions, for instance, sought to ‘connect global trends with local traditions’ – a process known as ‘glocalisation’ – which highlights the importance of social capital, embeddedness and clustering in traditional sectors (Hospers and Benneworth 2005). Although regions may lack macroeconomic powers, regional governments’ responsibility for planning and programming has allowed them to adapt local business to the new demands of knowledge and services economies, provide network opportunities and stimulate participation by regional stakeholders (such as local firms, universities and business associations). Together, these regional ‘lobbies’ have pressed for the defence of territorial interests in state and European structures, be they focussed on environmental, fishing or industrial policies. Regions have forged shared interests at the European level in the CoR, transregional associations, through state lobbying channels and the practice of bilateral paradiplomacy.2

Some scholars have argued that the creation of regional authorities is indicative of the development of a regional level of political decision-making in Europe as a whole, and we are now seeing the ‘creation of a new bargaining area based on territory rather than sector’ resulting from

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2 This refers to the activities of substate elites in seeking to foster external relations, either in cooperation or confrontation with state policies, but which in either case involves bypassing state boundaries and challenging the traditional monopoly of states over foreign relations (Aldecoa & Keating 1996).
functional, political and cultural pressures specific to countries (Sharpe 1993: 16). In order to account for why this third level of regional authority has been created, it is necessary to examine pressures for regionalisation within states. Keating provides a comprehensive account of the motivations for regional mobilisation and the various forms that this might take (Jones and Keating 1995; Keating 1996; Keating and Loughlin 1997; Keating 1998). He identifies several types of ‘bottom-up’ movements which include: conservative regionalism, that defends regional traditions against the modernising state; bourgeois regionalism, which seeks to modernise and free itself from a traditionalist state; technocratic regionalism, that is focused on regional planning; left-wing progressive regionalism, which endorses the themes of democracy, equality and progress; right-wing populist regionalism, which is opposed to immigration and the state draining its resources; cultural regionalism, based on the protection of local cultures or languages; and minority nationalism, based on a historic homeland and the desire for self-determination (Keating 1996).

Keating argues that each movement operates within distinct opportunity structures determined by the incentives and constraints of state territorial management. So whilst we can say that in many European states, there has been a trend of decentralisation responding to pressures from regionalist movements (Jeffery 1997), it must be noted that decentralisation has been neither a homogenous process across European states (Le Galès 1998: 244), nor a symmetrical process within states. To take the UK case, referendums were set in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (NI) for national assemblies in 1997. The different constitutional settlements reflected the desire of the central government to satisfy the minimum demand for autonomy in each of the separate parts (Adams and Robinson 2002). Whilst the NI Assembly and the Scottish Parliament were granted extensive legislative powers, there were provisions for NI to join the Republic of Ireland if a majority of its inhabitants so wished and Wales was given only secondary legislation and administrative powers. There were no attempts to impose a uniform regionalisation arrangement across the UK, but rather an asymmetrical one reflecting the demands of each nation (Keating 2001). It is at this point where an examination of cultural and historical pressures arising for regional autonomy would further our understanding of these processes. Studies of regionalism generally lack detailed examination of how regionalism has developed as bottom-up movements in specific countries. Furthermore, regionalism studies have failed to address how regionalist parties have sought to use the third level to further demands for autonomy. If nationalist parties entered government at the substate level, how would they be used for furthering autonomy in Europe?

One of the reasons why there has been no crossover in analyses of regionalism and nationalism may be found in the lack of agreement about what a region or a nation constitutes. Most nationalism scholars do not acknowledge regions, and thus ignore important cases of territorial mobilisation that are not based around the nation. An exception to this would be the attempts to
equate some nations such as Quebec with ‘region-states’ that offer a compromise between independence and federalism (Gagnon 2001). Yet Connor (1977) argues that regionalism and nationalism cannot be conflated, as the former seeks autonomy within the existing state, whereas the latter seeks separation from it. Contrarily, Keating (1996: 4) contends that ‘the division between nationalism and regionalism here is by no means clear, and is becoming less so as the state reconfigures’. Applegate (1990: 1165) agrees, who argues that ‘the study of regionalism… intersects with the study of nationalism in a rather ambiguous way. Regionalism seems to be like nationalism, but without the much-disliked features of ethnic prejudice and secessionism. Of course, these distinctions often collapse when actual examples are looked at’. The approaches that separate regions from nations ignore boundary cases where territoriality and nationality do not coincide, and national or regional groups overlap two territories (Keating et al 2003). Furthermore, they ignore cases where members of a territory identify with regional and national demarcations, revealed in opinion polls in Catalonia. Moreover, in the case studies it will be shown that parties defined as ‘regionalist’ by scholars can also have ethnic components. Regionalism can be exclusionary and should not necessarily be seen as the ‘healthy antidote’ to bellicose nationalism, whilst, by the same token, nationalism does not have to be a destructive force, and can be beneficial for creating civic solidarity. The most effective way of separating different components of nationalist/regionalist goals is to examine how parties themselves use different terminology. In playing the European game, substate parties may advocate regional criteria whilst, in pressing for autonomy from the state, they may assert the territory as an historic nation. I will now turn to a discipline that acknowledges both regions and nations in its understanding of ‘space’.

2.5 The Social Construction of Space

The field of political geography underwent a considerable transformation in the 1960s and 1970s. The previous focus on the state as a bounded, historically- and geographically-determined entity gave way to a new line of thinking about the range of ways in which geography is informed by politics. Importantly, the new political geography pointed to the social construction of territory, serving to de-mystify and de-emphasise state and regional boundaries. Political geographers sought to demonstrate how territory is open-ended and in a constant condition of reconstruction (Cox 1973; Agnew 1987). Moreover, they have demonstrated how other geographical scales, such as locality and region, constitute politics on different levels. The previous primacy of state-centred models, argue Agnew and Corbridge (1995: 84-94), was based on the assumption that states have exclusive power within territories and that state boundaries define societal boundaries. These no longer hold given that states are entering international agreements where sovereignty is shared, where global economic developments affect domestic areas, and where regional societies are challenging the
authority of the state through political mobilisation. In order to understand the relationship between politics and territory, we must consider how politics is ‘organized in terms of the places where most people live their lives; settings that are linked together and across geographical scales by their networks of political and economic influence’ (Agnew 2002b: 2).

The organisation of politics at different spatial levels has given way to new considerations of local and regional differences in voting patterns (Cox and Reynolds 1974; Taylor 1993), how public services are delivered by municipal governments to local areas (Cox 1973; Harding 1999), and how cities constitute local societies and collective actors in fields of governance (Bagnasco and Le Galès 2000). Importantly, these analyses show that state spaces no longer define the scope and limits of interest formation. Rather, we need to consider how old places are transformed and new places are created (Jessop 2000) and how places are socially, politically and economically constructed (Paasi 2001). The regional mediation of politics has given rise to a variety of political and economic forms, such as regional movements and regional economic ‘motors’ within and across states. Territorial boundaries have become open-ended and indeterminate. This is especially evident in Europe, where ‘the roles of regions and their boundaries are increasingly fuzzy since the open international markets put regions… increasingly into competition’ (Paasi 2001: 15).

In a world where state sovereignty has been penetrated from above and below, new regional geography scholars have been pursuing a more flexible understanding of current spatialities. Importantly, they have questioned the ‘fixed’ political boundaries between states and the ‘boundedness’ of regions (Agnew 1998; Paasi 1986). Agnew (1987) argues that places constitute the aggregation of social processes, which cross boundaries in a variety of ways. In order to understand the social construction of territories we must consider how territory mediates different social processes occurring at different scales. This requires an examination of the functions of social structures and historical patterns of organisation, and their interaction over a period of time. Functional spaces do not necessarily have to correspond with territorial political spaces, which challenges the notion of places as closed, bounded units. Instead, we can talk of spaces as open and constantly re-constituted, whilst boundaries are socially, politically and economically reconstituted in the process of institutionalising territories (Paasi 1986).

Importantly, the construction and re-constitution of territory has opened up new political spaces and systems of action that provide scope for different forms of territorial political strategy. In particular, regions are becoming functional, economic, social and cultural spaces that challenge state monopoly over territorial power. Regions are significant for political mobilisation, cultural identity and provide rationale for economic growth, themes that are central to the discourse of territorial political movements. These movements are able to mobilise regional-specific economic and cultural resources, often in the defence of unique territorial identities (Williams 1997), in order
to take advantage of rapidly changing spaces for political action and authority at different spatial levels. The uncertainty of political, economic and cultural boundaries and spaces, resulting from changing European and state structures, has created new opportunities for political strategy and has altered the nature of autonomy. Territorial actors are now searching for new forms of autonomy in open, contested political spaces that are less clear-cut than independent statehood.

### 2.6 Towards a New Approach to Territorial Mobilisation

Studies of nationalism, regionalism, political geography and party studies have highlighted the importance of territory as a factor mediating political interests. In this discussion we reviewed how national mobilisation is shaped by a combination of cultural, economic and political factors in order to secure the autonomy and recognition of nations. Nationalist elites have sought to sustain the nation as a key unit of shared identity and have constructed or re-appropriated cultural meanings of the nation in line with their political, socioeconomic and constitutional goals for the territory. Students of regionalism have examined how regions have become actors in state and European political and economic structures. Through the decentralisation and Europeanisation of regional policies, regions have developed distinct territorial interests based on socioeconomic programmes that mobilise cultural resources in order to obtain a competitive advantage in European markets. Political geographers have broadened our understanding of the social construction of territory and its effects on political and economic organisation in open, permeable spaces. Party scholars have begun to explore how parties function at the substate level, demonstrating that substate nationalist parties face competition from territorial branches of statewide parties in defining the territorial project. And some scholars have sought to transcend these disciplines, such as Keating (1998), Hooghe (1995) and Jeffery (1997), to examine how substate actors operate within a post-sovereign, multi-level order in which authority is dispersed. All of these disciplines highlight the importance of territory as a factor mediating political interests. Yet it appears that the attention given to spatial issues by social scientists has not led to a convergence of concepts or theories on the role of territory in shaping party competition, identity-formation and economic transformation.

This means that there are limitations to what these disciplines, taken separately, can tell us about territorial mobilisation in Europe. Attempts to explain nationalism as a political strategy focussing on statehood and secession cannot account for new forms of autonomy that parties are pursuing; analyses of regionalism lack the examination of the historic and cultural specificity of different types of territorial movements; whilst political geographers cannot tell us about which methods and strategies territorial movements have employed to search for these new political and functional spaces in Europe. As Harvie (1994: x) suggests, debates on regionalism and nationalism can be likened to a ‘badly organized dinner party’ where guests don’t speak to each other, but sit
alongside each other. The lack of cross-disciplinary collaboration on issues of territory means that some cases cannot be looked at together, such as comparing the ‘region’ of Bavaria and the ‘nation’ of Scotland. Clearly, we need some sort of convergence between theories of territory to understand how political parties are seeking autonomy and capacity within state and European structures.

This research builds on theories of the dispersal of authority and substate mobilisation to create an analytical framework that allows us to examine the extent to which European integration has influenced territorial party politics, and in particular, the territorial strategies of substate parties. As will be explored in the next chapter, these territorial strategies include demands for more constitutional autonomy, as well as increased policy capacity to control resources. My motive is to move away from the anachronistic assumption that all politicised territories seek their own states (or autonomy within an existing one), and can be explained by universal conditions. Instead, I propose a context-specific approach to understanding group territorial mobilisation. It will be demonstrated that more nuanced patterns of territorial politics are developing, in which parties are seeking the accommodation of their autonomy and identity within the shifting state and transnational order. European integration has influenced the constitutional and policy goals of parties, and has been used in support of territorial political projects.

The main research question that has arisen from this overview of spatial approaches, and which will provide the framework for this thesis, is the following. To what extent has the process of European integration influenced the territorial strategies of political parties in Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia during the period of deepening integration? This question may be unpacked to include a number of dimensions. The first of these is to gauge the level of substate party adaptation to European integration. This involves an examination of their levels of identification with the EU; how the European dimension has played a role in their programmes, discourse and strategies; and how they have utilise Europe-wide networks to strengthen their interests. After an overview of party responses to European integration leading up to this period, the ratification of the Single European Act (SEA) in 1987 will provide the starting point for a deep analysis of the evolution of territorial politics in Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia. This period represents a ‘deepening’ of European integration (Stirk and Weigall 1999; Turner 2000). Attention is given to party responses to the Maastricht Treaty, Committee of the Regions, the structural funds, European Monetary Union, the creation of interregional initiatives and ‘Europarties’ and the draft European Constitution. This research therefore examines responses to key events in European integration as well as party involvement in European institutions and networks.

Secondly, I wish to explore the nature of territorial strategies pursued by the parties under question, and the extent to which they have been influenced by challenges and opportunities presented by European integration for substate mobilisation. Sharpe (1993: 6) states that ‘the
majority of regional nationalist movements do not seek separation but, rather, some institutional and symbolic recognition of their sense of difference from the core culture’. I would go beyond this in saying that territorial interests comprise a variety of political, economic and cultural dimensions. As will be explored in the next chapter, territorial strategies may be conceptualised on two main dimensions: autonomy, which implies some form of constitutional recognition, and expanding the capacity of the region, which implies obtaining policy benefits for the territory. As we shall see, many parties are forced to make a trade-off between autonomy and capacity, through pursuing increased access to the centre. They also have the option of seeking to increase regional power and influence in state ‘centres’, or to focus on the new ‘centre’ in Brussels.

Third, I will examine the extent to which integration has altered the nature of territorial politics and party competition. This necessitates an exploration of how Europeanisation has contributed to a more pronounced emphasis on territorial identities and interests, leading substate parties to compete in their strategies to enhance territorial autonomy and capacity in Europe. The framing of the question ‘to what extent’ the process of European integration has influenced territorial strategies also allows me to examine intervening factors. Territorial strategies may be influenced by local or state-level factors, such as the effects of decentralisation policies, constitutional and policy constraints. These factors will vary across cases and across time. Also, territorial demands may have been influenced by factors at the international level, which is constant over cases, such as the decolonisation movements of the 1960s in spurring an ideological discourse of liberating territories from illegitimate control. The examination of intervening factors influencing substate strategies, in addition to the ‘independent variable’ of European integration, allows for the obtainment of a greater amount of comparative data. Finally, I wish to explore the limitations of Europe for territorial projects. Why have some parties used opportunities to advance their interests in Europe, whilst others have not? A key question here is whether substate actors can bypass the state in the pursuit of their territorial projects in Europe, or if they must continue to rely on state support, representation and resources to meet their needs in an intergovernmental Europe with power lying in the Council of Ministers.

2.7 Analytical Framework and Conceptual Clarification

In accordance with the aims expressed above, this research will examine the impact of European integration on the territorial strategies of substate political parties in a comparative design. The impact and uses of European integration by substate parties will be systematically compared across three case studies – Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia – during the period of ‘deepening’ European integration – from 1979 to the present day. The aim is to explore the uneven effects of European integration in different places, and to gauge how different substate actors have responded to the
challenges and opportunities of European integration. The ‘impacts’ of Europe are indicated through programmatic change, rhetoric, coalitions and involvement in European bodies. Within each case study I examine how European integration has influenced the territorial strategies of substate parties and how it has affected party competition. My focus is on political parties that have advanced territorial strategies in order to secure autonomy and policy benefits for the territory. Rather than focussing primarily on the minority nationalist or regionalist parties, I believe it is necessary to have an awareness of the overall impact of the territorial dimension on party competition in substate political systems, in which parties of every political persuasion have become active in framing the ‘national question’. To this end, I will also examine the territorial strategies of each of the political parties operating in the substate party arena. These can be loosely grouped into five categories: left-wing parties (including Social Democrats, Socialist and Communist parties); right-wing parties (including Conservatives, Christian Democrats and populist parties), liberal (democratic) parties, green parties and minority nationalist/regionalist parties. The decision not to examine single (nationalist) parties within Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia inevitably creates greater complexity in this research and increases the number of factors to be compared. But this choice is a strategic one, as I believe it essential to examine the competitive party political context within my case studies. This requires looking at the relationships between different actors, and the contestation that results from differing viewpoints and demands.

Contestation lies at the heart of territorial politics, as it is indeed a function of politics at any level. Yet, in spite of this, few scholarly attempts have been made to examine the complexity of political motives, actors, bargains and rivalry involved in framing and pursuing the territorial question. Too often, the focus is overwhelmingly placed one political party as the bearer of the project of autonomy. This often neglects the party political context in which there may be a multiplicity of actors who raise the profile of territorial issues and push to find different status for the territory in question. Terms such as nationhood, autonomy and self-determination are used interchangeably by a number of parties for different ends, which could mean greater political authority or more specific demands such as educational rights. We must acknowledge that parties will debate, negotiate, contend and sometime cooperate on different strategies for pursuing autonomy, as well as their representation of territorial interests. Parties themselves are coalitions of interests and subject to internal contestation over demands, sometimes leading to splits, and some parties may take up the autonomist mantle in some time periods, whilst downplaying autonomy in other time periods. Here it is hypothesised that European integration has had an effect on the ways in which parties have pursued their demands of autonomy, and what these demands are.

Therefore, a central part of this research is to examine how political parties operating in substate political systems compete on the territorial dimension. This may be influenced by the
relevance of the territorial issues at hand in the public domain, pressures from strong parties seeking constitutional change (thus increasing the salience of an issue, and forcing other parties to adopt diverging positions to avoid that party’s ‘ownership’ of the issue), and opportunities for expanding a party’s support base. Arguably, party positioning the unitarism-independence continuum is just as important as justifying their positions within a left-right spectrum. Following from Sartori, we may propose that the constitutional preferences of parties have provided crucial ‘pivots’ upon which parties compete and the party system hinges. These may include, at various times, support for unionism, devolution, federalism and separatism. These types of demands are not ‘static’, but rather parties are able to move from goal to another. In some cases parties may articulate more than one preference at the same time in response to changing opportunities. Importantly, parties must integrate these constitutional goals with their ideological positions. As was previously stressed, ‘territory’ is an issue that is not affiliated with a particular ideology, but rather it cuts across the left-right dimension of party competition. This allows parties from the left, right or centre to advance their own interpretation of territorial interests. Yet for some parties, this is easier said than done. In order to put forward a cohesive territorial project, parties must show how their constitutional preferences are aligned with their socioeconomic demands. This may be particularly problematic in the face of European integration, where parties support deepening political integration to the extent that it allows regions a stronger voice and more autonomy in EU decision-making, but may oppose the fact that many regional competences are directly impinged upon by EU directives.

At this point, I wish to elaborate upon what I understand by European integration. This concept involves a large number of complex phenomena and has been subject to a variety of interpretations. These endeavours have entailed the creation of sub-categories such as economic, social, cultural and political integration, which have developed at varying speeds, reflecting the commitment to furthering each process. For instance, economic integration, the removal of barriers to the free movement of labour, goods and services, has received the greatest support from members and thus dominates the language of European community-building (Farrell et al 2002). Social integration aims to create a uniform set of social conditions for all citizens who reside and work in the EU (Threlfall 2002). Cultural integration emphasises common European citizenship and the creation of a European identity (Banús 2002). Political integration has entailed specific treaties and agreements between sovereign states leading to the creation of institutions including the European Parliament, the Commission, the Council and Court of Justice. Broadly speaking, European integration may refer to a process of institution-building, policy-making and agenda formation that allows for the formulation of interests and representation at different territorial levels. However, this research does not attempt to explain all aspects of European integration and their possible future paths. Instead, I wish to narrow this definition to highlight aspects that are most relevant to substate
party strategies, which are predominantly political, economic and discursive aspects of integration. This involves examining whether parties have challenged the monopoly of member-states in EU institutions by demanding greater regional representation therein, seeking more input into EU policy-making – especially on issues that directly affect regional competences, and whether they have ‘Europeised’ their nation-building projects by adopting civic criteria for territorial membership and advocating EU themes such as free trade and diversity.

‘Europeanisation’ has been generally referred to as a process of change affecting political actors and institutional spheres that is linked to European integration. Although there has been a tendency to conceive this as a ‘top-down’ process in which European integration is seen to influence domestic policies, institutions and identities (Cowles, Caporaso & Risse 2001; De Winter and Gomez-Reino 2002), one may also identify ‘bottom-up’ aspects of Europeanisation, whereby state and substate actors seek to shape the direction of European integration as a means of achieving their own aims (Bomberg 2002; Dardanelli 2006). Europeanisation must therefore be understood as a two-way process, though as Olsen (2002: 942) points out, its ‘effects are difficult to identify and disentangle’. This research examines both the impact of European integration on substate parties and party systems, and the way in which substate parties seek to use and influence Europe in the pursuit of their territorial objectives. In particular, it is interested in what kind of ‘Europe’ substate parties wish to see being developed, and how changes in institutional and political structures at the European level have opened up new spaces for territorial actors to operate.

My main hypothesis is that territorial actors have redefined their territorial strategies as a result of opportunities provided by European integration. These ‘opportunities’ include access to European institutions such as the CoR and the European Parliament, involvement in inter-regional bodies, European political parties and lobbying organisations, and special rights and minority protections under European law. Change in strategies is indicated by the way in which political parties advance their goals, adapt different rhetoric for these purposes, and become involved in a range of coalitions. I do not, however, assume that European integration itself determines what these exact responses shall be. Rather, it will influence substate parties in various ways, thereby producing different demands for increased autonomy and capacity. These demands differ across cases, and also within them. To account for this, I hypothesise that in all cases territorial responses are influenced by European integration, but they will diverge depending on local, statewide and external factors. The importance of local and statewide factors in determining responses to Europe will be gauged during the case study research.

The method of controlled comparison, which attempts to achieve the functional equivalent of an experiment, is not possible here. Attempts to determine causal relationships between European integration and demands for autonomy and policy capacity requires holding other
significant variables as constant. However, there are a multiplicity of potential causal variables affecting the goals, rhetoric and demands of parties. I wish to make room for strategic behaviour, the capacity of political actors to make choices in the face of different opportunities and constraints, and the scope for actors to rethink and pursue new types of strategies. For this reason, it is necessary to engage in within-case analysis that makes use of ‘process-tracing’, otherwise known as historical analysis. This method will strengthen the comparison by helping to assess whether differences independent of European integration might account for the differences in outcomes. I will therefore conduct an inductive analysis of the impact of European integration on the territorial strategies of political parties. At the end of this analysis I will identify factors that have affected the outcomes of regional responses to Europe in the cases, that is, the sources of variation.

The period under analysis has been characterised as the deepening of European integration, from the Single European Act to the signing of the draft European Constitution, from 1987 to 2005. At the same time, because I am interested in changing responses and differing outcomes of the impact of European integration on territorial strategies, I will consider how the parties developed their territorial strategies prior to the period under scrutiny. A less in-depth examination of party strategies will be conducted for the immediate period leading up to the late 1980s (from the first elections to the European Parliament in 1979). It should be emphasised here that I am not testing a theory of territorial mobilisation to guide my analysis, but rather posing general questions to be asked in each case, and generating a set of variables that can be compared across cases. This comparative case study method is structured, because the same general question is asked of each case. This makes the systematic comparison and accumulation of comparable data from the findings of several cases possible. Furthermore, this method is focused because it concentrates on certain aspects of the cases. In other words, a selective theoretical focus guides the analysis of the cases.

Given the considerable scope of this research – examining change in the strategies of between six and twelve political parties in three case studies over a 26-year period – it is necessary to develop a rigorous analytical framework that allows me to identify a common problematic, to examine variation amongst cases, and to analyse complementary factors that influence territorial strategies. The main types of territorial strategies that are employed by parties to advance their territorial projects in Europe are discussed in depth in the next chapter. For the time being, it is necessary to identify what ‘indicators’ will be used for detecting change in party strategies. These are: (1) changes in constitutional and policy goals; (2) coalitions and party relations (with state parties or party family ‘siblings’); and (3) rhetorical devices. These dimensions were chosen as they give us the best indication of continuity and change in territorial strategies.

The first, general, hypothesis regarding changes in constitutional and policy goals is that political parties have redefined their goals of autonomy, and altered their strategies for obtaining
these, as a result of the opportunities presented by European integration. This involves a two-way process of Europeanisation, whereby political parties have used European integration in order to advance their territorial projects at the European level whilst, correspondingly, changes and developments in Europe, such as the regionalisation debates and creation of regional institutions, have had an impact on the territorial strategies of substate parties. More specifically, the process of European integration has caused traditionally centralist and pro-federalist branches of statewide parties to become involved in debates on the future of their substate/regional territory in Europe, and to develop (stronger) demands for autonomy, which are framed within the context of a ‘Europe of the Regions’. Contrarily, instead of lessening the risks of independence for nationalist parties as some scholars argue, I hypothesise that European integration has lessened the need for independence, so that regionalist and nationalist parties have moderated their demands, and have instead participated in the debates on the regionalisation of Europe as a gradualist/progressive territorial strategy. At the same time, in the pursuit of substantive policy goals, such as increasing the economic capacity of the territory through obtaining state and European funding and resources, it is hypothesised that parties may be forced to trade-off autonomy for access to the centre.

Regarding the second analytical dimension, of coalitions and party relations, it is hypothesised that as parties develop stronger territorial claims, they will seek greater autonomy, policy divergence and an independent voice in pursuing their territorial strategies if they are branches of statewide or federal parties. This will allow them to pursue more vigorous territorial strategies in the substate party system and to engage more fully in party competition on the territorial axis. Furthermore, non-nationalist parties will seek to influence other members of their party family to adopt more regional-friendly policies at the European level. On the other hand, regionalist and nationalist parties, whose autonomy claims are influenced by the regionalisation debates in Europe, will be more comfortable in making alliances with less ‘extreme’ parties both within the local party system and at the European level, and will entertain a wider range of autonomy demands for short-term coalition purposes.

Finally, I hypothesise that in response to the ideological dimension of European integration, substate parties have Europeanised their rhetoric and have adopted civic and inclusive criteria for territorial membership. In emphasising their pro-European credentials, and in order to be perceived as credible, parties will therefore abandon tendencies towards ethnic exclusiveness or racism. Moreover, concepts and issues at the European level will be used and interpreted by parties according to their goals of autonomy. As such, parties will adapt their rhetorical devices to become more Euro-friendly if the opportunities for pursuing their territorial projects in Europe are seen to be ‘open’. For example, core concepts such as a ‘Europe of the Regions’ and subsidiarity will be used in party rhetoric if they can be interpreted/shaped to suit the autonomy claims of parties.
However, parties may also use these terms to obscure complex problems. Demands for subsidiarity, federalism and a Europe of the Regions are useful to parties if they are vague and open to interpretation, and can be used as a substitute for substantial policy programmes and ideas when parties are forced to deal with real issues.

In examining the impact of European integration on substate territorial strategies, this approach challenges three assumptions in the literature. First, it counters the tendency to assume that nations and regions are homogenous territorial blocs with a single set of territorial interests, or that the only actor representing the nation is the nationalist party. Second, it confronts the idea that nationalist movements always seek independence. Rather, it appears that territorial actors are seeking new forms of autonomy, not only in a state setting, but within a supranational framework. And third, instead of assuming that European integration has a blanket effect on territorial politics, I aim to emphasise how territorial mobilisation is extremely differential. This research fills a gap in the literature reviewed in the first part of this chapter, by exploring how territory has become a key axis on which parties compete, the dynamics of substate party systems, the types of territorial strategies employed by substate actors, and how parties understand and adapt to European integration at the substate level. The aim is to account for the diversity of territorial responses to Europe across three cases, and explain why some actors have been more able (or more willing) to use Europe for their political projects than others.

2.8 Case Selection
Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia are not commonly referred to in a comparative setting. The first is considered a ‘nation’ in a devolved political system, the second a ‘free state’ in a federalised system, and the third a ‘special region’ in a decentralising system. However, the choice of examining the impact of European integration on territorial politics in Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia was a deliberate one. The main factor guiding this case selection is the emergence of political parties in Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia that place the interests and identity of the territory at the heart of their political discourse. Second, there is more than one political party vying for the representation of territorial interests, leading to contestation. Third, in each case the constitutional issue is open, and is a source of party competition. Fourth, the constitutional issue has been correlated to European integration, which in Scotland was linked to devolution, in Bavaria the defence of the German Länder and reform of federalism, and in Sardinia it was linked to Italian decentralisation and the re-writing of Sardinia’s regional constitution. Fifth, territorial parties have not only responded to European integration, but have developed visions of a future European polity, and what form autonomy may take within this setting.
The point of this case selection, however, is not only to identify similarities between the case studies. Indeed, the differences between the conduct of territorial politics in Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia arguably outweighs the similarities. For instance, Sardinia is an underdeveloped island in the Mediterranean and a ‘special region’ in Italy, where demands for autonomy are linked to demands for modernisation. Bavaria is a wealthy region in the centre of Europe, and the protection of its economic and political might from external threats is one of the central goals of the autonomist Christian Social Union. Scotland also lies on the periphery of Europe, and the protection of its traditional industries are central to the demands of substate parties. European integration has affected these cases in different ways, eliciting different responses and demands from political parties. Each region operates within different state structures, of a devolved state, a federal state and a decentralising state, and political parties have to respond to the constraints and opportunities this presents. Within each case, substate parties draw on different economic, political and cultural resources and accord these mobilising tool varying levels of importance in their ideology and strategies. Furthermore, the regions have different capacities to legislate, to access European institutions and to influence the state, which shapes different party responses to European integration. Due to all of these factors and more, political parties in all three cases have interpreted, used and responded to European integration processes differently.

To select cases for comparative examination does not, however, solely involve the substantiation of why certain cases have been included, but equally important, to justify why other cases have been excluded. Since the 1960s (and in some cases prior to this) a plethora of territorial political movements have arisen in various parts of Western Europe. Why look at Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia and not, say, the Catalonia, Flanders or South Tyrol? The comparative case study methodology was chosen because I wish to undertake a ‘thick’ description of the impact of European integration on territorial politics and to assess detailed variation across a small number of cases. The provision of a thick description of territorial politics in Bavaria and Sardinia is particularly valuable, as these cases are under-researched. Certainly, the activities of the ruling Bavarian Christian Social Union (CSU) have been well documented in literature on European regionalism. Yet this literature makes no effort to examine the autonomy goals of the CSU and other substate political parties, and scholars of nationalism have neglected Bavaria as it has not made a claim to nationhood. Although Bavarian parties have been central to demands for a Europe of the Regions, the CSU has only been once examined as a nationalist party (Sutherland 2001), and little has been written about the territorial strategies of other parties in Bavaria.

With regards to Sardinia, I wish to tackle the complexities of regionalist politics in Italy, but without choosing the obvious and well-documented case of the northern Leagues. The Sardinian Action Party (Psd’Az) is the oldest existing autonomist party in Italy, but there has been very little
literature produced tracing the development of the party since the 1950s, when its electoral success waned. This is my opinion is an oversight because after the identity politics ‘boom’ of the 1970s and 1980s, the party obtained roughly 15% of the vote in regional elections – not an insignificant result by any standards – and currently, the percentage of the vote for nationalist parties in Sardinia taken together is 10-20% (in the 2005 provincial elections). In addition to the nationalist parties, a coalition called ‘the Sardinian Project’, has been in government since 2004, which seeks to increase the autonomy of the island whilst modernising the economy and rehabilitating the culture and language of Sardinians. However, the issue of European integration has neem noticeably absent from Sardinian party politics, which leads us to question why Sardinian parties have not been more central to European regionalism debates. Political parties in Sardinia are instead more enthused about exercising autonomy within a Mediterranean context, which in itself is a novel response to European integration, and territorial demands are to push the outer limits of Europe (towards Africa) in order to take advantage of opportunities closer to home.

Whilst the cases of Bavaria and Sardinia were chosen for their originality and a desire to contribute new research to the rich body of literature tracing the development of territorial parties elsewhere in Europe, my reasons for examining my third case are rather different. The Scottish National Party is often said to be one of the most advanced minority nationalist parties in Europe. An examination of the SNP with other lesser-known cases will therefore throw up possible conditions of the success of the party. But this is not the only reason why Scotland was chosen over other cases. I wish to examine the impact of European integration on territorial strategies of political parties, and whilst the SNP has perhaps the most pro-European rhetoric out of the parties examined here, its constitutional demands are in fact rather vague. I wish to explore what ‘independence in Europe’ means, and how other parties in Scotland have responded to this by putting forth alternative constitutional options. There is little research on how other parties in Scotland have made claims to autonomy and have re-positioned themselves on the European and territorial dimensions. This is an oversight, as often it is not the self-proclaimed autonomist party that is pushing the territorial agenda, but rather regional branches of statewide parties. In spite of (because of) the inevitable differences between substate parties and their regional environments, the factor linking them – their claim to represent territories enjoying and seeking to further their autonomy within state and EU structures – accords with the theoretical framework I seek to develop here.

2.9 Research Methods and Data Collection

The research methods used to collect the empirical data for this project were a qualitative analysis of primary party literature, government and EU documents and local and regional newspapers. This was supplemented by a set of interviews with prominent spokespeople of substate political parties
and government and European officials. Together these methods have provided a rounded view of how substate parties have responded to European integration. In order to collect this data, I undertook field research in Edinburgh, Scotland (January-February 2004 and February 2005), Munich, Bavaria (January-February 2005) and Cagliari, Sardinia (May-June 2005). Each research mission lasted 5-7 weeks. Although a longer period of fieldwork may have produced better contacts with each of the parties and increased their familiarity with my research, interviews were carried out with all those identified as relevant subjects and I was able to obtain the primary documentation identified at the beginning of the project (with the exception of Sardinian parties – see below).

The focus on changes in the constitutional and policy goals, rhetoric and activities of substate parties over a period of twenty-six years necessitated close scrutiny of individual parties’ campaign literature (including programmes, manifestos, leaflets, speeches and press releases) and conference documents, including speeches, minutes and discussion papers. The material selected for content analysis was obtained from party archives and web pages, national libraries and research institutes, newspapers and journals, in addition to the information obtained from interviews with key members of each party. As well as making direct contact with the parties, I explored other sources of documentation on the parties, including research institutes and regional and university libraries. These included the National Library of Scotland and the Central Library in Edinburgh, the Hanns-Seidel Foundation and Bavarian State Library in Munich, and the Sardinian Biblioteca Regionale and the University of Cagliari library. I also consulted back catalogues of local newspapers for information on the party’s programmes, positions and responses to European developments. The main newspapers consulted were: the Scotsman and the Herald for Scotland, the Süddeutsche Zeitung and Bayernkurier for Bavaria, and L’Unione Sarda and Il Giornale di Sardegna for the Sardinian case. To examine the ways in which parties performed in substate and European institutions, I obtained the minutes of parliamentary discussions and collected documents from the Committee of the Regions, European Parliament, the Convention on the Future of Europe, and Europarties. The objective was to find out which policies are supported by parties, which coalitions have been made, and how elected party members represent the interests of the territory. In order to preserve the linguistic subtleties of this wide-ranging survey of texts, an English translation has accompanied the original versions written in German, Italian and Sard.

These methods of data collection were supplemented by the control function of interviews – a research method that is valuable for producing new insights in its own right. A total of 41 interviews were carried out with party members and government representatives, each lasting between 30 and 60 minutes. (These are listed in Appendix 1.) The interviews were semi-structured and based on a set of pre-prepared questions relating to European integration, party policy, and aims.
of coalitions. The aim of the interviews was to control for correct interpretations of party literature and often provided further insight into party policy.

Access to party literature and individuals varied from case to case and party to party. This presented a number of unforeseen challenges in collecting data. Documentation was easiest to obtain in Scotland, where parties supplied me directly with many of the required materials, the National Library had extensive archives of party programmes, campaign literature and briefing papers, and party and government webpages contained voluminous data covering the last 5-10 years. In addition, Professor David McCrone at the Institute of Governance helpfully gave me access to institute archives, and his own collection of newspaper articles dating from 1990 to 2004.

In Bavaria, data collection was mixed. On one hand, the extensive archive at the Hanns-Seidel Stiftung, which is affiliated with the CSU, contained complete sets of CSU election campaign manifestos, literature, speeches and a full back-catalogue of the Bayern Kurier. This was not the case for regional branches of statewide parties – the SPD, FDP and Greens – where there was no systematic logging of party literature. This challenge was partially overcome through small kindnesses by individual members; for instance, Bayern SPD press officer Harald Schneider kindly gave me access to his internal policy papers, memos and other literature relating to European developments, whilst FDP Bayern spokesman Lars Pappert gave me his own copies of election manifestos from 1992 to 2005. Bavarian party websites also contained numerous briefing papers, online discussions, election programmes and press releases, whilst the Bavarian state library contained some copies of older party programmes.

In contrast, data gathering in Sardinia presented manifest problems, not least because following crisis of the Italian political system, in which the main parties were dissolved, party archives did not exist prior to 1991. Furthermore, Sardinian parties simply did not produce the same levels of documentation on European issues as Scottish and Bavarian parties. This was partly remedied by questioning interviewees on the development of relevant policies, and crosschecking this with newspaper articles and secondary documentation. But the lack of archive material meant that the Sardinian case relies on a narrower range of sources.

There were other challenges in collecting data in Sardinia. Whilst contacting party and government spokespeople to arrange interviews was unproblematic in the cases of Bavaria and Scotland, it was another story altogether in Sardinia. Interviews were extremely difficult to organise due to the closedness and unresponsiveness of parties. After weeks of phone calls and emails, I was eventually forced to take to the streets and knock on party headquarters doors (many of which had moved without forwarding addresses, or were unstaffed). Whilst nationalist parties, when eventually found, were enthusiastic to talk to me, regional branches of statewide parties were more sceptical of my project and less obliging in their time. In order to speak to the latter (and convince
them of the merits of the research), I was required to develop the right ‘contacts’ in the Consiglio Regionale through friends of friends. The island’s problems with clientelism and the lack of transparency and openness of parties was experienced first hand during this research, as it is reflected in the study of Sardinian territorial politics – it’s who you know that opens the right doors.

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter has posed my main research objective – which is to examine the extent to which European integration has influenced the territorial demands of substate political parties – and has described how I intend to go about answering this question. This research builds upon several approaches to territorial politics, including studies of regionalism, nationalism, political geography and party competition, in creating an analytical framework that allows us to examine change in substate party responses to European integration. The study employs a comparative methodology that examines the impact of Europe on territorial strategies across three cases – Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia – since 1979. I have explained how I intend to identify change in party strategies, and have given an overview of the research methods used. In the next chapter, we shall consider what types of territorial strategies are available to substate parties.
3. Territorial Strategies in Europe

3.1. Introduction
In the analytical framework laid out in the previous chapter, I stated my intention of examining how parties in substate territories have adopted a range of territorial strategies to advance their political projects in response to European and state structural change. The aim of this chapter is to lay the groundwork for the case analysis by exploring different types of strategy and identifying their main analytical dimensions. The first part draws on the work of Rokkan and Urwin (1983) and other scholars to advance our knowledge of some of the strategies that may be employed by territorial movements. The discussion then takes a more theoretical turn. Following Isaiah’s Berlin’s thesis on positive and negative liberty, I distinguish between two types of strategy: the pursuit of (constitutional) autonomy from the state, and the quest to increase capacity to act. These types are then defined and unpackaged. It is argued that whilst both strategies may be pursued simultaneously, parties may trade off autonomy for policy benefits and access to the centre. The nature of the relationship between autonomy and the capacity, and how this has been altered by European integration, is considered in the final section.

3.2 Understanding Territorial Strategies
It is generally understood that any kind of strategy is ultimately determined by its end goal. For example, people commonly speak of strategies of survival, sporting strategies (to win the event), and in the academic world Mitchell (1990) gives us an analysis of the strategies of self-government. Territorial strategies are obviously related to goals for the territory in question, which in this analysis are attributed to substate political parties (rather than, say, the state). Yet how does one define the parameters of a ‘territorial strategy’ when it may range from tailoring state policies to the territory, protecting local cultures and languages, increasing legislative and functional capacity, or seeking confrontation with the centre? The aim of this discussion is to explore what kind of strategies are being pursued by territorial actors, and to consider how they might be classified.

Let us begin by examining Rokkan and Urwin’s (1983) classic account of what they call ‘peripheral’ demands in West European states. They construct a typology of peripheral aims, which includes territorial strategies as a subclass of these. Aims of territorial mobilisation are broadly defined as the desire ‘to live in one’s country, to speak one’s own language (‘le droit à la parole’), and to be autonomous’ (Rokkan and Urwin 1983: 140). The authors distinguish between two important aspects of aims: (1) aims as the final outcome of processes of peripheral identity-building, and (2) strategic aims. Regarding the first aspect, Rokkan and Urwin supply the reader with a
typology of ‘final aims’ of peripheral (nationalist) parties, which they arrange on a continuum extending downwards from full independence, confederalism, federalism, regional autonomy, peripheral protest to a concern for peripheral identity-building. The types of strategies that peripheral actors may employ to achieve their final aims are listed in order of descending magnitude: violence and terror (shading into civil disobedience), electoral competition, the formation of a political party to advance territorial interests, the penetration of statewide parties, establishing umbrella organisations for a non-partisan approach, and propaganda aimed at the centre and peripheral group. These strategies may be deployed separately or simultaneously. Although this is a useful classification for examining how ‘mobilized groups and aspiring peripheral leaders…attack the centre and achieve a united and distinctive organization’ (ibid: 146), in this research we are dealing with a particular set of actors – substate parties – whose aims are not necessarily to attack the centre but who seek to advance territorial interests. To that end, the range of strategies available to them will be invariably different.

Rokkan and Urwin (1983: 154) address another issue central to this research, that is: what happens when ‘political mobilization itself can be dissipated among several movements espousing all the various options’. Whilst the authors only focus on the dispersal of demands amongst minority nationalist parties, the analytical framework used here is rather different. The involvement of non-nationalist parties in the pursuit of territorial demands has led to competing projects for self-determination. Often, cross-party collaboration between parties in pushing for certain constitutional rights can create a territorial bloc against the state and increase their ability to achieve final aims. But in other cases, the proliferation of competing views on nation-building or territorial interests may crowd out or the demands of the main nationalist party and lead to fragmentation of the territorial vote. Rokkan and Urwin (1983: 144) define a successful territorial strategy ‘as one in which choices are made that maximise the realization of the desired outcome, if possible with minimum costs’. But how do we measure such success in strategies, and how can we account for failure? Before we attempt to answer these questions, it is helpful to examine how other scholars have theorised territorial strategies, and how they may be examined in an empirical setting.

McEwen (2004b) has developed a detailed account of how the territorial strategies of the Labour party in Scotland and Wales diverge. In Scotland, the party’s territorial strategy has three main elements: defending the new constitutional status quo, ‘depoliticising’ territorial identity, and emphasising partnership with the UK government. In Wales, a rather different set of strategies are deployed, as Welsh Labour advances a more confrontational approach with the UK: seeking to push the boundaries of devolution, assert national distinctiveness and challenge the UK government in intergovernmental relations (McEwen 2004b: 7-10). Here, McEwen implies that Labour party strategies in Scotland and Wales have changed since the 1980s, however, she lacks a systematic
method for analysing such change and specifying the factors leading to variation. Having said that, McEwen’s framework advances our knowledge of the main dimensions of territorial strategies which, if we extrapolate from her analysis, consist of (1) constitutional / institutional goals, (2) symbolic or identity-related goals, and (3) strategies adopted in relations with the state. The latter is particularly important, as it underlines the negotiation of power relations within states.

Turning to another body of work, Gibson (2004) undertakes an analysis of territorial strategies of political control leading to subnational authoritarianism in democratic states. He defines territorial strategies by their intensions (not a strictly proper way of constructing concepts; see Sartori 1976), as ‘strategies that maximise the following values: control, autonomy, and leverage—that is, control over provincial political actors, autonomy from national influences, and leverage over national political leaders’ (Gibson 2004: 13). Gibson focuses on three strategies: the parochialization of power, the nationalization of influence, and the monopolization of national-subnational linkages. He draws on the work of the political geographer Robert Sack (1986: 1), who defines territorality as ‘a spatial strategy to affect, influence or control resources and people, by controlling area’. Controlling area, however, may not only imply monopolising power in the local political arena as Sack understands it, but should be extended to account for influence or control of resources at different territorial levels. This is shaped by the institutional configuration of the political system, which to a large extent determines where subnational elites can erect boundaries that ‘minimize outside involvement in provincial politics’ (ibid: 59).

The issue of boundaries is a crucial one, and a great deal of work has been done by political geographers in showing how ‘boundaries’ are in permeable and socially constructed (Agnew 1987). At first sight, this seems to undermine the notion that boundary control is a fundamental objective of any territorial movement, be it the strengthening of cultural boundaries – where substate elites seek to protect a local culture from outside influences – or defending the territory from political and economic pressures from the centre (Rokkan 1980). But this can be looked at another way. It may be argued that substate territories themselves are continuously being reconstituted, where their cultural, political and economic ‘boundaries’ are being pushed. The aim of a territorial movement is often to expand their functional capacity across boundaries, if they feel themselves to be in a position of control; or drawn in to protect, say, minority languages or a cultural programme if they feel threatened. Substate actors pursue political projects across regional or state ‘boundaries’ – a dimension not considered by Gibson. And gaining the capacity to operate in different spheres may be considered more fruitful than obtaining constitutional recognition. In order to understand this better, we must consider substate–state relations, and how states respond to territorial demands.

Rokkan and Urwin (1983: 166) argue that the ‘centre’ has two territorial objectives: ‘to preserve the integrity of the territory, and to ensure legitimacy within these boundaries through
popular support for and acquiescence to its political authority’. The state does not willingly give concessions to territorial demands, particularly if they involve radical constitutional reform. This may be seen as ‘the thin end of a wedge that might ultimately threaten these regime imperatives, for at the furthest edge peripheral demands challenge the unity of the state’ (ibid: 166). Moreover, Rokkan and Urwin argue that the centre ‘needs’ the periphery for a number of vital tasks, including the maintenance of political order throughout the state territory, the delivery of votes, and the provision of services. For this reason, the state must find a way to accommodate peripheral demands. It has a variety of options for achieving this, which include group or territorial accommodation, ranging from centralising strategies to ‘strategies of federalizing accommodation’ to guarantee the protection of peripheral identities. As Rokkan and Urwin admit, ‘between these two poles there is a large grey area of mixed strategies’ (ibid: 181). This is the area of most interest to this research. But although the authors hint at what these may be – such as regional economic policies – they are not elaborated upon.

Keating helps us fill in this grey area, by examining how states ‘territorially manage’ minority nations and regions. Territorial management is defined as ‘the efforts of central elites to cope with the territorial dimension of policy problems and to contain territorially based challenges to the central power structure’ (Keating 1988: 18). States may pursue regionalism as an instrument of ‘economic intervention, to improve administrative efficiency and reduce overload at the centre, to coordinate their own activities and those of other agencies as well as to satisfy autonomist demands from the periphery’ (ibid: 22). The type of management strategy adopted by central elites is determined by the type and strength of peripheral demands. So, in the case of violent separatist movements, the state might attempt to make deals with constitutional nationalist parties to undercut violent action. In the case of democratic separatist movements, states may offer concessions of autonomy to the territory to isolate separatists, whilst nationalist parties may be able to ‘negotiate for autonomy with the centre rather than having it presented to them by sovereign power’ (ibid: 237). Autonomy arrangements range from administrative devolution to federalism.

However, there is another strategy that the state may consider to appease territorial movements, which does not involve formal autonomy arrangements, and may appear be more attractive to substate elites. This is giving the periphery increased access to the centre and more control over regional-state linkages which, particularly in periods of economic decline, may seem as more important to substate territorial elites than semi-independence (Keating 1988: 129). Substate actors may be keen to increase capacity and obtain ‘real’ control over policy areas such as the economy, planning, and social policy, in exchange for constitutional recognition. This type of brokerage politics is also preferable for states, as offering specific policy benefits is less of a threat to territorial integrity and legitimacy than constitutional rights. In delegating powers to the
periphery, and extending its sphere of influence, the state still has the last word in deciding how far the territory may act independently or diverge in policy, whereas formal autonomous arrangements may fully remove the state’s control in a number of legislative areas.

As this discussion has demonstrated, the aims of territorial mobilisation, as stipulated by Rokkan and Urwin, are not always or only to ‘live in one’s country, speak one’s language and to be autonomous’. Certainly, language is central to the demands of some territorial movements, and the aims of being reunited with a ‘homeland’ is the desire of many irredentist movements, but there is a great deal more to territorial aims and strategies that those identified by Rokkan and Urwin. In this discussion we saw how territorial actors often use brokerage tactics, by negotiating their ability to control resources and influence state decision-making, which is often pursued simultaneously as autonomy strategies, and sometimes instead of them. Territorial mobilisation is not only about seeking autonomy from the state, but also the capacity to act, which may mean working through the state in order to obtain more policy benefits. The relationship, and trade-off, between autonomy and capacity is the subject of our next discussion.

3.3 Autonomy versus Capacity

A number of scholars have emphasised the dual nature of (autonomous) power relations, which was most notably captured by Isaiah Berlin’s (1969) conception of positive and negative liberty. Negative liberty refers to the non-interference by others on the life of the individual or community, whereas positive liberty refers to the ability to fulfill one’s own potential. Thus, negative liberty is the absence of external constraints, whilst positive liberty is the presence of internal control. For Berlin, we may use the negative concept of liberty to answer the question: ‘What is the area within which the subject – a person or group of persons – is or should be left to do or be what he is able to do or be, without interference by other persons?’ whilst we use the positive concept to answer: ‘What, or who, is the source of control or interference that can determine someone to do, or be, this rather than that?’ (Berlin 1969: 121-2). Berlin argues that negative and positive liberty are not only two distinct kinds of liberty, but even rival or incompatible interpretations of a political ideal.

Political scientists have also addressed the notion of autonomy from and autonomy to. Most famously, Robert Dahl (1956) distinguishes between power over and power to. For Dahl, an entity is relatively autonomous if it undertakes actions that no other entity can prevent. In other words, it is the agent’s power to conduct its own affairs, against the wishes of others. Politics is thus based on conflict and the reconciliation of competing interests in order to pursue certain preferences. This fits with Berlin’s notion of negative liberty. Yet others, such as Kjellberg (1995: 43) argue that autonomy, ‘from originally being negatively defined... [has] become an instrument for the realization of communal interests, as well as a means to implement other values’, thus endorsing a
positive notion of autonomy. Not all theorists have endorsed this dichotomy. Some have argued that there is only one basic concept of freedom, on which both sides of the debate converge. Freedom can be understood as a triadic relationship involving an agent, certain preventing conditions and certain doings or purposes of the agent (MacCallum 1967). Freedom exists when a subject is free from certain constraints to do or become certain things. Sharpe (1987) argues, for instance, that subnational units are autonomous when they have the freedom from interference by central officials, as well as the freedom to act to solve the problems of the regional community.

Sharpe’s work indicates that autonomy from and autonomy to are both two sides of the same coin. However, it is essential to analytically distinguish between these two aspects in this research, in order to capture not only the institutional fact but also the exercise of autonomy. So as well as identifying that a certain territory is in possession of devolved legislative powers, there is also a need to understand how that territory uses these powers, or other channels at its disposal, to shape and control policy and to achieve certain ends. In the footsteps of Berlin, I distinguish between the ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ aspects of being self-determining. ‘Autonomy’ is considered to involve constitutional recognition in line with Berlin’s notion of negative liberty, whilst positive liberty – that is, the freedom to fulfill one’s potential – is equated with the ‘capacity’ to act and to order one’s behaviour. The next section explores how scholars have approached the concept of autonomy, which is often characterised by a focus on the state as the holder and giver of autonomy. Consideration is then given to how one might fruitfully conceptualise ‘capacity’ – a term less analysed, but by no means less complex, than autonomy. This analysis will be used to develop some preliminary definitions of the two concepts, and to consider how strategies of autonomy and capacity have changed in the context of Europe.

3.4 Conceptualising Autonomy

For a term that is so ubiquitous in the contexts of international law, political science, philosophy, constitutional law and sociology, it may seem surprising that no attempt has been made to construct a general theory of autonomy. But the explanation for this is quite simple: autonomy is a relative term that can only be understood within a larger context of complex authority relations. Autonomy does not signify the minimum level of independence of a particular entity that can be accorded the status of autonomy, but rather the extent of dependence or independence of a political, cultural or economic entity vis-à-vis the state, market or civil society, thereby rendering any universal theorising impossible. Some authors have argued that the concept is so ambiguous as to confound any explanatory value, but this is in fact the major strength of the term: it may be invoked on an ad hoc basis in any situation that requires it (Wiberg 1998; Suksi 1998). This is not to say that there have been no efforts to develop criteria or conditions for the establishment of autonomy regimes, as
the work of scholars such as Lapidoth (1996) and Hannum (1990) testify. Valiant attempts have been made to establish a principle of, or more ambitiously, a right to autonomy (Hannum 1998; Brunner and Küpper 2002). However, what is lacking from these approaches is an examination of how autonomy can understood in a theoretical framework, and not just as an institutional fact.

At first glance one may attribute this self-restraint on the part of scholars to the difficulties in distilling the core traits of autonomy when it has been employed in such a bewildering amount of contexts. However, it appears that there may be a more obvious explanation for theoretical reticence – the propensity of legal and social science scholars towards terminological confusion. Autonomy is often used interchangeably with other related but distinct concepts such as self-determination, self-government and independence (Safran and Maiz 2000). It has also been defined as constituting a number of different constitutional arrangements that include federalism, confederalism, decentralisation, associate statehood and devolution (Lapidoth 1996; Rothchild and Hartzell 2000). Moreover, autonomy is often defined by what it is not – and here it is usually understood that autonomy does not mean secession or separation, but rather a means of avoiding the break-up of states (Heintze 1998). In addition, one could add the argument of whether autonomy represents the retention or dilution of sovereignty in a state context. Some of these ‘conceptual synonyms’ may be explicable through the reasoning that autonomy is relational and therefore can only be examined vis-à-vis the concepts and their institutional referents and values to which autonomy relates. However other conceptual synonyms appear unnecessary and should be avoided to ensure conceptual clarity and meaning (Sartori 1984). So is there any way to prise the concept of autonomy away from the plethora of ‘stronger’ concepts within which it allegedly resides, and more especially, from the state? Below it is argued that conceptual approaches to autonomy must be broadened in two ways: firstly, regarding the types of claims to autonomy made; and secondly, the scope of autonomy must be expanded beyond the state context to include the European level.

But first let us examine traditional approaches to autonomy. As legal scholars like to emphasise, there are no general conditions, procedures or criteria for establishing autonomous units. Rather, it is invoked on an *ad hoc* basis and may comprise a wide range of constitutional arrangements. In domestic law, autonomy indicates the self-government of public corporations and institutions, agents that are delegated authority from the state to regulate their affairs through legislation. In international law, autonomy implies sovereign state independence or the constitutional recognition of autonomy within an existing state. In this understanding, autonomy either belongs to a state and is attributed to the capacity of a state to exert power, or autonomy is negotiated within a state, arising from the decision of a state to allocate a degree of self-government to one or more of its constituent parts, but without going so far as establishing states of their own (Motyl 2001; Heintze 2000: 7). The decision to create autonomy arrangements is often based on the
notion that national cultures are largely incongruent with sovereign states, and that some territorial or cultural communities should have the right to limited control over their own affairs. Thus substate autonomy implies a way of devolving authority to a lower level, but maintaining the state’s territorial integrity. This means that the main frame of reference for autonomy remains the state.

Because autonomy arrangements can only be understood in the context of a particular state’s history, cultural system, political and institutional structures, we are often informed that any scholarly examination of autonomy arrangements can only be particularistic. Attempts to identify common patterns among existing models based on proposed criteria are few and far-between. Some scholars have instead drawn upon empirical data of autonomous arrangements to distinguish between two types of autonomy: territorial and non-territorial. Territorial autonomy generally refers to state delegation of administrative and/or legislative powers to institutions representing a population inhabiting a certain territory within a state. Criteria for the possession of ‘full autonomy’ may include the following: a locally elected body with independent legislative powers; a locally chosen chief executive; and independent local judiciary (Hannum and Lillich 1980: 858). In order for these autonomy arrangements to be successful, the group must reside within a geographically well-defined area and constitute a majority there. There have also been recommendations that territorial autonomy should take the particular historical circumstances of a group into consideration, such as those outlined in the CSCE Copenhagen Document (Heintze 2000: 18). Because the subject of autonomy is always a group, the recognition of minority groups and response to collective demands within a state is an important issue in the deliberation of autonomy arrangements. Such groups normally comprise ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious minorities, meaning there is also some overlap with the second ‘type’ of autonomy identified by scholars.

Non-territorial forms of autonomy are less easy to characterise, not least because of the array of terms that scholars use to denote this second ‘type’. Personal autonomy (Lapidoth 1996), corporate autonomy (Ghai 2000), and cultural autonomy (Brunner and Küpper 2002) all indicate the application of autonomy to members of a group whose characteristics diverge from the majority of the state’s populations and are dispersed across its territory. Unlike territorial autonomy institutions, which may cover a broad mandate of social, political and economic affairs, non-territorial autonomy is more limited to cultural matters. The granting of non-territorial autonomy to groups is inextricably bound to issues of identity. The rights or entitlements protected under such autonomy may include the preservation and promotion of the religious, linguistic or cultural character of the minority through the creation of institutions representative of the minority and the delegation of competences to such organs that cover specific issues of importance for the group such as education, media and religion insofar as they are essential to the group’s identity. Non-territorial
forms of autonomy are generally invoked when group members are not concentrated in a single geographical area and thus where territorial solutions are not feasible.

In summary, autonomy may be defined as the constitutional recognition of a distinctive group by the state, either through the delegation of administrative and legislative functions to territorial institutions representing the group, or through the granting of powers to minorities to establish their own institutions in order to protect and promote their identity. Yet, we must be aware that in most accounts of autonomy arrangements, there is what some scholars call a ‘descriptive fallacy’: the notion that autonomy should correspond to, and be measurable against, an independent and objective reality (Walker 2003). Autonomy is seen a fixed and ascertainable state of affairs, or an ‘institutional fact’ (Werner and Wilde 2001). However, as we have learned from political geographers, institutions and state boundaries are not static, meaning that autonomy is constantly negotiated – it is a process of negotiation derived from recognition and claims. This requires us to consider how territory is socially constructed, and to look at how territorial elites use devolved institutions to pursue political, economic and cultural projects in order to be self-determining not only in an ‘institutional’ sense, but also in a real-power sense.

### 3.5 Conceptualising Capacity

Whilst autonomy may be associated with the constitutional arrangements of substate territories, we must also account for a substate territory’s concern to expand its capacity to achieve certain ends. These may include the ability to control economic development, cultural maintenance or linguistic preservation. We must therefore distinguish between autonomy and the ability to realise it.

Political scientists working in the field of urban regime analysis have drawn our attention to what they call governing capability or capacity (Stone 1989; Keating 1991). Stone defines an urban regime as a governing coalition, a ‘set of arrangements or relationships (informal as well as formal) by which a community is governed’ (Stone 2006: 28). They are neither fixed over time, nor possess clearly demarcated boundaries. The regime is less dependent on power over, a form of domination or conflict in the Weberian sense, than power to, a form of empowerment that entails building the capacity of the political community to act together to pursue common aims and to solve problems. This type of cooperative politics is crucial to the organisation of sustainable urban regimes, which comprise myriad actors with changing preferences, but which must search for and agree upon technical solutions to problems.

The notion of empowerment and the ‘capacity’ of a political community to act together to achieve certain ends is also evident in Keating’s earlier work on urban politics. Drawing on Stone’s distinction between problem-solving politics and conflict-based politics, he examines the form and factors determining the ‘governing capacity’ of local political arrangements, which implies ‘the
ability of elected councils to manage social and economic change’ (Keating 1991). In order to effect and manage such change, governing coalitions must be able to formulate policies and to mobilise resources behind their implementation. This is determined by a number of structural and political constraints, such as the formal structure and powers of local government, control of the instruments of public services, and the constraints of the external economic environment (ibid: 6-10). Whilst some scholars such as Gurr and King (1987) have emphasised the importance of a local government’s autonomy from higher levels of government to pursue local social and economic interests, Keating argues that the capacity to realise policy aims does not always require legislative autonomy. In fact it may flourish under conditions of state centralisation. It is possible for both local and higher-level governments to increase their capacity simultaneously, not only at the expense of the other. Centralisation does not necessarily entail the reduction in local government capacity, but state and local governments may enjoy ‘relative degrees of autonomy or dependence on each other’ (Keating 1991: 6). In his later work, Keating (2002a) expands this framework to tackle the question of regional power: ‘regional autonomy means something more than having formal powers and competences devolved from the central state. It requires the ability to mount a distinct development project and to insert the region into the new networks of policy making spanning the public-private boundaries and crossing state borders’ (Keating et al 2003: 33).

We may surmise from this work that territorial actors not only seek autonomy in the formal sense, but also the capacity to make decisions, to act in different political spheres and to pursue political, economic or cultural projects. Territorial capacity may be understood as the ability of a territorial entity to mount territorial projects, to control resources and to pursue informal channels of influence through networking and brokerage. Increasing territorial capacity does not imply the declaration of a monopoly over political authority, but the ability to exert authority within a variety of different spheres. These spheres are not necessarily restricted to the boundaries of the territory – such as the safe-guarding of language rights – but also the capacity to act outwith the boundaries of the territory by engaging transnational networks and projecting itself into international markets.

Importantly, increasing territorial capacity may require increased access to the state rather than more autonomy from it, in order to secure representation in state institutions, resources, and forms of state protection. Substate actors must develop and manipulate linkages and interdependencies with the state to gain power and control over resources. This may involve trading off constitutional autonomy for more regional power at the centre. For example, economic capacity may be enhanced by greater influence within the state to secure territorial interests. This indicates a trade-off between autonomy and influence at the centre. Regions may also seek to uphold universal values of social solidarity across the state, rather than striking out on their own and allowing regions to diverge in policy. This indicates a trade-off between autonomy and integration with the centre.
Regions may also seek the receipt of transfer payments and more subsidies from the state, indicating a trade-off between autonomy and *resources from* the centre. Finally, substate actors may find that it is not more autonomy from the state that they need when confronting European and global pressures, but rather protection from the market and a shield from unwanted external encroachments. This implies a trade-off between autonomy and *protection by* the centre. These options are available to parties in regional government. But it is also important to consider how opposition parties in substate arenas propose to alter the nature of these relations of dependence and autonomy between regional and state bodies, and how this influences substate party competition, particularly in confronting the new challenges and opportunities presented by European integration.

### 3.6 Autonomy and Capacity in Europe

As we have seen so far, legal and political science scholars predominantly frame autonomy and capacity demands in the context of state sovereignty. Autonomy is negotiated within a state, arising from the decision of a state to allocate a degree of self-government to one or more of its constituent parts, whilst increasing capacity may require trading-off autonomy for access to the state. This state-centric approach becomes inadequate, however, in explaining how autonomy may exist within a supranational political structure or how Europe may be viewed as a new ‘centre’ for substate actors to access. Substate parties indicate that they wish to pursue autonomy within the EU, raising a host of complexities for understanding constitutional rights within a supranational framework. Who ‘grants’ the autonomy, or offers brokerage deals, and how may these powers be exercised?

In the first instance, autonomy may be attributed to the suprastate political system itself. But as we are mainly concerned with substate entities, we might more fruitfully consider how suprastate political institutions can grant formal (institutional) autonomy to substate territorial groups. Bullain (1998: 346) argues that at this point ‘we depart from a concept of autonomy the sphere of influence of which is framed by the state’. In broadening the legal definitions to include the European dimension, autonomy would imply the actual delegation of regulatory powers from central authorities – here perhaps the institutions of the European Union – to the institutions of the autonomous region. This may lead to a dead end, however, as there has been reluctance by the EU to recognise formal ‘rights’ to territorial autonomy. Despite encouragement of greater regional participation in European institutions, this does not amount to the constitutional recognition that some substate actors so desire. But this is where our understanding of the strategy of enhancing capacity may prove more useful. Here, it may be argued that the EU provides a new context for substate units to act and pursue their territorial projects.

The transformation of political authority in Europe, resulting from integration and decentralisation, has opened up functional and political spaces in which substate actors may
operate. This means that authority may be re-constructed on a basis that does not necessarily correspond to the state. Indeed, substate territorial actors are no longer confined to the boundaries of states, if indeed this has ever been the case. Moreover, substate territorial actors are now searching for forms of autonomy that are less clear-cut than independent statehood. The European level constitutes a new focus of demands for autonomy, which have included a Europe of the Regions, Peoples or a Federal Europe. Our next question, based on these demands for autonomy in Europe, is whether or not we may prise the notion of autonomy away from the state. There are two reasons for doing so. First, as the nature of the state changes due to pressures arising from transnational processes (and substate pressures), the importance of state boundaries is simultaneously de-emphasised. Autonomy can stretch across one or more states (such as the Basque Country) or transcend them (calls for autonomy by the Roma, for instance, that ignore state boundaries).

Second, as emphasised previously, the attainment and exercise of regional power does not only entail constitutional recognition. Europe also provides new systems of action for territorial actors seeking self-determination and the ability to act. As Bullain (1998: 355) states, ‘the conception of political autonomy within the states needs to be adapted to the new political supra-state frame. This implies a need to connect the autonomous units to the European institutions… that increasingly adopt normative decisions over sectors of autonomous competence’. This requires re-thinking the nature of the politics of autonomy, whereby state sovereignty or even constitutional rights are no longer the main issue. This is evident in two ways. Firstly, the state no longer provides the main point of reference for territorial demands and most parties indicate that they do not seek statehood. Second, territorial actors are seeking representation, influence and control over economic development, which entails the capacity to act rather than claims to constitutional rights.

The EU opens up new possibilities for informal (or ‘soft’) power arrangements. Some scholars have argued that the EU constitutes a system in which actors at various levels – local, regional, state, trans-national and international – are involved in a process of multi-level governance (Marks 1992: Marks and Hooghe 2000). This approach emphasises the fluid and open-ended nature of the EU system in which a wide range of actors can play an influential role in decision-making. Moreover, the EU offers a number of subsidies and protection to substate territorial actors seeking to expand their economic capacity. It may be considered more lucrative for substate actors to lobby EU institutions to access these resources, rather than seeking only state funds and protection. Moreover, substate actors may seek to establish coalitions, become involved in networks, set up trade missions or make more specific demands such as the protection of minority languages with recourse to the European Court of Justice. In order to achieve these goals, regions are seeking greater participation in European institutions and networks in order to give voice to their territorial interests. This means that the capacity for territorial political actors to act in systems of multi-level
governance may in some cases be considered more important than obtaining constitutional rights. At the same time, it would be wrong to assume that regions seek only to increase their participation in European arenas, or to posit that all regions view the processes of European integration in a positive light. As Jeffery (2004) has shown, whilst some regions have argued for Europe to ‘let them in’, others have demanded that Europe ‘leave them alone’. Some regions feel themselves to be disempowered by European integration because of the way that competences are demarcated between the member states and Europe. To that end, their ‘capacity’ strategies have involved seeking to erect barriers to Europe to prevent their competences from being transferred upwards.

3.7 Classifying Autonomy Strategies

To recap, territorial strategies may involve demands for constitutional recognition, as well as the capacity to effect functional or policy changes in different spheres. Drawing on the ‘peripheral aims’ model of Rokkan and Urwin (1983) and the ‘self-government demands’ classification of De Winter and Tursan (1998), we may now construct a classification of autonomist strategies. The categories of unitarism, unionism, devolution, federalism and independence are employed to account for the constitutional autonomy demands of political parties. These classes may be considered in succession based on their ‘radicalism’, using a scalar procedure, i.e. on a unitarism–separatism. It is important to bear in mind that these categories are ideal types in the classic Weberian sense, and that political parties may move from one position to another in response to changing circumstances. Unlike, say, the left-right cleavage in politics (though this is also coming under question), parties do not always have fixed, permanent positions on territorial issues. They may switch from one demand to another at different times, and, more confusingly, parties will even endorse more than one autonomy aim at the same time. Following the construction of this ‘autonomy’ classification, consideration is given to policy goals of parties. To test the capacity-building strategies of substate parties, I will focus on their proposals to shape socioeconomic policy, control resources and increase their voice to protect territorial interests in Europe. These policy demands inform and cross-cut the main constitutional demands in several ways.

(1) Unitarism. The creation or maintenance of a unitarist state, based on the Jacobin model, lies at one end of the territorial spectrum. Rokkan and Urwin (1983: 141) categorise this as the ‘full integration’ of a territory within a state, where there is no recognition of cultural, political or economic divergence. Although none of the substate parties examined in the case studies advocate a unitarist solution as a territorial strategy, there have been attempts by state actors such as the Italian Communist and Socialist Parties in the late 1940s and 1950s, to create a centralised unitarist model. In the case analyses, we shall examine how the regional branches of statewide parties and other substate parties have responded to these centralising efforts.
(2) **Unionism.** For those seeking to maintain the unity of the state, however, unionism is the proffered option. This is usually associated with a monopoly of power at the centre, and concomitantly, resistance to constitutionally recognising the interests or identities of minority nations or regional communities, as these may constitute a threat to the integrity of the state. Yet despite overriding support for the centralisation of political institutions, unionists may in fact give recognition to a region through non-constitutional means, such as extending administrative decentralisation or the preservation of distinctive cultures or educational systems, which do not challenge state sovereignty or lead to the ‘slippery slope’ of independence. Parties supporting unionism may therefore be against granting constitutional rights for the region, but are in favour of acknowledging regional interests and identities in a more culturally or economically oriented way, which allow them to engage in the pursuit of territorial policy goals. Advocates of unionism may also argue that regions are better represented through the state, and that access to the centre is more important than legislative autonomy.

(3) **Devolution.** This form of autonomy implies the decentralisation of administrative or legislative powers to a specific substate territorial unit. This may entail the creation of elected regional parliaments and regional governments with executive, legislative and/or fiscal powers (which may be exclusive or shared with the central government). What distinguishes devolution from federalism is the fact that the substate territory in question is treated differently from the rest of the state. Therefore, parties that pursue devolution strategies ‘are not federalist in the sense that they demand greater autonomy purely for their own region’ (De Winter and Türsan 1998: 205). Another important aspect of devolution is that demands may be a continuous process of negotiation with the central government for more and more powers in order to serve territorial policy interests – as discussed below – and to maximise territorial influence, rather than an end in itself. (Though the same might also be said for federalism, which some scholars argue should not be seen as a static system characterised by a fixed division of powers, but as a process of federalizing – a continual negotiation of authority that is marked by both cooperation and competition [Friedrich 1968: 7].) In any case, regional government arrangements ordinarily involve the transfer of certain domestic competences to the region (often done in an asymmetrical fashion if other territorial units within the state are also furnished with devolved powers), such as health, education, police and transport, whilst the central state has control over foreign relations, defence and monetary policy.

(4) **Federalism.** This goal, which involves transforming a unitary or devolved state into a federal state, requires not only giving a degree of self-government to the territory in question, but to all regions in the state. As Riker understands it, federalism as ‘a political organization in which the activities of government are divided between regional governments and a central government in such a way that each kind of government has some activities on which it makes the final decision’
Importantly, authority is divided in such a way that neither government level may ‘trespass upon, override or remove the competence of the other’ (Walker 2000: 390). In this sense, federalism is institutionally a more radical demand than regionalism, as it alters the organisation of the entire structure of the state (De Winter 1998: 205). Yet we could also argue that federalism is a politically weaker demand than regionalism, as it does not give recognition to the specificities of regional identities and cultures, but rather subsumes them within a larger programme of decentralisation where each region is made equal. Federalism in this understanding implies a mode of political organisation that unites separate polities within the overarching political framework of the state, rather than recognising or valorising the distinctiveness of one regions’ specificities over another. Many federalists, for instance, abhor what they consider to be narrow-minded nationalism or regionalism, which they believe makes a claim to special treatment. Others believe that federalism may accommodate different types of cultures within a plurinational state, and that regionalism is not small-minded, but open, tolerant and progressive.

An important aspect of federalism is the concept of subsidiarity. Subsidiarity has been interpreted in a number of ways, but generally implies that decision-making should be taken at the lowest, most appropriate level possible. However, there is often disagreement between advocates of federalism regarding what the ‘appropriate’ level should be: the state, region, province or commune. Moreover, there is disagreement as to whether how far regions may be able to diverge in policy. For that reason, I have introduced two ideal types of federalism in the following case analysis: centralising federalism, which emphasises the concentration of powers at the centre (and the standardisation of policies across regions); and decentralising federalism, which lays stress on bringing decision-making powers down to the lowest possible level and allowing for divergence between different territorial units – be they states (in a European context), regions, provinces or communes. The latter also accentuates the need to define and limit the autonomy and policy reach of the centre, as much as that of the regions and localities.

(5) Independence. This involves the full separation of the region from the rest of the country, and its establishment as an independent sovereign state with full powers over its internal and external affairs. In this sense, it is a much clearer option that devolution, which may cover a complex variety of situations with varying degrees of power-sharing. It is also possible for parties to adopt an end-strategy of independence, whilst pursuing in the meantime a gradualist approach that increases the powers of the territory. However, it could also be argued that goals for independence enter similarly murky waters, given that the possibility of being able to make a claim to absolute independence over one’s own affairs has come into doubt given that states – old as well as newly established – are undergoing a rescaling of their authority due to globalisation and supranational integration. Some scholars have asked why substate actors continue to demand independence when
the very concept of state sovereignty is losing its meaning (Tierney 2005: 161). For instance, if we define sovereignty as consisting of ‘a plausible claim to ultimate authority’ made on behalf of a particular polity (Walker 2002: 345), how much sovereignty can a state in the EU now claim, when many of its competences have been shifted upwards? Tierney (2005) argues that in response to these developments, some parties seeking independence have developed a more nuanced approach to this goal. This may include seeking a larger political or economic ‘external framework’ for the newly formed independent state, such as the European Union, or NAFTA, or seeking complex constitutional arrangements within and beyond the state. This is especially important if the territory possesses a small population and few resources, and its chances of ‘survival’, or being able to maintain the pre-independent standards of living, seem slim.

Having examined the ideal types of constitutional goals available to substate political parties, in line with the first understanding of autonomy, it is now necessary to consider the second, overlapping, category of territorial aims, which was defined as the capacity to realize territorial interests. To test the capacity of territorial actors, I will focus attention in the case studies on examining the socioeconomic policy goals of substate political parties. In the face of globalising and Europeanising trends, these goals may include a greater say over the type of development being pursued that corresponds to local traditions or norms of development. This may require more control over regional policy, or put another way, divergence from state policy. Regional actors may articulate distinct socioeconomic programmes that valorise local traditions and cultures as a strength to be exploited European markets and to raise their competitive advantage vis-à-vis other areas. The protection of local cultures and languages may be understood as part of a broader social project that is underpinned by the desire to sustain the territory as a unit of identity.

Territorial capacity therefore implies the ability to mount territorial projects, to control and shape policy, and to exert authority within a variety of different spheres. But how might one operationalise the concept? In the following case studies I will explore the policy programmes of substate parties relating to socioeconomic issues. In particular, I will examine three main dimensions (and dichotomies) of capacity goals: (1) demands for policy divergence to respond to local needs more effectively, or convergence to raise welfare standards to the state level; (2) fiscal autonomy to control the levers of the economy, or more resources from the state; and (3) demands for direct representation of territorial interests in Europe, or more influence in state delegations. I am interested here in how the confluence of territorial and socioeconomic issues are accommodated in party programmes, and how parties seek to trade-off autonomy for more access to the state in order to realize territorial interests.
3.8 Conclusion

As this chapter has shown, territorial strategies have both constitutional and policy dimensions. The way in which substate parties integrate their constitutional and policy goals will now be explored in the case analyses. Each case begins with an overview of the local political terrain – examining how parties compete in a multidimensional policy space, how they construct the nation and perceive territorial interests. Following this, the trade-off between capacity and autonomy, which was historically negotiated within the state, will be explored. At this point, the European dimension is brought in, and the discussion will focus on how substate parties have developed territorial strategies in response to Europe from the late 1980s. Demands for constitutional autonomy are separated from demands for increased economic capacity. In the first instance, the ideal types of constitutional categories identified above will be used as a basis for examining how parties have altered their goals for autonomy, and repositioned themselves along the ‘territorial spectrum’ in the face of deepening European integration. I am especially interested in how the imagery of a Europe of the Regions has influenced the constitutional goals, rhetoric and coalitions of parties. Following this, consideration is given to how Europe has affected the capacity dimension of territorial strategies. The focus is placed on the socioeconomic programmes of substate parties in Europe, and the way in which European policies are perceived to advantage or disadvantage territorial interests. The extent to which the EU has become a new centre of decision-making and source of funding to access alongside that of the state will also be considered. In each case, the aim is to explain how and why parties have sought to bypass, replace or strengthen the state during the period of deepening European integration in the pursuit of territorial autonomy and policy goals.
4. Territorial Politics in Scotland

4.1 Introduction
The issue of constitutional change was a constant fixture in Scottish politics throughout the twentieth century. The involvement of Scotland’s parties in issues of autonomy and the defence of Scottish interests reflects an important territorial dimension to Scottish politics. The independence-seeking Scottish National Party is not the only political creature in Scotland to realize the political and electoral potential of nationalism. Rather, the SNP’s monopoly over national identity politics in the 1960s and 1970s (Mitchell 1996) has given way to a complexity of political actors, motives, bargains and rivalry that determine the ever-changing ‘national question’. Indeed, since then, every one of Scotland’s major political parties – the Scottish Labour Party (SLP), the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party (SCUP), the Scottish Liberal Democrats (SLD), and the Scottish Socialists (SSP) – have all claimed to constitute the party of Scotland and have offered a range of constitutional proposals to advance Scotland’s distinct territorial interests.

One explanation for the trend towards national identity politics is the achievement of a measure of autonomy in the form of a Scottish Parliament. The Scottish branches of hitherto ‘unionist’ parties have since 1999 been operating in a peculiarly Scottish political context. Devolution of UK political structures has been met with calls for greater policy and organisational autonomy of Scottish branches of statewide parties to fight for exclusively Scottish interests. However, this was not an overnight phenomenon. ‘Even prior to devolution Scotland and Wales had begun to evolve their own distinctive party systems in which Labour’s main competitors were the nationalist parties rather than the Conservatives’ (Laffin et al 2004: 3). A number of factors, including the SNP’s slow rise from peripheral obscurity to forming the main opposition in the Scottish Parliament has forced other parties to enter the nationalist debate, whether this has been usurp, denounce or reframe the issues at hand. Since the 1980s in particular, parties have become involved in a range of territorial strategies to advance Scottish interests in the UK and Europe. Yet the question of how ‘nationalist’ parties in Scotland have become is not the focus of this discussion. Rather, this chapter will explore an equally significant and not unrelated topic: how the issue of European integration has become entwined in debates about Scottish self-determination.

The European question has played an increasingly important role in Scottish politics since the deepening of integration with the Single European Act in the late 1980s. The processes of decentralisation and supranational integration have created new challenges and opportunities for Scotland, and parties must now face a multidimensional policy context in which they must compete not only on the class dimension, but also on the territorial and European dimensions. Whilst the last
two issues have often been associated with the pro-European, pro-independence SNP, in reality parties of every political creed have articulated rival goals of how to best secure an economically and politically powerful Scotland in Europe. The aim of this chapter is to explore how Scottish parties have re-positioned themselves in response to European integration, and how they have altered their strategies to advance territorial interests. The discussion begins with an overview of the main political traditions in Scotland, examining how parties’ constitutional preferences have been shaped by different ideological discourses. Following this, we consider how parties have conceptualised the ‘nation’ and Scotland’s position within Britain and Europe. This entails an examination of how parties link Scottish nationhood to their socioeconomic and political projects.

At this point, we will bring in the European dimension, examining how Europe has altered the possibilities for pursuing autonomy for Scotland and how this has affected party strategies for seeking constitutional rights or policy benefits. The discussion is structured thematically to examine how parties compete on the themes of independence, federalism, regionalism and unionism in Europe, and how these constitutional proposals correspond to their economic projects. This analysis aims to show how parties have altered their territorial strategies even though the contours of the European dimension in Scottish politics has been constant. Moreover, it aims to show that, whilst the parties’ constitutional platforms are central to understanding their claims for self-determination in Europe, equally important are their proposals for economic development, which often requires making a trade-off between autonomy and access to the centre.

4.2 Political Traditions and Ideologies in Scotland

A number of authors have sought to demonstrate the distinctive nature of Scottish political traditions and ideologies within the Union (Fry 1987; Paterson 1994; Bennie et al 1997; Brown et al 1997). Although Scottish politics is largely characterised by competition on the left-right cleavage, as in the rest of the UK, the assumption that politics is determined by class interests that operate in a standardised fashion across the entire territory is misleading. Whilst party competition in Scotland has been influenced by the historical impact of a two-party system, with each party representing opposing ideological poles – Conservatives vs. Liberals during the nineteenth century, and Conservatives vs. Labour in the twentieth century – the Scottish electorate has tended to vote for the party that appeared to best represent Scottish interests in the Union. This has meant that Scottish branches of statewide parties were often perceived, and also acted, differently from their UK counterparts. This has been the cause, as well as consequence, of the need for parties north of the border to cater for Scottish interests within the Union, or to ‘translate Scotland to Britain and vice versa’ (Brown et al 1998: 124). Parties are successful ‘when they are able to shape Westminster
concerns to Scottish interests, and to maximise Scottish influence’ (ibid) and Scottish voters will support those seen as being the best vehicles for advancing Scotland’s interests in the Union.

Let us consider the main political traditions in Scotland. Throughout the nineteenth century, the main ideological force in Scotland was Liberalism. This effectively brought together two strands of ‘unionist paternalism’ and ‘interventionist socialism’ (Fry 1987: 147). The first element drew from the Scottish Presbyterian tradition of church government and the emphasis on ‘common sense’ and the equality of men, as well as a commitment to Scotland’s fruitful place in the Union. The second element, evident in the radical wing of the party, was based on destruction of privilege, the extension of civil liberty and an emphasis on popular education (ibid: 98). This commitment to social reform would partially help translate Liberal values into Labour values the following century. The Liberal Party was able to maintain a hegemonic position in Scotland due to its ability to capture a variety of social platforms whilst catering to Scottish distinctiveness. But it was the division over interpretations of its ‘unionist’ basis that led to its decline at the end of the 19th century. The party split on the issue of home rule for Ireland, with the right-wing taking over the smaller Conservative Party in Scotland. The Liberal Party (renamed Liberal Democrats following the merger with the Social Democrats in 1987) was relegated to ‘third party’ of Scotland throughout most of the twentieth century. But its involvement in the campaigns for a Scottish Parliament during the 1990s helped raise its profile, as well as highlighting its commitment to self-determination within a federal framework. Since 1999, the Scottish LibDems have formed a coalition government with Labour. Although it is debatable that there is a resurgent Liberalism in Scotland, the LibDems have provided an important reformist dimension to Scottish politics, for instance forcing Labour to maintain and expand universal access to public services.

At the beginning of the twentieth century the ideology of Unionism, captured best by the Scottish Unionist Party, became ascendant in Scotland. The title ‘unionist’ came from the merger between the Tory Party and the larger Scottish Liberal Unionists in 1912, following the split in the Liberal Party. Being an independent Scottish party (between 1912 and 1965), the Scottish Unionists eschewed the use of the word ‘conservative’, which was seen as an English phenomenon, and drew electoral appeal based on their distinctive Scottish persona. Furthermore, the Liberals’ influence on the Scottish Unionists meant that the party’s right-wing ideology was supplemented by a belief in state intervention and civic responsibility, which endeared the party to the recently enfranchised Protestant working-class. Unionism is a complex ideology that at its heart rests a belief in the maintenance of the union between Scotland and the rest of the UK. Brown et al (1998: 11) capture the essence of this ideology, and its ability to cater to Scottish distinctiveness, well: ‘On the one hand, Scotland had to be in the Union to realise its true potential as a nation: thus to be a true nationalist it was necessary to be a unionist. On the other hand, to be a true unionist it was
necessary to be a nationalist because, in the absence of a Scottish nationalist assertion, the Union would degenerate into an English takeover of Scotland’. Being nationalist as well as unionist did not imply that Scottish Unionist Party supported Scottish, Welsh or Irish home rule, in fact quite the opposite: they opposed home rule as it was feared it would lead to the break-up of the British Empire, and later the UK. However, they were also intent on asserting a Scottish particularist position, seeing the UK as constituting a number of distinct national communities. The Tory party’s distinctive policies for Scotland were important in competing with the UK Labour Party, whose commitment to home rule was unstable, and who lacked distinctively Scottish appeal due to its principle of centralising power. However, the party’s electoral decline in the 1960s and 1970s, and its increasing financial and ideological dependence on its English counterpart, caused it to partially merge with England and reinsert the word ‘Conservative’ into its title. Thereafter the party was known as the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party (SCUP).

The reasons for the Conservatives’ decline in Scotland have as much to do with the party’s response to territorial issues as their socioeconomic policies. As religion lost its power in Scottish politics and the welfare state grew in importance, the Tories’ basis of support – the Protestant working class – transferred their allegiances to Labour. Their ideological loyalty to Tories vision was furthermore undermined by the newly christened Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party’s inability to articulate a Scottish brand of ‘Conservatism’, compounded by the sense of loss in demoting the distinctly Scottish ideology of ‘Unionism’ that had been undermined by the collapse of the British Empire. Whilst the Tories had once been able to bring together unionism and territorial particularism as two sides of the same coin, by playing the Scottish card whilst proclaiming the sovereignty of the British state, this strategy came to an abrupt end upon the election of Heath’s successor, Margaret Thatcher, as leader of the party, and then UK Prime Minister. The Scottish Tories were handicapped by Thatcher’s desire to free the party from the ‘painful hook’ of recognising national identities and interests within the UK (Thatcher 1995: 322), which undermined Scottish unionist ideology. Instead, Thatcher espoused the vision of a unitary state whereby assimilation became the key requirement for free-market liberalisation, an economic project that lay in opposition to the Scottish commitment to the post-war welfare settlement (McEwen 2002). She repeatedly declared that there would be no devolution whilst she was Prime Minister, and would give Scotland no favours or distinct policies (Kellas 1990: 428; Bennie et al 1997: 68). It was a combination of the popular hostility to Thatcher’s unitarist project, in addition to a widespread rejection of her neoliberal policies, that catalysed the surge in nationalism, pressed the need for constitutional reform, and unified social-democratic parties in support of devolution.

When Thatcher came to power in the 1970s, the predominant ideology in Scotland, since decline of the Unionist Party, was Socialism – or more specifically, Labourism (in the form of
Labour Party values). The success of this ideology could be interpreted as a continuation of the socially progressive ideas pursued by the radical Liberal Party in Scotland and later accommodated by the Scottish Unionists through their emphasis on common sense, which ‘fused economic individualism with a collectivist intent’ (Brown et al 1998: 133). These long historical strands of social democracy in Scotland were in the 1950s best captured by Labour, which became the largest party in Scotland and has so remained to this day. However, it took a long time for Labour to win this social democratic vote, partly because of the strength of the Liberals. In fact, the first Scottish Labour Party was established in 1888 by Keir Hardie, a former Liberal who was dissatisfied with the party’s inability to turn itself into a left-wing workers’ party. Following the ‘Red Clydeside’ agitation in the early 1920s, which involved popular agitation over housing, wages and conscription, Labour became the most attractive political vehicle for pursuing the demands of the radicalised Scottish working-class, such as the introduction of state housing. It could be argued that in one sense, Labour was also continuing the Scottish traditions of corporatism and intervention to restructure industry, practised by the radical Liberals and Unionists before them.

During the time of Labour ascendance, what marked a break from previous eras in Scottish politics was the emergence of a specifically nationalist party whose denunciation of all things ‘unionist’ moved the main battle lines of party competition from left vs. right politics (where both sides could accommodate nationalism) to left vs. nationalist politics (at which point the Tories were in decline). This was not a simple or straightforward development, especially as the Scottish National Party, as we shall see, began to adopt a left-wing mantle, whilst Labour itself harboured nationalist tendencies. Labour has a long history of supporting home rule (indeed, Keir Hardie, founder of the Scottish Labour Party, was an enthusiast of Scottish self-determination). However, there was a problem in that home rule might undermine Labour’s support of centralised planning and nationalisation. Labour had its base in working-class interests, and the economic allocation of resources was to be decided on the grounds of need rather than on regional pressures. This led to the policy of home rule being dropped in the 1920s, 1940s and late 1950s, and has since exhibited a cyclical quality (Keating and Bleiman 1979). Fry (1987: 173) argues that Labour has since ‘turned itself into the most unionist and rigidly disciplined of all the parties’.

Yet turmoil in the 1970s, caused by the resurgence of political nationalism in Scotland in the form of the SNP, forced the Labour Party to reconsider its centralist ideology. A breakaway party was formed that sought to fuse socialism with nationalism (which called itself the Scottish Labour Party, not to be confused with the then Scottish Council of the Labour Party), and other factions within the party, such as Scottish Labour Action, have been vociferous in their calls for greater Scottish autonomy. As McEwen (2004a: 1) states, Labour found it necessary to devise ‘strategies to accommodate distinctive territorial identities within the party and the state in order to minimise
support for nationalist parties and secessionist claims.’ In 1979, following the defeat of the devolution referendum – which had been hurriedly and unenthusiastically introduced by the Wilson government as a tool to beat down the SNP – Scottish Labour moved towards a clearer commitment to home rule and some of its members became active in the Campaign for a Scottish Assembly (CSA) in the 1980s. The party gave CSA’s proposals for a Constitutional a ‘guarded welcome’ that developed into full-fledged support (Newell 1998: 110). In 1989, Labour MPs signed a declaration that directly challenged the doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty: ‘We, gathered as the Scottish Constitutional Convention, do hereby acknowledge the sovereign right of the Scottish people to determine the form of government best suited to their needs’ (quoted in Newell: 110-111). Through its involvement in the broad church of the CSA, Labour was able to re-assert its position as the party representing the needs of Scotland, and carry forth the ‘mandate’ it had been conferred by the Scottish people (Herald, 13 June 1987). Yet this was easier said than done.

Although nationalism has been a constant force in Scottish politics since the late 1800s, which had found a vehicle in such organisations as the Scottish Home Rule Association and the Scottish Covenant Association, it was not until the 1970s that political nationalism made a real breakthrough in Scotland. In October 1974, the Scottish National Party polled 30% of the General Election vote in Scotland, exploiting the discovery of oil in the North Sea adjacent to Scotland the previous year. ‘The real purpose of the oil campaign was to convince Scots that oil made independence both economically possible and politically necessary’ (Miller 1981: 60). The image of a self-sufficient nation was sealed with the reassurance of non-UK subsidised wealth. SNP electoral success forced British parties to take the Scottish dimension more seriously. The philosophy behind the SNP was to win self-determination for Scotland, whereby Scotland meant ‘anyone living in Scotland’. However, the party was divided on how to achieve this goal. One group, known as ‘gradualists’, have sought to build upon decentralising measures to advance Scottish independence through a ‘step-by-step’ strategy, whilst fundamentalists want ‘independence nothing less’ and believe devolution limits the aspirations of those who want a Scottish state.

The rivalry between these groups to a large extent determined the SNP’s responses to the devolution referendums of 1979 and 1997. In the first referendum, the party provided only tentative support for a ‘yes’ vote, believing the referendum to be a Labour strategy to undermine demands for independence. The separate campaigns and mud-slinging between pro-devolution parties sent a confusing message to voters, and whilst a majority of Scots did vote in favour of constitutional change, they failed to surpass the restrictions of the 40% rule and the proposals for an Assembly failed. During the second referendum in 1997, introduced by the new Labour government, the SNP supported the consensual scheme, which was seen as a useful progression from the status quo. The SNP put its full political weight and resources behind a ‘yes-yes’ campaign organised by Scotland
FORward, which was being pushed by Labour and the Liberal Democrats. Thus the group was able to create a unified campaign for a successful double-yes vote. It also highlighted how similar the positions of the SNP and particularly Labour were: with both parties advocating a centre-left, post-Thatcherite agenda, this meant that they are both now fighting over the same political territory.

This has not always been the case; as Labour has swung back and forth on the home rule debate, so has the SNP moved from left to right on the political spectrum in order to capture the largest amount of votes possible. There have always been ideological tensions within the SNP, dating back to the merger between the right-wing Scottish Party and the left-wing National Party of Scotland. At first these were resolved by taking no clear ideological stance, and instead emphasising the SNP’s inclusive nature as a ‘broad church’. However, by the 1960s, the party began defining itself ideologically, and the election of Billy Wolf as party leader saw the party move to a more explicitly left-of-centre politics. The motivation behind this strategy was to challenge the dominant political position of Labour. Although there was resistance within the party to defining the SNP as ‘leftist’, the SNP continued in the 1980s to articulate a social-democratic position, which was demonstrated by their support for the anti-poll tax protests. The SNP played upon anti-Tory sentiments in Scotland, which was part of a larger strategy to fight Labour on the grounds that Scotland was a ‘working-class’ area. Furthermore, with the arrival of Alex Salmond as party leader in 1990, who was a ‘self-confessed socialist’, the party was located firmly on the left. Policies of the SNP have included a commitment to progressive personal taxation to redistribute wealth from rich to poor and the renationalisation of the railway system, though there are indications that the party is considering a move to centre-right politics, evident in its support for a business tax cuts since 2003.

The closeness of Labour and the SNP’s social democratic, pro-decentralisation agendas meant that they were both fighting for the same votes. In an analysis of survey data drawing from the 1997 Scottish Election and Referendum Surveys, Brown (1998: 18) concludes that ‘part of the success of the SNP, and to some extent the Labour Party in Scotland, can be explained by the political discourse of linking Scottish nationalism with left-wing attitudes’. This makes party contestation over the meaning and merits of devolution versus independence, and the parties’ ability to link these constitutional aims to the discourse of nationalism and socialism, more pertinent to their election battles. However, there are signs that this dynamic is changing, as both the SNP and New Labour have moved to the centre(-right) ground. This has opened up space for other parties to take up the mantle of socialism in Scotland, in particular the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP).

The SSP was created in 1999, though its roots lie in the old Scottish Militant (a Trotskyite organisation within Labour) and the Socialist Workers’ Party. Scotland has a strong tradition of radical Leftism, dating back to the Highland Land League in the 1880s, the heyday of Red Clydeside in the 1920s, and the disproportionate strength of the Communist Party of Great Britain...
north of the border (in 1951, for example, 51% of the CP’s votes came from Scotland). The Scottish Socialists, as well as arguing for the rights of the working man (and woman), proclaim to be the party of the Scottish people. The party supports an independent Scotland based on socialist values, thus fusing the dominant post-war political traditions of socialism and nationalism in Scotland through its arguments for ‘a socialism that is based on decentralisation, diversity and voluntary co-operation between nations’ (SSP 2004: 3). The SSP claims to be the representative of ‘traditional socialism’ in Scotland, and to that end supports nationalisation, increasing workers’ rights, and the replacement of the council tax with a Scottish Service Tax. Its position has taken some of the wind from both the SNP and Scottish Labour’s sails – winning the vote of SNP supporters disillusioned with the party’s move to the centre-right, and Labour supporters who think that New Labour is a mask for the New Right. The SSP has won considerable support amongst the disaffected working-class, winning them seven seats in the Scottish Parliament during the 2003 election.

From this overview of the main political ideologies in modern Scotland, we can surmise the following. The success of political parties in Scotland is largely determined by their ability, as Brown et al (1998) argue, of articulating a distinct Scottish party identity whilst catering to Scottish needs and interests within the Union. For example, the Scottish Unionist Party drew on its appeal as an independent Scottish party with a particular Scottish unionist ideology (Seawright 1996). The Liberal Party in the eighteenth century ‘drew on the Scottish Presbyterian tradition with its focus on the democratic tradition of church government’ (Brown et al 1998: 128). And the founders of the Labour Party were highly supportive of Scottish home rule, even though this support has not been consistent. Of equal importance to articulating a Scottish identity in their platforms and policies, parties in Scotland have been successful when they were seen to best represent Scottish social preferences. We can trace support for state interventionism, and the notions of compassion, civic responsibility and egalitarianism in each of the four political traditions discussed above. These social preferences have underpinned Scotland’s support for the principles of the welfare state, a project that has been linked not only to the rise of socialism, but also to the resurgence of nationalism and the maintenance of unionism in the second half of the twentieth century. The strong link between Scottish identity and state welfarism (McEwen 2002; Beland and Lecours 2005) means that parties are faced with the challenge of constructing a sense of Scottish nationhood, linked to their constitutional preferences and informed by their ideological positions, that encompasses progressive social values and policies that appeal to the Scottish electorate.

Although class is a relevant feature of voting in Scotland, ‘there are other, distinctly Scottish, dynamics at work which complicate class models of voting in the Scottish context’ (Bennie et al 1990: 107). There is a strong territorial dimension to party competition in Scotland, and when parties in Scotland did not fully represent, or make concessions to the particularities of
Scottish economic, social or cultural life, this resulted in electoral deviations on either side of the border. Since 1959, Scottish voting preferences diverged from the rest of the UK, heralding the decline of Scottish Unionism, which came to a head during the ‘Thatcher years’ of 1979-1990, Labour’s consolidation of being Scotland’s favourite party, and the rise of the SNP. From this time onwards, authors have held that the party system in Scotland differed from the rest of the UK (Paterson 1994; Brown et al 1998; Bodganor 1999). The emergence of a broad-based, cross-party coalition in Scotland that presented a united front for self-rule in the 1990s also demonstrates how Scottish politics has diverged from the rest of the UK. Moreover, the current system of proportional representation in the Scottish Parliament, has enabled other non-class based issues to come to light. These include the plight of the Scots fishermen and the closure of local hospitals, in response to which candidates have stood as independent health campaigners. Furthermore, the Scottish Green Party elected 7 MSPs in the 2003 Scottish elections, bringing ecological issues to the forefront of Scottish politics. Arguably, this indicates that class politics might be declining because of the salience of other ‘post-materialist’ issues (Inglehart 1977, 1990). In any case, it is clear that parties now operate within a highly complex multi-dimensional policy arena.

4.3 Party Constructions of the Scottish Nation

An important determinant of how parties pursue territorial strategies is the way in which they perceive and construct the Scottish ‘nation’ in their rhetoric and programmes. This section examines how parties perceive the Scottish nation in a British and European construct, and how they link their constructions of nationhood to policy and constitutional aims. It will be shown that although parties make varying efforts to capture feelings of politicised national identity, none of them vividly depicts the Scottish nation as an ‘imagined community’ with strong emotional and symbolic content. Rather, the emphasis is on how to obtain status and resources for the territorial collectivity.

For the SNP, the Scottish nation is considered a political community that requires sovereign statehood in order to make it a ‘normal nation’ and to give it the self-respect that comes with being independent. So long as Scotland is considered a ‘region’ of the UK, as it accuses other parties of doing, it will not be in control of its ‘destiny’. Nationalists rally against the view that Scotland is dependent on England: ‘for much of the last three hundred years Scotland has been told that it is too small, too distant, too poor, or too stupid to govern itself’ (Salmond 1999). Instead, according to the SNP, Scotland is a rich country with abundant natural resources and a skilled population that could easily overturn its sluggish economic growth and low self-confidence by choosing independence. Moreover, the SNP has brought a social-democratic discourse into its nationalist ideology, arguing that independence is the only means of establishing a distinct social policy in accordance with Scottish values: ‘the ability to implement policies to make a real difference…requires full control of
the economy, taxation, social security and employment policy’ (SNP 2003). McEwen (2002: 86) argues that the SNP has ‘sought to benefit from Labour’s drift to the centre by advocating a social democratic case for independence’, even though their socioeconomic programme for an independent Scotland lacks detail. In any case, the SNP argues that it is crucial for Scotland to be viewed in political and economic terms as separate from the UK, and not just a cultural entity within it as some of the statewide parties argue.

Yet this is easier said than done. As McCrone (1992: 31) suggests, ‘the party’s problem for long enough was that it could find no way of changing the idea of ‘Scotland’ into one of a politically independent nation. “Scotland” remained associated with the music hall, tourism and cultural organisations.’ Scholars have paid a great deal of attention to the overtly ‘civic’ character of the SNP. For instance, Hamilton (1999) argues that Scottish political nationalism is a model of associative identity-politics in Europe, whilst Nairn (2000) believes that the SNP has succeeded in recapturing the democratic voice of Scotland. The nation is characterised territorially, and thus anyone can consider herself to form that nation by living in it and sharing in its institutions and society. This inclusiveness means that the ‘tariff’ for being a nationalist is quite low, and allows the SNP to appeal to the widest voting electorate. This includes non-native born or blood-descent Scots, which is demonstrated by the SNP’s affiliated organisations, Asian Scots for Independence and New Scots for Independence. The SNP’s criteria of ‘national belonging’ as voluntary participation in a multicultural society also deflects criticism that the party is exclusionary or anti-English. The party fears that any emphasis on birth, tradition or Scottish culture will arouse accusations of narrow ‘ethnic’ nationalism, which would discredit the movement and undermine its appeal to broad sections of Scottish society. ‘Suspicious of concepts like ‘tradition’ and ‘identity’, many tough-minded left-wing nationalists were even prepared to abandon the cultural argument entirely’ (Beveridge & Turnbull 1989: 4). One could go further and argue that the SNP has not constructed a cultural meaning of Scottish nationhood, or sought to stimulate collective action on this basis, as it is assumed that this ‘nation’ already exists. Yet political representations of the nation rarely command such profound emotional legitimacy as ascribed cultural meanings. And while the SNP continues to articulate its understanding of the Scottish nation as a civic community, other parties have drawn on the cultural appeal of nationalism in order to win support for their political projects.

The Scottish Tories inversely consider Scotland to be an historic and cultural nation, but not a political community with a claim to sovereignty. Whilst the party recognises Scottish nationhood, as being derived from it history, culture and traditions (SCUP 2004), this is firmly placed within the wider political construction of the UK state. Thus former leader David McLetchie (2003) argued that ‘we are a one nation party because we believe in the union - in a Scotland that plays the fullest part in British, European and world affairs’. This fits with the Tories’ constitutional goals, which

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have moved from opposing a Scottish Parliament (seen as a threat to the union), to improving the workings of devolution in order to ‘save the union’. The discourse of ‘one-nationhood’ is also linked to their economic and social policies for Scotland. The Scottish Conservatives argue that the post-war welfare state was a product of one-nation principles, which ‘correlated the interests of the working-class with the interests of the (British) nation’ (McEwen 2002: 73). Thus, the Tories accepted the public provision of welfare as a means of creating social cohesion across classes and national communities, and forging a common loyalty to the British nation.

However, the Tories’ approach to public policy in Scotland underwent a major change with the advent of Margaret Thatcher as leader. She maintained that her neo-liberal agenda, which broke with the one-nation approach by promoting a flexible, free-market economy with minimal government intervention, actually reinforced rather than undermined Scottish socioeconomic values. Instead of loyalty to state welfarism, she posited that Scots were naturally inclined to individual entrepreneurialism and self-reliance, and she offered a revisionist account of the philosophy of Scottish Enlightenment thinkers such as Adam Smith to support this argument. Thatcher thus attempted to correlate Conservative values with Scottish national identity: ‘Tory values are in tune with everything that is finest in the Scottish character…hard work, self-reliance, thrift, enterprise… Scottish values are Tory values’. Amongst the Scottish public, these arguments fell on deaf ears. The mass unemployment in Scotland caused by the closure of local industries, in addition to the cut backs in social security services that many Scots relied upon, led to the Tories being viewed as an English party out of touch with Scottish needs. The Scottish Tories, as an administrative branch, were in an awkward position; although many disagreed with the Thatcherite agenda, they were incapable of forging divergent policies that drew upon the state welfarism of one-nation Conservatism, and thus suffered a steep decline in electoral support. Since devolution, the Scottish Tories – having gained more autonomy from the UK party – have returned to their social-liberal roots, emphasising the Scottish Unionist position of ‘service to others and to the community’ whilst advocating fiscal autonomy to allow the devolved institutions to steer the Scottish economy.

In their rhetoric, the Tories do not have qualms in using Scottish imagery in invoking their claims to best represent Scotland. In their 2004 European election manifesto, the Scottish Conservatives showed some of their elected members signing a ‘Declaration of Arbroath’ at the historic site. In this document, the Tories drew on history and traditions to justify Scotland’s claim to difference: ‘The history of Scotland has been the history of a small country merging with larger entities yet preserving its nationhood… The construction of a new European Union will be fatally compromised if it is conceived to be something hostile to and destructive of the national traditions that large and small countries cherish alike’. One may contrast the Tories desire to protect

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Scotland’s traditions from European integration with the SNP’s disregard of the need for cultural protectionism. But the Conservatives face some critical challenges in expressing their political project to the Scottish electorate, due to their perception of being an ‘English’ party hostile to any form of Scottish political self-determination. Following their electoral wipe-out in 1997, the Scottish Tories ran an internal inquiry to recreate its sense of ‘Scottishness’ and to develop a new ‘tartan distinctiveness to policy making’ (Seawright 2004: 7). This included its acceptance of the principle of devolution and a desire to address specifically Scottish aspirations (SCUP 1998). The Tories made a commitment to ‘win back the trust of the Scottish people’ and address the grievances of the Scottish people (SCUP 2003). However, it remains to be seen whether this new Scottish identity and rhetoric, framed in the context of unionism, will have the desired impact on voters.

The Scottish Conservatives are not the only ‘unionist’ party in Scotland drawing on the language of British nationhood and identity in their rhetoric. Whilst the Conservatives have historically linked unionism with the British Empire, the Labour Party talks of Scotland leading the democratic renewal of ‘new Britain’ which is a ‘multicultural, multiethnic and multicultural country’ (Brown and Alexander 1999: 4). Within this overarching construct, Scotland is considered one of the three ‘historic nations’ with multiple identities (as Scottish, British and European). Nationhood does not require political independence, which would result in ‘isolation, chaos and uncertainty’ (SLP 1994). Rather, Labour thinks Scottish interests are best served in the UK, and for that reason advocate regionalism and devolution. This does not preclude Scottish Labour from supporting a form of ‘practical’ nationalism or engaging in a discourse of ‘popular sovereignty and self-determination’ (McEwen 2004a: 164). Scottish Labour has sought to appeal to a distinctly Scottish identity through its advocacy of Scotland as an historic nation and through its use of certain cultural imagery. For instance, in promoting ‘Tartan Day’ in North America, First Minister Jack McConnell posed in a kilt in New York. Yet it would be difficult to argue that these activities are meant to appeal to cultural nationalism per se. Rather, it seems that the promotion of Scotland’s culture abroad is motivated by economic concerns – to boost tourism and increase external trade.

Like the SNP, Labour do not provide a cultural marker for their idea of the Scottish ‘nation’, instead emphasising themes that undergird a collective identity, such as a particular Scottish commitment to social democracy, social inclusion and solidarity (Keating et al 2003: 151). But that is where the similarities end. More in likeness with the Conservatives’ use of cultural imagery to frame their construction of the Scottish nation, Labour’s emphasis on a national identity based on shared values rather than political objectives may be considered as an effort to de-politicise national identity, and to ‘disassociate expressions of national identity from debates over Scotland’s constitutional and political future’ (McEwen 2004a: 169). Since devolution, Scottish Labour has moved away from an explicitly pro-Scottish stance, instead endorsing London’s commitment to a
renewed sense of Britishness (McEwen 2004a: 167). Labour is trying to forge Scots’ loyalty to the
British state and reconcile British and Scottish identity, a dualism that is the accepted norm for
many Scots (Bond and Rosie 2002). Moreover, Scottish Labour have sought to emphasise themes
such as solidarity, partnership and social justice across the UK to support their vision of Scottish
nationhood within the Union and to defeat the ‘narrow divisiveness’ of the SNP (Brown and
Alexander 1999: 47). Labour argues that Scottish values of egalitarianism and collectivism are best
served in the UK, based on the principles of the welfare state. But ‘New’ Labour’s centre-political
agenda, especially its privatisation of public services, may be seen as descending from Thatcherism
and thus, for many Scots, an English phenomenon. This may have prompted a move in Scottish
Labour’s strategy away from emphasising Britishness. First Minister Jack McConnell, in response
to Chancellor Gordon Brown’s bid for all Brits to ‘honour and embrace’ the Union Jack, asserted
that ‘I think of myself as a Scot, first and foremost’ (Observer, 29 January 2006).

In contrast, the Liberal Party had continuously advocated ‘home-rule-all-around’ since the
1880s and can justifiably argue to have a much stronger mandate than the Labour Party to advance
the cause of Scottish self-determination. The Liberals advocated parliaments at Edinburgh and
Cardiff at every general election since 1950, even though distinctly ‘Scottish’ and ‘Welsh’ priorities
were submerged within the general commitment to a federal UK structure. Yet the LibDems have
also put claims to Scottish nationhood within a wider European and international context,
comparing Scotland to other substate entities within federations (such as the provinces in Canada),
and acknowledging the various types of regional status in Europe (such as the Spanish autonomous
communities and the German Länder). By referring to Scotland as a region in their European
activities (though not in the Scottish political context, where the territory is defined as a nation), the
LibDems are able to make direct comparisons with other European substate territories and engage
in the European discourse on ‘regionalism’. It also neutralises their language on Scottish autonomy.
Like Labour and the SNP, they never refer to a collective cultural project in Scotland, but interpret
Scottish nationhood as being underpinned by democratic values in an international context.

Since devolution, the system of proportional representation has opened up space for new
parties, such as the Socialists and Greens, both of whom claim to be ‘Scottish’ parties first and
foremost. The Green vision of an independent Scotland is based on the principles of environmental
wisdom, equality, radical democracy and social justice (SGP 2003: 2), which fits with the social-
democratic welfare consensus in Scotland. Although the Greens avoid using the language of
nationalism, they believe that decentralisation, subsidiarity and bringing power closer to the people
strengthens democracy, and for that reason support independence. Contrarily, the Socialists assert
that Scotland is an historic, and naturally socialist nation with a long history of radical politics, but
which has been suppressed and exploited by successive governments in Westminster. Labour in the
Scottish Executive constitutes their new target, which is accused of running down public services and living standards in their pursuit of free-market policies (SSP 2003). In their 1999 campaign brochure, the SSP stated their desire to build a Scotland ‘based on the principles of equality, democracy, liberty, generosity and solidarity’ (SSP 2004: 2), a position that is aligned to the state-welfare values of the Scottish electorate, and which again eschews cultural references to Scotland.

This discussion has shown that ‘the debate surrounding the concept of the Scottish nation is a hotbed of ideological friction because of the conflicting political projects it expresses’ (Sutherland 2001: 277). The SNP’s claim to be the only ‘truly’ Scottish party has been vigorously contested by other parties in Scotland, who have advanced various visions of Scottish nationhood and self-determination. Yet none of the parties have explicitly sought to describe the Scottish nation as an imagined community with a concomitant sense of belonging and loyalty, but they have rather tried to emphasise the socioeconomic and political values and traditions in Scotland to underpin their notions of nationhood. Each party has argued that their proposals for constitutional reform are the best way to safeguard these values. So, for the SNP, Scotland must acquire independence in order to be a ‘normal’ nation (though one that offers voluntary membership to any Scottish resident) with full control over social policy; for Labour the main objective is to enhance Scotland’s status abroad in order to obtain material benefits, but without breaking away from the UK which provides common welfare institutions and economic security; for the Conservatives, the Scottish nation is culturally defined but politically and economically part of the British Union; and for the Scottish Socialists, the nation must be free from the UK and Europe to be self-determining, with the aims of creating a sense of socialist internationalism amongst Scots. These different conceptions of Scottish nationhood form the basis for competing territorial demands. Our next task is to examine the socioeconomic dimension of territorial claims. Specifically, we will examine how parties has sought to secure Scotland’s territorial interests in the Union, often having to choose between territorial strategies of gaining more autonomy for Scotland, or channelling demands to the centre.

4.4 Territorial Strategies: Autonomy versus Capacity?

As we have discussed so far, each of the main political ideologies in Scotland – Liberalism, Unionism, Socialism and Nationalism – has highlighted the need to accommodate Scotland’s distinct identity and interests in the UK. In accordance with their conceptions of nationhood, the political parties in Scotland have advanced different territorial strategies to best secure Scottish power and influence, whilst underlining Scotland’s system of shared sovereignty within a larger political construct. However, the way in which ‘power and influence’ is best obtained for Scotland has been the source of heated contestation. The territorial strategies adopted by parties have both constitutional dimensions, stretching from independence to centralisation on the territorial
continuum; and (socioeconomic) policy dimensions, which could similarly range from fiscal autonomy to support for economic centralisation and greater access to the centre. Often these two territorial demands – for constitutional rights as well as policy capacity – may sit easily together, in the case that constitutional rights are seen as a pre-requisite for building policy capacity. Yet what is interesting to this discussion is when parties are forced to make a trade-off between the two, which often leads to inconsistencies in their overall policy programmes.

Midwinter et al (1991: 74) argue that throughout the twentieth century, Scotland’s lack of constitutional autonomy was the *quid pro quo* of privileged access to the centre. Although the administrative functions of the Scottish Office (est. 1885) were during the post-war period gradually expanded to include responsibility for the implementation of a range of welfare state services, it lacked legislative powers and thereby the ability to develop distinctive policies for Scotland. In exchange for making do with this weak ‘formal’ autonomy, the Scottish Office was given disproportionate access to the centre, which meant a strong lobbying role in the Cabinet and Whitehall departments in order to secure maximum funds for Scotland (Jones and Keating 1985). Particularly in times of economic crisis, it was believed that access to the centre was more important than achieving a quasi-independent status for Scotland. The British welfare state provided a certain sense of stability and economic security contrasted with the uncertainty of enhanced constitutional autonomy (Keating 1988; McEwen 2002: 66). Questions of socioeconomic development and resources were therefore separated from the need for constitutional reform, and the two main parties in Scotland, Labour and the Conservatives, exhibited a preference for trading-off home rule for Scotland for influence in London and enhanced policy capacity.

The Conservative strategy, for instance, was to give Scotland just enough administrative devolution to allow implementation of state policies with a distinctive Scottish style, and enough influence within Whitehall to pursue Scotland’s ‘national interest’, without granting any legislative autonomy. This strategy resulted in the expansion of Scottish Office powers in the 1920s and 1960s, which was also part of the Tory vision of decentralised administration in the UK. When Edward Heath, party leader in the late 1960s, tried to take this one step further through proposals for a Scottish Assembly, he failed to mobilise support within the Tory party for legislative autonomy. Since then, the Tories have taken a more or less consistent line against granting self-government to the nations of the UK, and when demands for autonomy grew louder with the rise of the SNP in the 1970s, Conservatives governments have undertaken periodic ‘stock-taking’ exercises to expand the remit (though not necessarily the powers) of the Scottish Office to sweeten the trade-off. Functions relating to transport, social policy, housing and planning were transferred to the Scottish Office in the 1950s, which gave Scotland a limited ability to develop economic planning programmes. As Mitchell (1996: 46) notes, ‘accretions to the responsibilities of the Scottish Office were building up,
sustaining the notion of a Scottish economy while not allowing it to tackle Scotland’s underlying social and economic problems’. The Scottish Office was unable to make political decisions about the distribution of social benefits or to pursue a particular economic policy line, unless this was part of a lobbying strategy behind closed doors in Whitehall. Despite having high capacity to implement policies and obtain resources and concessions, it had low autonomy – in being free from Whitehall constraint – and thus remained an agent of local administration in a highly centralised British state.

Yet arguments for economic centralisation were well-supported by the existence, role and purpose of the British welfare state. Labour’s introduction of the National Insurance Act, National Health Service Act and the National Assistance Act in the late 1940s, which formed the backbone of the welfare state, was an important device in creating a sense of Britishness amongst Scots, to replace the unifying appeal lost by the decline of Empire. According to Brown et al (1998: 15), ‘Labour had abandoned its early belief in a Scottish Parliament in favour of managerial control of the implementation of policy and largesse from the UK state’. As well as its nation-building role, the welfare state could be effectively deployed in arguments against independence. ‘In the face of a territorial challenge to the integrity of the state, the economic and social security guaranteed by the welfare state can be contrasted to the insecurity of enhanced sub-state autonomy or secession’ (McEwen 2002: 69). Tories also supported the welfare state in the 1950s and 1960s as an important aspect of British identity and a bulwark against separatism. Issues of socioeconomic development were separated from questions of constitutional reform, as British governments continued to accommodate Scotland’s territorial interests through administrative devolution and access to Whitehall, whilst underlining the importance of socioeconomic unity. This consensus held until the 1970s, when two developments forced Labour in opposition to revise its strategy of separating constitutional issues from socioeconomic issues. On one hand, the rise of the SNP – and its promises of Scottish wealth through abundant oil reserves – prompted Scots to reconsider whether the British state was the best guarantor of socioeconomic security. Combined with the widespread questioning of the economic credibility of the UK, and its perceived inability to deliver material welfare, the SNP’s arguments for an economically successful and independent Scotland challenged the economic cases for the Union – namely, that the British common market was advantageous to Scots and that Scotland was heavily subsidised by the rest of the UK (Mitchell 1996: 56).

This economic case for the Union was also weakened by the advent of Thatcherism. The neo-liberal agenda promoted by the Thatcher government, which undermined such important common British institutions as the National Health Service, thereby undermined the sense of loyalty amongst Scots to Britain itself (Mitchell 1996: 53). Her policies threatened the social and economic security of Scots in the Union by rolling back the welfare state, upsetting the trade-off that Scots had traditionally accepted between economic security/central access and autonomy, thus making the
latter a more attractive option. Thatcher’s attacks on nationalised industries, local government, social welfare and public services, which embodied the Scottish identity (McCrone 2001:122) led many in Scottish Labour to believe that an assembly would have been able to resist these ‘deeply damaging and divisive policies’ (Scottish Parliamentary Labour Group 1984: 3; cited in McEwen 2002: 78). This was an important factor in their switch to supporting home rule in the 1980s. At this point, argues McEwen (2002: 81), demands for the ‘establishment of a Scottish Parliament replaced access to the centre as the primary goal of those demanding policies to address Scotland’s socioeconomic problems’. The Scottish electorate had welfare expectations of the Parliament, and no longer trusted Westminster to act in Scotland’s interests on matters of socioeconomic reform.

Since devolution, the Scottish Parliament has been given substantial control over social and economic policy, such as health, education, housing and regional planning, which were once also the remit of the Scottish Office. But whilst the latter only had administrative responsibility, the Parliament has legislative powers, and is thus in a much stronger position to address the underlying socioeconomic needs of Scotland. Furthermore, the fact that much of the welfare state has been devolved, means that the Executive can pursue a distinctive policy style in line with Scottish values. This has been most evident in the introduction of free care for the elderly and the abolition of up-front tuition fees, which has put some pressure on Westminster to offer the same social benefits to the English. Holyrood thus has considerable institutional autonomy to diverge in policy-making. However, this autonomy is not free from constraints. First, as stipulated in the 1998 Scotland Act, the UK government retains exclusive responsibility over social security, employment policy and control over taxation. These reserved powers impinge on the Scottish Executive’s ability to pursue a distinctive economic development programme for Scotland, as it must work within the macro-economic boundaries set by Westminster. For instance, active labour-market policies require coordination across welfare (reserved), immigration (reserved), training and education (devolved), and transport (devolved). This requires a coordinated response from devolved and central institutions, which is achievable when the same party is in government at both levels, but limits devolved institutions from pursuing distinctive policy lines. The Executive’s socioeconomic goals ‘can only be achieved where the UK government broadly shares the same policy goals’ (McEwen 2002: 86). Second, the autonomy of the Executive to pursue distinctive economic development goals is constrained by limited financial powers. Scotland receives a block grant from the Treasury, and although it has discretion over how it spends this money, it has no control over how the money is raised or redistributed. This raises questions about the accountability and responsibility of the Executive with regard to spending and taxation, and underlines the fact that the devolved institutions are ultimately dependent on the centre for finance.
Debates about the autonomy and capacity of Scottish institutions have changed yet again with the deepening of European integration, as Brussels provides a new ‘centre’ for regions to access, and EU legislation impinges on many of Scotland’s devolved competences. As we shall see, Scottish parties began to view Europe as a new context for pursuing constitutional change, which was partially catalysed by the need to counter the SNP’s appeal of independence in Europe. Europe was also considered by some parties to constitute a new arena for pursuing the social-democratic project that Thatcher tried to bring to an end. How these two separate, but interconnected, goals played out in party programmes is examined in detail below. For now, I shall provide an overview of Scottish party responses to European integration up until the time of deepening integration.

4.5 Europeanisation and Scotland’s Parties

British entry to the European Community (EC) in 1973 caused as much political discord in Scotland as it did in the rest of the UK. However, the discussion of costs and benefits of EC membership took a somewhat different hue north of the Border. It has been noted by Bennie et al (1997) that Scots were decidedly critical of the EC before and after joining, despite voting positively during the referendum on continued UK membership of the EC in 1975 (but less so than England and Wales by about 10%). What made the issue distinctive north of the Border in the 1970s was the fear that Scotland would be further removed from the new economic and political centres and that Scotland’s fisheries, agriculture and traditional industries would be threatened by the Common Market. The Tory government’s principal argument in favour of EC membership – that the UK would recover its prosperity through increased trade – had less resonance in Scotland than elsewhere. Instead, the Scottish electorate’s cautious approach to Europe was better captured by left-wing parties.

During the 1970s, the Scottish Council of the Labour Party believed that the EC threatened its programmes for nationalisation and the welfare state. Labour had vehemently rejected the neoliberal free-market Europe that the Tories had painted a picture of in the early 1970s. In the 1975 referendum on EC membership, the Labour Party was split. Although members of the Labour Party in Scotland voted against continued EC membership in their 1975 party conference, the UK Labour Party had overcome its divisions by supporting the Callaghan Government’s referendum campaign (Butler and Kitzinger 1996). But winning the referendum did not quell the divisions between the pro- and anti-European camps. Hostility to Europe led to a Conference decision to withdraw from the EC in 1980, a position that was elaborated in the party’s 1983 General Election manifesto: Labour would ‘open immediate negotiations with our EEC partners, and introduce the necessary legislation, to prepare for Britain’s withdrawal from the EEC, to be completed well within the lifetime of the Labour Government’ (Labour Party 1983, cited in Ashford 1992: 128). That year, the Party suffered quite badly at the polls. Ashford argues that the Party’s anti-European position did
not resonate with Britain’s voters and led to their massive electoral defeat. Whether this is the case or not, a number of factors led to a change in policy in the 1980s. These included the conversion of trade unions to a pro-European position, public support in favour of EC membership and the need to take a proactive role in determining European affairs in order to avoid the creation of a ‘Fortress Europe’ that the single market may herald. Labour began to link constitutional change in Scotland to regionalisation in Europe, arguing that Scotland had to maximise the representation of its interests in Brussels, which was aided by the trend towards regionalisation in Europe and the adoption of the principles of subsidiarity in Maastricht (Dardanelli 2005: 93). Its ‘about-turn’ on Europe would become intricately linked to its re-commitment to constitutional change in the UK.

The SNP was during the post-war era highly suspicious of European integration. The EC was viewed as centralist and elitist, and it was unclear to the party how Scottish interests would be represented if the EC operated on an intergovernmental basis – with the UK Government taking important decisions over Scottish affairs. During the 1975 referendum, the SNP campaigned on the theme ‘No voice, no entry’, hoping that Scotland would distinguish itself from the rest of the UK by voting against the EC. However, the party misjudged the mood of public opinion (which at the beginning of the year had favoured the SNP’s position) and when 61.7% of Scots turned out to vote ‘Yes’ by 58.4%, the SNP had to re-think its position. The change in attitude was assisted by the election of Winifred Ewing to the European Parliament in 1979, who obtained publicity for SNP’s defence of Scottish interests in Europe. Another influential proponent of Europe was Jim Sillars, a former Labour politician who in 1975 had formed a short-lived socialist-nationalist breakaway group. Sillars advocated the benefits of independent Scottish membership of the EC and upon joining the SNP was instrumental in developing its ‘independence in Europe’ platform.

As for Scotland’s other main parties, the Liberal Democrats were enthusiastic advocates of European integration. They had supported applications for membership of the ECSC in 1951, the EEC and Euratom in 1957 and the attempts of both Labour and Conservative Governments to join the EC in the 1960s and 70s. During the 1975 referendum, the Liberals campaigned for a ‘Yes’ vote, but they did not fall in with the Conservative line: ‘Although Liberals have all along supported European economic integration, they have always laid the greatest stress on the need for a political union’ (Liberal Party 1975). In contrast, the Tories were openly hostile to the idea of closer political integration, though they were not immune to the benefits that a deregulated economic Europe would bring. As Thatcher later recounted, ‘I had one overriding positive goal. This was to create a single Common Market… British businesses would be among those most likely to benefit from the opening-up of other countries’ markets’ (Thatcher 1995: 553). It was solely upon this basis that the Tories supported the 1975 referendum. However, with Thatcher’s election as leader of the Party in 1975, and Prime Minister in 1979, the Tories pursued a more pugnacious approach to Europe.
In the period between the two devolution referendums of 1979 and 1997, the relevance of Europe to the constitutional debate in Scotland increased considerably. This was due to a number of factors. The introduction of direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979, and in particular the election of Winnie Ewing for the SNP for the Highlands and Islands constituency, created a direct institutional link between the Nationalist project and Europe. Formerly a critic of the EU, Lynch (1996: 37) argues that Ewing’s ‘political activities imported a more positive European dimension into the party’. As Ewing (1998) states herself, ‘I tried to prepare a place for Scotland in the hearts and minds of our Euro-colleagues’. Furthermore, Dardanelli (2003: 18) points to Ewing’s increased knowledge of the workings of the EU system brought about by ‘institutional learning’ as a ‘key factor in determining her change in attitudes towards the EU’. The SNP’s conversion to Europe, and in particular their adoption of an independence-in-Europe policy, forced other parties to re-consider their positions on integration. Moreover, other parties in Scotland were also subject to the same processes of ‘institutional learning’ processes in Brussels, importing European ideas and issues – in particular EU funding initiatives – into Scottish political debates.4

But there were other factors at play in prompting a change in party perceptions of Europe. At a time when Thatcher’s Britain held little attraction for Scottish political elites, Europe was beginning to look like a more agreeable system of shared sovereignty for Scotland. The re-election of the Conservatives in 1987 and 1992 (despite Scotland voting Labour) augmented pressures for a Scottish Parliament with strong European relations. ‘It is this European dimension… that ensures that the campaign for a Scottish Parliament has a recurrent tendency to keep coming back on the agenda’ (Brown et al 1998: 23). Whilst Europe was a low-key issue in the first devolution referendum, when parties saw integration as a process detrimental to devolution, by the time of the second referendum Europe had become central to debates on Scotland’s future. Scottish Labour and LibDem MEPs had been active in debates about carving out a role for regions in the changing European construct, and linked this to the need for devolution (Hepburn 2006). Moreover, the Constitutional Convention (1995) attached ‘great importance… to Scotland’s dynamic and developing relationships with the institutions of the European Union’. Not only was it understood that many of Edinburgh’s competences would fall under EU legislation and directives, but the Convention had hopes of seeing Scotland act on an international stage.

Furthermore, the social policies of the EC were looked upon favourably by the left in Scotland and the rest of the UK, such as those relating to childcare equality and workers’ rights (Brown et al 1998). In particular, the provision of regional development funding, and the Highlands and Islands’ qualification for Objective 1 funding in 1994, cast European integration in a more positive light. The Scottish Labour Party and SNP sought to construct a popular perception that

4 There are currently 7 MSPs elected for the single constituency of Scotland.
Scotland was a more left-leaning country, and that Europe would accommodate these social-democratic values. They criticised the Tories’ refusal to sign the Council of Europe’s Charter of Local Self-Government in 1985 and Maastricht’s Social Chapter in 1992. Meanwhile, the Scottish Conservatives continues to extol the economic rationality of Scots, and the perceived benefits of market integration, whilst political integration was put forward as threat to British sovereignty. The problem here was that this particular message did not have the same impact in Scotland as in England, as Scottish sovereignty was already seen to be shared with the UK.

Once the SNP and Labour both switched sides to a pro-European stance in the late 1980s, joining the solidly Euroophile Liberal Democrats, Scottish parties enjoyed parodying the ‘little Englander’ mentality of the Tories’ Europhobia. Not only did they put forward the idea that Scotland was a more social-democratic country, but they also played on the commonly-held perception that Scotland is a more pro-European nation. Non-Conservatives parties put forward Europe as an alternative to Thatcher’s free market ideology (despite Thatcher arguing that the single market was the only worthwhile development in Europe), and a new arena for developing the social-democratic project. But although there was a general perception that Europe heralded the possibility for, and perhaps need of, constitutional reform, there was contestation among parties as to the nature of such reform, whether it be for the purposes of federalising, decentralising or separating the constituent parts of the UK. Each of the parties in Scotland were forced not only to construct a certain idea of Scottish values and perceptions, but also to position themselves as the vehicle most likely to defend these values and interests in an integrating Europe, through reform of the UK constitutional settlement or the reification of the benefits of remaining in the Union.

4.6 Constitutional Autonomy in Europe

The aim of this section is to examine how parties in Scotland have advanced different constitutional options in response to European integration since the late 1980s. Although the contours of the European issue have remained the same for all political actors in Scotland, the positions of parties in response to European issues have changed quite radically. The discussion is organised into four themes: of how parties in Scotland have competed on the goals of independence, federalism, regionalism and unionism within a European context. Here I will identify which constitutional goals are considered by parties to best further territorial demands and explore how parties use the term autonomy for different instrumental ends in their rhetoric. But it will be shown that party constitutional demands do not always fit neatly into separate categories, as parties move from one position to another, or sometimes endorse more than one constitutional goal at the same time. Likewise, parties may advocate similar policy demands (as we shall explore in the next section), leading to inconsistencies in territorial strategies. Let us now look at each of these claims in detail.
4.6.1 Independence

Independence is the goal of three parties in the Scottish Parliament – the Scottish National Party (SNP), the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP) and the Scottish Green Party. The motivations for pursuing this goal, and interpretations of how independence might be achieved, vary markedly. The SNP adopted a policy of ‘independence in Europe’ in 1988 in response to accusations of trying to ‘divorce’ Scotland from the rest of the UK. The European context would reassure voters of ‘going it alone’ and provide an external framework for shared Scottish sovereignty, replacing that of the UK. However, the idea that Scottish independence would be best served within a European framework has been challenged by the two youngest parties in the Scottish Parliament. The Scottish Socialists and Greens are against EU membership, and demand independence outside Europe. Meanwhile, the aim of independence has been vigorously contested by Scotland’s statewide parties, who have sought to preserve the UK Union through other decentralising or federalising measures (though some LibDems and Labourites have shown sympathy for this goal, much to the chagrin of the party leaderships). This discussion will explore how Scotland’s parties compete on the theme of independence, and how this aim has been altered in the context of a ‘deepening’ Europe.

The SNP believes that Scotland should play a full role in the EU, as a ‘normal’ nation and an independent member-state. They eschew any attempt to classify Scotland as a ‘region’, which is considered to carry much less political weight than nationhood. The SNP has compared Scotland’s plight to that of other countries in Europe, especially following the dissolution of the former Soviet Union. ‘Nations throughout Europe are moving towards independent statehood, with the ultimate goal of EC membership. Yet… Labour and the LibDems are firmly committed to old, discredited state structures. Both would relegate Scotland to a region of Europe, with no power to shape our future’ (Memo to Maastricht 1991: 2). From Labour’s perspective, the opposite holds true. The Scottish Labour Party has taken the opposing side on the question of independence, and argues that if Scotland were to secede, it would lose influence at the core of British decision-making, the Cabinet, and the advantages of being part of one of the biggest EU member-states in European negotiations. To counter the demand for independence, Labour endorsed the idea of a devolved assembly with far-reaching powers. It believes that a regionalised Europe better reflects the realities of interdependence, in that there no need for statehood when Europe is tending towards unification.

This possibility is not addressed the SNP, which continues to believe that the nation should be congruent with the state, and as a nation, Scotland should be entitled to statehood. Yet there has been significant contestation within the party about how this goal of independence should be achieved, and what kind of Europe the SNP wants. When the policy was adopted in the late 1980s, there was ambiguity as to whether the party supported centralisation or decentralisation, or
federalism versus confederalism in the EU. Those within the ‘supranationalist’ camp advocated closer European unification, in which the EU would have control over foreign policy, defence and a single currency. Those who positioned themselves within the intergovernmentalist camp argued for the primacy of states, whereby powers would only be transferred to the EU if the member states so decided. Alan Macartney MEP (1990), made an attempt to clarify where the SNP stood in these issues. He argued that independence in Europe would require the creation of a European confederation; an association of member states which pool sovereignty in certain areas but do not surrender total control to an authoritative body. This would allow Scotland to exert equal influence over decision-making as other small member states.

Yet the SNP is also not adverse to having regional representation in the Council of Ministers. For instance, it currently argues that Scottish Ministers in the devolved Parliament should be given the right to attend and participate in the EU Council of Ministers’ meetings, and to take the lead of the UK delegation when EU Council meetings deal with specific and vital Scottish interests. This position has been exploited by the Labour Party, which argues that Scottish self-determination can be accommodate by devolution, thereby rendering independence unnecessary. The SNP’s ambiguous position also raises the issue of whether it in fact supports federalism as a stepping stone to independence, or whether it would be necessary to have independence is Scottish Ministers could attend Council of Ministers meetings in a regional capacity. Despite this, the SNP has not endorsed federalism, or regionalism, which means that its plans for expanding Holyrood’s powers, and the impact of this on relations with Whitehall, remain unclear.

The dual strategy of demanding full independence and at the same time supporting devolution (see section 4.6.3) results from the divide between fundamentalists and gradualists. The former see independence as a zero-sum gain and small section of this group also seek to free Scotland from the shackles of Europe, like the SSP and Greens. This demonstrates that Europe is another fault line that runs through the SNP. The gradualists, on the other hand, see sovereign statehood arriving in stages, and have sought to use devolution as a ‘stepping stone’ to independence. Yet in official party literature, the SNP refuses to acknowledge the implications of this intermediate strategy, focusing only on independence. To achieve this goal, the SNP must ‘maintain the constitutional debate due to the change in the approach of UK parties… the Party will have better prospects of success due to the decline in credibility of devolution… It is likely that the UK parties will promote a more UK-Unionist agenda’ (SNP 1992d: 2).

The ‘UK party’ that the SNP was primarily referring to here was its main competitor – Labour. Within the Labour Party, there is a strong body of opinion opposed to independence and in favour of the continuation of the union with England. Scottish Labour leaders have time and again warned Scottish voters of ‘divorce’ from the UK and the havoc that this would wreak. But such
opposition to independence has not always been shared by all party members, in particular those sympathetic to home rule. The Scottish Liberal Democrats also acknowledge that ‘independence is a perfectly legitimate aspiration. But: we reject claims that independence is risk free and a passport to instance success’ (1996: 1). The SLD want a federal UK structure, an option that offers Scotland the autonomy it needs without the ‘unsettling effect’ of negotiating independence. The LibDems are opposed to unitary statehood as it counters their policies of decentralisation and European political integration. However, there has been dissent within the ranks. SLD Vice-Chairman Bob McCreadie argued that following devolution, Scotland should ‘move towards independent membership of the EC’ (Scotsman, 5 February 1992). So there is a minority within the party that believes that expanding Holyrood’s powers means achieving full control over Scottish affairs.

A similar situation has occurred in the Conservative Party. Although the Tories are staunchly opposed independence, there are some members who believe it might solve some of their problems. For instance, Allan Stewart, former MP for Eastwood, thinks that the party should support a policy of independence, as this arrangement would produce a clearer and more cooperative relationship with England than asymmetrical devolution, which has yet not resolved the ‘West Lothian Question’. Stewart expressed his feeling thus: ‘I’ve always believed that the English perception of what independence would do to them has always been unnecessarily worried. There is a major issue about defence, but I don’t think other issues are a real worry’ (Herald 2 May 2005). Yet the possibility of the Tories supporting Scottish independence remains very much a pipe dream, as the party leadership and much of its electorate remain ideologically opposed to the principle.

Contrarily, the break-up of the UK is a central aim of the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP). Their goal is to establish an independent socialist Scottish republic operating on the principles of public ownership. This new polity would not, however, seek to find a place within the free market EU. The SNP’s goal of independence in Europe is contested by the SSP on two grounds. First, because this demand is contradictory, entailing the transferral of rule over Scottish affairs from Westminster to Brussels, as opposed to ‘genuine’ self-rule. Second, the EU represents a ‘semi-despotic and undemocratic’ set of institutions that operates behind closed doors to impose unjust, neo-liberal policies on citizens (SSP 2003; EACL 2003). As Tommy Sheridan, former leader of Scottish Militant Labour (the SSP predecessor), put it during the 1994 European Parliament elections, ‘We will be the only party in this election putting forward an alternative to the European super quango of bosses, billionaires and bureaucrats… we will be the only party… calling for a completely new socialist union of European nations’ (Herald, 30 May 1994). Of particular concern to the SSP is the lack of European provisions for social rights and laws on working conditions to

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5 In the run-up to the first devolution referendum in 1979, Tam Dalyell, MP for West Lothian, posed the question of why, after legislative devolution, Scottish MPs would be able to vote English domestic affairs.
off-set the social disequilibrium created by free-market economics. These concerns are not so evident in SNP literature. Indeed, the Nationalists whole-heartedly support the dynamics of the single market (though to underpinned by clearer social rights), and emphasise the economic benefits to be obtained by bolstering business investment in Scotland through lower corporation taxes.

The Scottish Green Party also supports the long-term goal of independence, but has not subscribed to ‘independence in Europe’. It believes that the ‘unelected and unaccountable’ European Commission has ‘lost the trust of ordinary people’ (SGP 1999). The party is also critical of the EU’s failure to meet pressing environmental problems, for instance the Common Agricultural Policy ‘promotes intensive agriculture that destroys jobs and pollutes soil and water’ (ibid). The Greens also see the Schengen agreement as serious threat to civil liberties, by discriminating against ethnic minorities perceived as ‘non-European’. Therefore the party advocates an independent Scotland with open borders but are opposed the membership of the EU, unless its structures are radically reformed. On this count, the Socialists and Greens have similar platforms. But unlike the SSP, the Greens are predominantly gradualists: more like the SNP gradualist wing, they support the expansion of the Parliament’s powers in domestic and foreign (especially European) affairs.

In 2004, attempts were made to capitalise on the existence of three independence-seeking parties in the Scottish Parliament. The SSP proposed the creation of an Independence Convention, which would exist as an umbrella grouping for the sovereigntist parties. Although this idea has received support from the fundamentalist wing of the SNP, the SNP leadership and Greens have refused to join such an organisation. As an alternative, SNP leader John Swinney has promoted an ‘open dialogue’ with supporters of independence, holding talks with the Greens in particular. The issue of EU membership was not raised in these discussions, though if the three parties are able to cooperate on ‘the dream that is shared by Mr Sheridan and by the Green Party and by every member of the SNP, of an independent, free Scotland’, Europe will certainly become a major point of debate. But, there is some evidence to show that the SNP is joining the other two parties in their scepticism of European integration. For instance, the SNP threatened to oppose the European Constitution in a referendum had fishing not been removed from EU competences. To justify this scepticism, former SNP leader John Swinney maintained that in the early stages of integration, the SNP were naïve of the workings of Europe, and would accept anything put on their plate: now, one ‘shouldn’t always say yes to everything in Europe. There are some lines that we won’t cross’. The SNP’s decision to oppose the constitution raised the question of how ‘Europeanised’ it really is.

In the European sphere, the SNP has been involved in the European Free Alliance (EFA) and the Rainbow Group, despite calls from the anti-European camp to limit support for the EC. In

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7 Interview [1.10] with John Swinney.
its early days, EFA was a relatively loose organisation that allowed members to opt out of some policies (Lynch 1996: 143). This was important for the SNP, who remained (and remains) somewhat out of the orbit of the EFA because of its aim for independent statehood, rather than just regional autonomy. Since then, EFA has refrained from articulating a common programme or policies than parties must uphold, and has instead provided a ‘minimum’ set of basic principles. The SNP heightened its involvement with EFA with the election of Winnie Ewing MEP for the Highlands and Islands as the new EFA Chair. However, during the following years, the SNP was tarred by its European colleagues, especially when the nationalist *Lega Nord* entered a coalition slate with the former neo-fascist *Alleanza Nazionale* in 1994, leading to its expulsion from EFA. In the meantime, EFA turned itself into a political grouping with the new title EFA – Democratic Party of the Peoples of Europe in 1995, and formed an alliance with the Green Party. However, EFA does not seem to be visible within the file-and-rank of the parties themselves. As Neil MacCormick expressed, ‘one of the things I hope to do is get more of a grass-roots engagement’ with EFA.\(^8\)

The Scottish Socialist Party has also become involved in joining European organisations, and promoting closer cooperation amongst the European left. In 2001 it became a founding member of the European Anti-Capitalist Left (EACL) which, together with like-minded parties from Denmark, Portugal, the Basque Country and Catalonia, sought to lobby the EC on the draft constitution. The EACL approved the aim of contesting the European Parliament elections in 2004. For the Scottish Socialists, ‘an SSP MEP can help us make links with pensioners, students and public sector workers, campaigning against the war [in Iraq], the persecution of asylum seekers and attacks on workers’ terms and conditions’.\(^9\) Furthermore, the SSP has become active in the European Social Forum, which staged demonstrations against global capitalism in Florence 2002 and Paris 2003.\(^10\) Of interest here, the SSP co-sponsored a workshop in Florence with the Basque socialist and pacifist group Zutik, entitled ‘Globalisation and the right to National Self-Determination.’ The SSP is echoing the SNP’s tactics by forging alliances with like-minded parties in Europe that are sympathetic to the goals of independence and socialism. Furthermore, within the EACL the right to self-determination of ‘nations without states’ has been enshrined in the Paris Statement. This chimes with the SSP’s main problem with the draft European constitution, in that it does not recognise the multinational character of member-states and makes ‘it difficult for small states, like Catalonia and Scotland, to increase the powers devolved to them’ (Garvie 2004: 2).

The Scottish Greens have been active in developing links with other Green parties through the European Federation of Green Parties, which was succeeded by a European Green Party (EGP)

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\(^8\) Interview [1.1] with Neil MacCormick.


\(^10\) Apparently, the Scottish Socialist Party was given a warm welcome on the anti-war in Iraq demonstration by the Italian Socialists who began spontaneously singing ‘Scozia Libera!’ (Free Scotland!).
in 2004. The EGP fashions itself as ‘the political voice of green issues in Europe’, and has urged EU member states to strengthen their commitment to treaties such as the Kyoto Protocol. The EGP opposes the current push towards ‘harmonisation’ as strong legislation by a member state may be overturned, which may lead to a weakening of environmental standards. The EGP is also committed to ‘shared development, open borders, diverse cultures and the eradication of racism’ (SGP 1999) and seeks to further develop programmes of international debt relief. Indeed, the Scottish Greens have taken up the LibDem proposal for the Executive to be given specific powers to enable Scotland to give aid to developing countries (SLD 1999: 11; SGP 2003). It appears that the Scottish LibDems, Greens and Socialists are moving over the same terrain with regards to strengthening environmental legislation and promoting international cooperation, peace and cultural diversity.

4.6.2 Federalism

Within the Scottish political arena, only one party – the Scottish Liberal Democrats – officially endorses the principle of federalism. The SLD favour a federal solution to the UK’s constitutional debate, whereby Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the regions of England (if they so desired) would have control over certain domestic matters and the federal (UK) Parliament would retain other competences, ‘such as foreign affairs, defence and macro-economic policy, which are best dealt with at a collective level’ (SLD 1992: 1). This marks a radical alternative to Labour’s support for a devolved UK. Furthermore, a federal solution, argues the LibDems, solves the problem of parliamentary representation for an area with legislative devolution as posed in the ‘West Lothian question’. As a result of this commitment, the SLD claims the longest history of supporting decentralisation of the UK to its various parts. However, there have also been recent developments within the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party that point to their acceptance of federalism as a potential solution to what they consider as an unstable constitutional settlement created by devolution in 1998. Although this is not an official party aim, some Scottish Tories argue that a federal UK might be preferable to the present distribution of powers, and interestingly, have argued that fiscal autonomy for the Scottish Parliament is a step on the way to achieving this goal. These moves have been opposed by the Labour Party, who defend current relations between Edinburgh and Westminster, and disagree with a more extreme restructuring of the state that federalism entails.

The Liberal (Democratic) Party was an early advocate of a federal Europe. This fits with the Party’s long-held belief that peace and security is only achievable through international cooperation, free trade and the dispersal of the power of the state up to international institutions and down to the regions. A decentralised federal Europe should be based on the principle of subsidiarity, which ensures that EU policy-making is focussed only on areas where EU action is indispensable, to be enshrined in a Constitution that defines and circumscribes the centre’s powers.
Since the 1990s, the LibDems have linked decentralisation in the UK to that in Europe. The party’s ‘decentralist federalism is based upon decades of commitment to European integration and a realistic assessment that subsidiarity is the way forward for Europe as well as for Scotland.’\textsuperscript{11} But although the SLD ideally envisage the creation of a federal Europe as a long-term goal, as they also envisage a federal UK, that they also support a Europe of the Regions. This policy is consistent with the Liberal’s support of dispersing authority beneath and below the level of the state, and is seen as a step towards achieving the goal of a federal Europe. Commitment to a Europe of the Regions also makes sense given that the Liberal Democrats are in a coalition government with Labour in the Scottish Parliament, which is based on cooperation and compromise between the governing parties. However, the issue of federalism, despite being on the backburner, has always been a core priority for the SLD who queried ‘If Europe was to be a true federation, should the primary federal union for Scotland be Europe itself rather than the United Kingdom?’ (SLD 1992: 2). In the short term, the LibDem’s first task is to convert the UK into a federal system that ‘recognises Scotland’s position and status as a founding partner in the United Kingdom’ (Steel 2006: 60). In the long term, however, the SLD hopes that within a federal Europe, Scotland will not need the external structure of the UK, as the territory would be directly represented in Europe.

The Scottish LibDems undertook a partnership agreement with Scottish Labour in 1999 to form a governing coalition in the Scottish Parliament. Europe is one area upon which both parties are able to agree, highlighted by both parties support of a Europe of the Regions. However, whereas the Scottish Labour Party understands this to be the expansion of Scottish representation in European institutions, for the LibDems it means ‘a federal Europe in which power is devolved downwards to the nations and regions which form part of existing Member States’ (SLP 1989: 4). The LibDems also think that the Scottish Parliament’s powers should be extended beyond what Scottish Labour is presently comfortable with, as part of their federalising strategy. The SLD have proposed establishing a second Scottish Constitutional Convention to discuss (and expand upon) the powers of the Scottish Parliament. This proposition has found support amongst the SNP, the Conservatives, the Green Party and the Scottish Socialists, as we shall discuss below. It may only be a matter of time before Labour is forced to seriously consider whether the development of the UK state along more federal lines is a much better way of protecting the British Union.

Whilst the Labour Party has been able to avoid articulating a clear position on the federal question in Scotland, it has been forced to confront the issue of federalism head-on in its relations with the European parliamentary group, the Party of European Socialists. The PES calls for a ‘new federalism’ in Europe. In a draft manifesto to the European Parliament in 2001, the Socialist Group and the PES Congress called for the creation of a Federation of States and Peoples, based on

\textsuperscript{11} Scottish Liberal Democrat Party Leader Jim Wallace, quoted in \textit{The Herald}, 7 June 1994.
decentralisation to regions, territories and organisations in civil society. A ‘new’ federalism ‘should make it possible to assimilate the new context surrounding the federalist challenge: the new dimension of the European Union, the globalisation process, the new geopolitical perspectives of Europe, the tendency for nation-states to decentralise’ (PES 2001: 4). This position on federalism is close to that of the Federation of European Liberals and Democrats (ELD), to which the Scottish Liberal Democrats have strong ties. But although members from the UK Labour Parliamentary Group have signed this document, the Labour Party has not adopted a pro-federalist position. Instead, it seeks to maintain an intergovernmental Europe, but with stronger input from the regions.

Contrarily, the Scottish Conservatives have also shown some sympathy for the goals of federalism, which may be used as a method of strengthening the British Union in response to the SNP’s demands for secession. Plans for fiscal independence are part of a broader argument for federalising the UK to overcome problems associated with the asymmetrical system of devolution, whereby the House of Lords might be converted into a chamber to negotiate the affairs between the different units in a federal system. Murdo Fraser argued that

‘we have a hotch-potch of systems and above it Westminster is essentially unreformed, it hasn’t really been adapted to the change in circumstances. So I think we need to have a federal or quasi-federal system that seeks to iron out the difficulties between the different parts of the UK…we don’t think the current government’s approach… is sustainable.’

This proposal, of federalising the UK to provide long-term stability for the Union, is a new development within the party, resulting from their internal review to make the party more palatable to Scottish voters and to improve the devolution settlement. Instead, the party has proposed that the UK should be arranged along German or American lines, so that the House of Lords is converted into a second chamber that has direct representation of each of the nations and regions of the UK (SCUP 1998; Seawright 2004). However, support for federalism within the UK as proposed by some members of the party does not necessarily translate into supporting federalism at the European level. The creation of a federal UK is designed to strengthen the UK union, while federalism at the EU level is seen as eroding UK sovereignty.

4.6.3 Devolution

The Scottish Labour Party (SLP) has since the late 1980s been a committed supporter of a ‘Europe of the Regions’, whereby the party has been able to link domestic arguments in favour of devolution in Scotland with the dialogue relating to, and provisions for subsidiarity as laid out in the Maastricht Treaty. This objective has also been supported by the Liberal Democrats, and the SNP have also advocated more powers for the regions for Europe. The devolution settlement differs from

12 Interview [1.3] with Murdo Fraser.
federalism, in that the powers devolved are temporary and ultimately reside in central government. Thus the state remains unitary. However, there have been demands, notably from the LibDems and the Conservatives, that regional assemblies should be guaranteed in the constitution so that they cannot be repealed by central government. These parties, as well as the SNP, Socialists and Greens also want to expand the range of powers of the Parliament, most notably in the area of finance. But whilst the opposition parties in Scotland are pushing for greater powers for the Parliament, Labour remains intent on seeing ‘how far it can go within the powers it’s got… we have to wait and see.’

The Labour Party’s re-commitment to constitutional change in the UK, and in particular Scottish devolution, became intricately linked to its ‘about-turn’ on Europe. The party began to realise that it would be difficult for Scotland to have a voice in Europe without an elected devolved government. David Martin MEP (former leader of the UK Labour Group in the European Parliament) made a strong association between constitutional change in Scotland and Europe by arguing that an ‘enlarged democratic Europe of the Regions’ would connect ‘devolved economic and democratic structures at national and regional level [to] a more democratic European Community’ (Martin 1988b: 83). The late UK Labour leader John Smith continued this line of argument by stating that regional government was increasing in power and influence in Europe, and Scotland – like the German Länder – should have its share of it (The Herald, 24 October 1992). By 1995, another prominent Scottish Labour politician, Robin Cook argued wholeheartedly in favour of a Europe of the Regions, which he defined as ‘the development of common policies at a European level that are matched by devolution of decision-making to regions of Europe’ (The Herald, 4 August 1995). The SLP understands a ‘Europe of the Regions’ as the extension of substate authorities’ participation in European decision-making processes, though there are voices within the party calling for an elected Chamber of Regions alongside the European Parliament, indicating a more federalist interpretation. David Martin (1988b) has advanced more radical proposals for Scotland, which should have maximum representation in the EU on the same level of the German Länder, representation in UK delegations, the transformation of the CoR into a Senate of the nations and regions of Europe, and the enshrinement of the notion of subsidiarity.

In its 1997 campaign manifesto, Labour promised that Scotland would have direct power in Europe if elected, including direct access to the Council of Ministers, a high proportion of Scottish representatives in the CoR, the creation of offices in Brussels, and a Scottish Minister of European Affairs. In short, it was seen that ‘Labour offers Scotland more powers in Europe’ (The Herald, 23 January 1995). Peter Hain (2002), a Cabinet Minister, issued a document on a ‘Europe and the Regions’ that summarised Labour’s sentiments: ‘We recognise, of course, that the EU is a Union of Members States, each responsible for its own internal constitutional arrangements. But within that

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13 Interview [1.7] with Christine May.
framework there is a crucial contribution that the regions can make, helping the EU to produce better policies and to become more democratic and transparent’. Hain goes on to argue for the increase of the CoR’s powers, its renaming as a Congress of European Regions, and granting the body full institutional status. The primary motivation behind these proposals for devolution within a European context was to defuse support for the SNP seeking independence in Europe, and to demonstrate how influential Scotland could be without having to go the separatist way. But in reality, one could argue that the SLP and the SNP are moving over the same terrain, with each proposing similar strategies for enhancing Scotland’s voice in Europe, for protecting Scotland’s economic interests, and for establishing transnational links with other stateless nations.

Yet the SNP has had problems articulating a clear position on the ‘devolution’ question. In the early 1990s, the SNP were openly disparaging of the regional dimension of the EU, arguing that ‘[t]here are no plans to give regions political power. A ‘Europe of the Regions’ is not on the Community agenda... It is imperative that Scots are not fooled by the Unionists’ self-interested plan to ‘regionalise’ Scotland in Europe... European integration is diminishing the regions’ power and influence’ (SNP 1991a). For the SNP, regional authorities were perceived to be pushed to the margins of decision-making in Europe. Yet despite these early tough words on regionalisation, the SNP moved in favour of the creation of the CoR, an issue which split the party when SNP leaders made a secret ‘deal’ with the Conservative government to win more seats on the Committee for Scotland (The Scotsman, 9 April 1993). The SNP was also supportive of the establishment of Scotland House, the creation of a Minister for European and External Affairs, the development of stronger links between the Parliament and other substate governments in Europe, creating a joint assembly to coordinate EU policy, and used the term ‘subsidiarity’ as much as any other party to underline Scotland’s right to self-determination. These strategies and proposals represent the triumph of the ‘gradualist’ wing over the fundamentalists in the SNP. In seeking to gradually expand the powers of the Scottish Parliament, in particular in its European relations, the SNP have realised the possibilities of how much they can push for in Europe through the devolved Scottish Parliament – something that other nationalist and regionalist parties in Europe have long known.

Meanwhile, the LibDems have advanced another interpretation of a Europe of the Regions: it is simply another way of saying that Europe should ultimately develop along federal lines. Since the 1990s, the LibDems have associated decentralisation of the UK with European subsidiarity, in many ways mirroring Labour’s attempts to counter the SNP’s vision of Scotland in Europe. But because the notion of a federal Europe receives little sympathy in Scottish or British politics, and has tended to be an electoral liability, the party has stuck to the Europe of the Regions discourse, even omitting the word ‘federalism’ from their manifestos. Meanwhile, some sections of the Scottish Conservative Party have joined opposition parties in arguing for stronger links to Brussels
and Scottish Ministerial representation in Europe of policy areas important to the territory. The party’s current approach to Europe is a decentralising one, with support for subsidiarity tempered by strident calls for maintaining the primacy of the state. ‘Countries such as Scotland and EU regions such as Flanders should have a greater role in the EU of the future… But we must be careful that greater participation does not lead to the baby being thrown out with the bathwater. Scotland’s role must be seen within the context of a single UK negotiating position’ (McLetchie 2003). Although the Tories no longer have any intentions of getting rid of the Scottish Parliament and distributing its powers among the local authorities and central government, they are still hostile to regionalisation processes in Europe, which are considered a threat to integrity of the UK and a step towards a European federation. As former SCUP President David McLetchie (2003) declared, ‘We support a Europe of the nations,14 not a Europe of the regions which we believe would lead to the balkanisation of Europe and the greater concentration of power at the centre’.

Although the Labour Party still believes in the primacy of the nation-state in determining European affairs, it is not clear that their coalition partners in the Scottish Parliament take the same view. Charles Kennedy (2003), former leader of the Liberal Democrats, asked: ‘Is national sovereignty of supreme importance, or are we more effective when we pool it with others?’ The Scottish Liberal Democrats argue that whilst other parties are ‘obsessed with the maintenance of the sovereignty of Member States,’ the SLD on the other hand ‘seek the development of citizenship and democracy at every level of government, from the local to the European, with each level having its own guaranteed, or sovereign, part to play in the democracy of the whole’ (SLD 1992: 2). There have been previous alliances between the LibDems and Labour on the issue of Europe, but Labour does not share the Liberal commitment to federalism. The SLD toned down their main goals of creating a federal UK to exist within a federal Europe when signing a partnership agreement with the SLP in the Scottish Parliament. Both parties have held fast to the idea of a Europe of the Regions, but since then the SLD have re-emphasised their federal interpretation of this concept. In 2005-6, the LibDems put forward proposals to formally re-examine the powers of the Scottish Parliament, with an emphasis on expanding the Parliament’s fiscal powers.

As previously mentioned, the Labour Party is a member of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament (PES), which is a strong supporter of a Europe of the Regions. The Labour Party was able to obtain the support of the PES for creating a Scottish Parliament, which was included in a signed declaration at their Conference in 1992. The declaration also recognised the right of self-determination of substate entities, something that puts them on a par with the European Free Alliance (EFA) of which the SNP is a member (Scotsman 12 December 1992). The

14 It appears that McLetchie meant ‘nation-states’ when he said a Europe of the ‘nations’, despite referring continually to Scotland as a nation instead of a region.
maintenance of cultural diversity in Europe is also a priority issue for the PES. In 2001 PES Group MEP Giorgio Ruffolo produced a study of ‘culture’ and its management in EU member states, with recommendations for creating a European observation post for cultural cooperation so that best practices on cultural policies may be extended and exchanged. The PES was instrumental in the creation of the CoR and encourages the development of regional partnerships. This is part of a broader project to reinforce social and economic cohesion in Europe, and in particular to support the poorer regions which have benefited from the structural funds. Furthermore, the PES called for more involvement of the regions in European decision-making in the Convention on the Future of Europe. A part of this, regional access to European institutions should include the entitlement of regions to be able to defend their rights before the European Court of Justice in the event of EU legislation affecting their powers. These two demands are also part of the programme of the European Free Alliance, which represents nationalist and regionalist parties.

Thus, ironically, the Scottish Labour Party’s policies for using the Executive’s powers to build up an international reputation for Scotland, and its support for greater Scottish participation in European institutions and networks through the development of a ‘Europe of the Regions’, mirrors the aims of many nationalist members of EFA. However, these strategies are tempered by the need to present a united UK front in Europe. The main goals of the Executive in Europe, which resemble Labour’s position on Europe, are set out in their European Strategy: ‘to position Scotland as one of the leading legislative regions in the European Union’ and ‘to bring effective influence to bear on the UK Government, EU Member States, regions and institutions on EU policies affecting Scotland’ (Scottish Executive 2004a). But, crucially, distinctive Scottish representation in Europe is combined with ‘the clout of being part of one of the main players in Europe’ (McConnell 1995). It is unlikely that this last statement would find its way into EFA literature.

Although there are a wide range of constitutional preferences for self-government in EFA, the majority of members favour the deepening of European integration and the transformation of the EU into a ‘Europe of the Regions’ – a position which has forced the SNP to revise its policies towards subsidiarity and the role of the regions in the intergovernmental, confederal Europe that it envisions. For instance, one document states that ‘the SNP can at the same time join its European Free Alliance partners in actively supporting extended subsidiarity as a principle under which even devolution, the Scottish Parliament and Executive can effectively enhance their external powers and their contribution to European policy-making’ (SNP 2001: 5). It appears that membership of EFA has altered the nature of the debate around subsidiarity and regionalisation, and the SNP, through an alliance with regionalist parties in Europe, has been forced to reconcile the differences between its support of independence, and support of greater autonomy through devolution. For instance, Neil MacCormick suggests that EFA membership is a mode of ‘mutually supportive instrumentalism’ in
that there is common ground amongst regionalist and nationalist parties in seeking to raise issues pertinent to the stateless nations in the European Parliament, despite each party aiming for separate goals. According to MacCormick, ‘I think it is important that everyone moves at their own pace, as there is more than one type of autonomy project. You also have to reflect the real state of affairs’.\(^{15}\) The evocation of the word ‘pace’ could be interpreted that other autonomist parties in Europe or gradually building up towards the goal of independence. Yet MacCormick also accepts that there are some parties in EFA that will never seek independence. Clearly, the decentralisation agenda in Europe has posed a number of problems for the SNP, which has moved from opposing it in the early 1990s, to arguing that the subsidiarity concept must be enshrined with regards to the role of the regions: ‘regional status in the EC is a perfectly legitimate aspiration for the Community’s regions, although [they] are far from happy with the role given to them by member-states in the Draft Treaty on political union.’ Regionalisation in Europe, as well as providing some opportunities for the SNP, has also created confusion around the party’s central aims.

### 4.6.4 Unionism

Unionists, as previously discussed, are those who support the union between Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom, created by the Acts of Union in 1707. Unionism has never been a homogeneous movement, but rather represents a pro-UK consensus of all the statewide parties – the Conservatives, Labour and the Liberal Democrats. Although the SNP brands any party that does not want outright independence for Scotland as ‘Unionist’, thereby playing on the term’s associations with Conservatism and rule by Westminster, unionism can cover an array of constitutional options, including the decentralisation of power and/or concentration of administrative responsibility from London to Scotland. As the Scottish Tories, previously called the ‘Scottish Unionists’, once had something of a monopoly over this term\(^{16}\), supporters of other statewide parties have came to dislike the term ‘unionist’ which they consider too closely linked to the Conservatives, which have suffered from being branded an ‘English’ party.

The Scottish Tories are fierce defenders of the UK union. In the devolution debates of the 1970s and 1990s, they argued that a Scottish Parliament with law-making and tax-raising powers would undermine the Union, and lead to the break-up of the UK state. Former Prime Minister John Major declared that devolution was ‘one of the most dangerous propositions ever put to the Scottish people’ (Scotsman, 3 May 1995). Furthermore, the Tories have argued that if Scotland were to gain more political and economic autonomy, it would lose influence within the core of the UK decision-making system, and correlatively, Scotland would lose the benefits of being part of one of the

\(^{15}\) Interview [1.1] with Neil MacCormick.

\(^{16}\) The term ‘unionist’ in the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party originally referred to the Union of Britain and Ireland, though it is now generally taken to mean the Union between Scotland and the rest of the UK.
largest EU member states in European intergovernmental negotiations. According to Ian Lang, former Secretary of State for Scotland, Scotland is best represented in UK delegations to the Council of Ministers and it would be able to have ‘a regular place at the top table in Europe’ without having the go the devolutionist way. For John Major, this would ‘split our island apart and set one people against another. What stupidity.’ This view chimes with the Tory interpretation of subsidiarity, which starts with Brussels and ends with the UK level. To that end, the Tories stated in 1997 that a Scottish Parliament set up by the Labour Party would be abolished by a future Conservative government (Scotsman, 10 February 1997).

Having lost the ‘No-No’ side in the devolution referendum, the Tories have now accepted the permanence of the Scottish Parliament and have vowed not to ‘undo the will’ of the Scottish people. The Scottish Conservative Party has undergone a minor transformation since entering the Scottish Parliament. It now advocates greater powers for Scotland in Europe. For instance, the Secretary of State for Scotland should, in issues of concern to Scotland, be given the right to lead UK delegations to the European Council of Ministers, especially in the areas of fishing and agriculture (SCUP 2001). Whilst the Conservatives have (unofficially) supported measures to increase the Scottish Parliament’s powers, it appears that Labour has swung back to its unionist roots, drawing tight boundaries around how far regionalism should go. After having introduced devolution in 1998, Labour is keen on defending the current settlement. The party have resisted calls to expand the Scottish Parliament’s powers. In European affairs, whilst Scottish Labour have been involved in a wide array of regional organisations, such as RegLeg, Christine May MSP argued that Scotland should not seek greater access to decision-making in Europe. On this issue of the European Constitution, Scottish Labour did not formulate a separate response, but contributed to, and endorsed the position of the Blair government. The aim was to show a ‘united’ British front. Indeed, Gordon Brown and Douglas Alexander (1999) have underlined that devolution does not represent ‘separation’ between the parts of the UK, but rather a new form of ‘coming together’. This is part of a Scottish Labour strategy to increase a sense of Britishness, which through its decisions to harmonise policies with Westminster, also reinforces the principle of British sovereignty.

But whilst Labour and the Conservatives believe in the preservation of UK sovereignty within an intergovernmental Europe, Scotland’s other unionist party – the LibDems – do not. In the preamble to their constitution, the party states: ‘Setting aside national sovereignty when necessary, we will work with other countries towards an equitable and peaceful international order and a durable system of common security.’ The LibDems are not a pro-UK sovereignty party, but see the replacement of national sovereign states within a European political union as necessary for the

18 Interview [1.7] with Christine May.
19 Constitution of the Scottish Liberal Democrats, Preamble, as amended in April 2002.
achievement of world peace and the creation of a Europe of the Regions. Thus the authority of the nation-state should be dispersed upwards to international institutions and downwards to the regions, and consequently, ‘the expanding power of Europe... makes it more and more imperative that Scotland should be able to speak with its own political voice in European affairs’ (SLD 1992: 1-2).

In the European sphere, the British Conservatives do not have any natural allies. When the UK joined the European Community in 1973, the Conservative Party decided to form its own political group in the European Parliament – the European Democrat Group – rather than join the Christian Democrat Group, as they lack a strongly Christian orientation. After years in isolation, they finally joined the European People’s Party in 1992, but this was despite a great deal of opposition amongst EPP members, who considered the Tories as too secular, too right-wing, and too class-based. Furthermore, divisions within the Conservatives did not endear the Party to their European counterparts. The ‘Bruges Group’ of Thatcherites in particular were met with hostility in European circles. Thatcher’s opposition to the social dimension of European integration and her confrontational attitude towards trade unions alienated some Christian Democrats who stressed consensual politics at all levels of authority. Importantly, the EPP has supported a federal vision of Europe, which has been attractive to only a minority of Conservative MEPs and anathema to the official party line. Some Conservatives go as far to say that European federalism is a ‘threat to our constitution’. Whereas the EPP openly favour a United States of Europe where the principle of subsidiarity is key, the British Conservatives hold onto an inter-governmental vision of the European Union, and interpret subsidiarity in a very different light – stopping at the state level. The Tories have since distanced themselves from the EPP. This goes to show that many of the alliance that Scottish parties make at the European level are often fragile and fraught with difficulties – and this applies to the SNP in EFA, and Labour in the PES, as well as the Tories in the EPP.

Within Scotland, as within the UK generally, the Conservatives have not made themselves attractive coalition partners. However, the system of proportional representation in Scotland has ushered in a new set of political dynamics in which it is unlikely for the Scottish Conservatives to ever win a majority. This has forced them to consider potential coalition partners in Scotland – not an easy task given their continual opposition to all other parties supporting the campaign for a Scottish Parliament in the 1990s. However, it appears that an alliance with Labour has been taken into consideration by the Scottish leadership. This became first evident to the author when in an interview with Murdo Fraser MSP, the Scottish Conservative politician said that as the Conservatives were hostile to independence, thereby crossing out alliances with the SNP, the Socialists and Greens, and were at odds with the Scottish LibDems who were viewed as weak and hypocritical, an alliance with Labour was the only possibility. He went on to state that ‘if we look at

20 Johanssen (1997), quoting Lord Bethell MEP.
the policy platforms of the other major parties… I think you will probably find that the party whose platform we were closest to of those three would be Labour’.21

Fraser’s premonition became clearer when Scottish Tory leader David McLetchie (2003) said in a speech to the European People’s Party that ‘In common with the Labour Party, we agree that Scotland benefits from being part of the United Kingdom and the strong negotiating power that being part of a large member state brings’. He then went on to commend the Scottish Executive’s signing of the EU Concordat and praised Jack MacConnell for catching onto what he said was the Conservative idea of subsidiarity. This is not the usual Conservative language of confrontation, evident in the House of Commons. It appears that PR has radically altered the nature of Scottish politics, if the two main parties of British politics in the twentieth century, and sworn enemies, may be brought together. However, this also raises questions about the relationship between the UK government in Westminster and its constituent assemblies in Wales and Scotland, if Labour and the Conservative formed a coalition in the Scottish Parliament, but were at loggerheads in Westminster.

Despite being open to the possibility of a coalition with Labour in the Scottish Executive, the Tories have been bitterly opposed to Labour’s strategy of a Europe of the Regions. The Scottish Conservatives oppose not only a regionalised Europe, but also a federalist Europe or, as it was put in their 2001 election manifesto ‘a fully integrated superstate with nation states and the national veto disappearing’. Instead, the Tories have ‘a determination to veto further transfers of power from Westminster to Brussels’. The Tories have vacillated in their support of decentralisation and regionalisation. Whereas pre-devolution they were opposed to any distinct recognition of Scotland in Europe, they now think that Scotland should have a stronger voice, though this is best achieved through being part of the UK delegating team. ‘I believe that it is crucial for Scotland to be represented by Members of the European Parliament who can work closely with the Scottish Office here in Edinburgh and who can speak for Scotland in Europe with that authority’ (McLetchie 2003).

Furthermore, the Tories’ opposition to the draft European Constitution, which they believe would lead to a European superstate, is made on the basis that it would undermine Scottish self-determination. As Phil Gallie said, ‘The draft constitution for Europe would undermine totally the long-held aspirations of people in the chamber who fought for the creation of a Scottish Parliament. It represents a major step away from the devolutionary ideals on which the Scottish Parliament is founded… A considerable loss of sovereignty in a range of areas would follow, in which I am sure the Scottish Executive will take an interest when it finds in future that its wings are clipped.’22 Talk of ‘devolutionary ideals’ signals the Tories’ radically changed attitude to Scottish autonomy since 1999. At the same time, the Tories wish to maintain an intergovernmental Europe of the Nations, in

21 Interview [1.3] with Murdo Fraser.
which states come together ‘in different combinations for different purposes and to differing extents. In other words, a network Europe … so that outside the areas of the single market and core elements of an open, free-trading and competitive EU, countries need only participate in new legislative actions at a European level if they see this as in their national interest’ (SCUP 2001).

4.6.5 Summary
The deepening of European integration since the late 1980s, and the debates surrounding how to best represent Scottish interests in the newly emerging European sphere, has pushed the constitutional issue to the forefront of Scottish politics. Political parties have developed a variety of responses to integration processes, ranging from demands for more recognition of Scotland’s interests and identity, to protest against what is perceived as a threat to Scotland’s competences. Whilst the SNP has altered its goal in light of European developments to ‘independence in Europe’ – whilst at the same time seeking to build upon the devolution settlement to enhance Scotland’s powers in Europe – the reinforcement of Scottish interests resulting from devolution and integration has obligated unionist parties to also become active in nationalist debates. This led to calls in the early 1990s for a Europe of the Regions, which was influenced by European-wide developments for enhancing the regional level in Europe through institutions such as the CoR, greater regional participation in structural funds, and the new social dimension to European policy. Social-democratic parties began to view Europe as a socially progressive political arena in which regions and small states could play a full role, in a sense replacing the British ‘union’ (then associated with the Thatcherite agenda) with a European ‘union’ that was more in tune with Scottish values.

However, the belief in Europe as an opportunity structure for stateless nations soon gave way in the late 1990s to greater caution and scepticism about what regions could actually achieve in Europe, in constitutional terms as well as for obtaining resources. This was spurred by the failure of the CoR to constitute anything more than a ‘talking-shop’, the homogenising tendencies of the Single Market that undermined regional competitiveness, and the continuing centralisation of powers at the state level in the Council of Ministers. At this point, one may detect a change in the rhetoric of Scottish parties to a more protectionist line, and greater criticism of the way in which European decision-making takes place. This was most visible in the SNP, which wishes an independent Scotland to opt out of certain European sectoral policies, and the rise of more Euro-critical parties in Holyrood, namely the Socialists and Greens. In particular, following the failure of Scotland and other regions to obtain guarantees for a stronger regional role in the draft European Constitution, there has been growing scepticism about what Europe offers to the regions, and a move back to using traditional state channels to access European decision-making – either by Scotland becoming a state itself, or by seeking greater influence in UK delegations to Brussels.
Throughout this period, the two dominant Scottish political traditions of nationalism and socialism have become intertwined in European debates, whilst the pull to unionism has been given new impetus. Since the SNP’s adoption of a left-of-centre social democratic platform under the leadership of Alex Salmond in the 1990s, and the Scottish Labour’s move towards ‘neo-nationalism’ in the same period, there has been a convergence of left-wing and Scottish interests. Yet there is also a resurgent unionism, evident in the rhetoric of the Scottish Labour Party as well as the re-packaged Scottish Conservative Party, in order to combat the threat of separatism. Ironically, whilst the Tories argues for a strengthening of the Scottish Parliament’s fiscal powers to stabilise the devolution settlement and thus maintain the Union, Labour is keen on defending the current settlement and has resisted calls to expand Holyood’s powers. Furthermore, whilst undertaking a project to create greater loyalties to Britain amongst Scots, Scottish Labour has also avoided straying from the UK Labour (and government) line or articulating a distinctive Scottish position on issues ranging from the BSE crisis to the draft European Constitution. This raises the question of how far will Labour will go to accommodate nationalism in Scotland.

Yet whilst Labour believes that the current devolution settlement is constitutionally stable, widespread demands for more Scottish powers and representation in Europe across the political spectrum in Scotland show that this is not the case. The SNP, whilst pursuing the long-term goal of independence in Europe, also endorse a short-term strategy of delivering independence ‘by stealth’ through expanding upon the 1998 settlement. Demands to increase the Parliament’s powers have won support from the LibDems, the Tories and the Greens and Socialists. This strategy of accelerationism allows the SNP to enter the positive game of ‘coalition-building’ with other political parties, and ultimately might allow the party to make more ‘constitutional progress through arguing for ‘more’ independence for Scotland rather than absolute independence’ (Lynch 2000: 253). Their strategy, however, also underlines the point that the constitutional options of devolution and independence, in a context of European interdependence, are not as separate or as clear-cut as Labour and SNP suggest. In the context of closer European integration, many important legislative decisions regarding defence, security and monetary policy will be increasingly centralised at the European level, leaving both independent and devolved parliament with the same competences over social policy. This raises questions about the importance of constitutional recognition in Europe for Scotland, and whether Scottish interests could be best pursued through other means.

4.7 Territorial Capacity in Europe

A fundamental aspect of territorial capacity is the control of economic development and finance. It has been argued that the campaigns for a Scottish Parliament in the 1990s were motivated by the belief that political autonomy would improve the quality of life of Scots, increase the country’s
economic well-being, and give Scots the levers to pursue a distinctive economic agenda based on values of social democracy and egalitarianism (Surridge et al 1998; McEwen 2002). These aims are important to bear in mind when considering how parties’ compete in seeking to expand Scotland’s policy capacity and improve its ability to mount territorial projects. I begin by examining the approach adopted by the Labour Party, which is the largest coalition partner in the Scottish Executive, and I got on to explore how other parties envision the best means for advancing Scotland’s socioeconomic interests. Whilst one would expect that these strategies for improving Scotland’s economic capacity in Europe correlate to party demands for constitutional reform, this is not always so clear-cut. The questions I will be asking are: How do parties propose to increase Scotland’s capacity to mount economic projects in Europe? And how do these economic projects accord with their constitutional goals in Europe?

4.7.1 Autonomy versus Access to the Centre

The Scottish Labour Party acknowledges that much of Scotland’s potential economic success rests on its ability to gain EU funding and resources, attract foreign capital investment, and to compete successfully with other regions in the European single market. ‘As European integration proceeds, the success of our economy will increasingly depend on how competitive we are. The Scottish Parliament will have a major input to European wider economic initiatives… to benefit both urban and rural areas of Scotland’ (SLP 1994: 5). To that end, in particular, the party supports reform of the Common Agricultural and Fisheries Policies ‘to ensure a sustainable and equitable future for these [Scottish farming and fishing] industries and secure reforms in Scotland’s interest’ (SLP 2003: Section 5). Furthermore, it was argued that ‘Labour will continue to use European structural funds which have created economic opportunities [to ensure that] Scotland gets it fair share of European money for investment in transport, communications and other infrastructure’ (SLP 1994: 4-5). This is in keeping with Scottish Labour’s emphasis on improving infrastructure, skills and other ‘supply-side’ factors to increase business growth, rather than giving the Scottish Parliament the fiscal levers to lower corporation taxes or business rates.

The Scottish Labour Party argues that it can pursue effective economic policies for Scotland and create a flourishing environment for business with the current devolved powers. It cites the introduction of some key policy initiatives that have diverged from England to substantiate this claim: free personal care for the elderly, the abolition of up-front university tuition fees, land reform, new railways and transport infrastructure and a Bill banning smoking in public places. These policies, it is argued, meet the specific needs of Scottish society and the economy, highlighting the considerable discretion given to the Scottish Parliament about how it goes about spending the money it is allocated from the Treasury. This means that ‘devolution offers Scottish
business the best of both worlds… we have the levers to create growth, and the stability of the UK economic framework gives us the platform from which to grow our economy’ (SLP 2003: Section 1). Unlike other federal or devolved systems, Scotland has significant autonomy and discretion because the block grant system does not ring-fence spending areas. Labour’s argument is that the Scottish Parliament can do whatever it wants with the grant it receives; as long as the Treasury decides how much it gets, and Westminster decides the broader contours of macroeconomic policy.

Labour argues that these financial constraints have not prevented Scotland from carving a niche for itself in European affairs, by making informal contacts with European institutions and networks, or from making trade links with other countries and regions. Indeed, the Scottish Labour Party has become active in the practice of sub-national ‘paradiplomacy’. Although the Labour Government is at pains to emphasise that foreign and EU policy are reserved matters, the Scottish Executive is also encouraged to become involved in decision-making on EU matters that have an impact on devolved areas, and to create links with other European regions, thereby establishing the presence of Scotland as an international actor. The Scottish Labour Party has continued in its plight to increase regional access of European institutions, and has been active in practice of sub-national ‘paradiplomacy’. The first years of devolution saw the establishment of a regional office in Brussels (Scotland House), cooperation agreements with Catalonia, Tuscany and Bavaria, the creation of a Nordic-Scottish Action Plan, and active participation in the Council of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe (CLRAE), and the European Group of Regions with Legislative Powers (RegLeg), of which Jack McConnell was President in 2004. The creation of strategic alliances with other substate government is aimed to counter the SNP’s claim that small independent states are thriving in the EU, with Labour arguing that Scotland is better placed in the ‘premier league’ of regions along with Catalonia, Bavaria and Flanders.

Yet as much as advocating a unique Scottish role in European affairs, the Labour Party is also intent on defending the Union, and Scotland’s economic ties to, and advantages from its position within, the UK. Scotland should have a ‘close working relationship with UK Ministers and the Scottish Secretary to ensure that Scotland’s distinctive voice is heard’ and ‘an increasing role in helping to scrutinise European legislation’ (SLP 2003: Section 27). Labour’s position is to encourage the Scottish Executive’s active participation in European institutions and networks, but as a ‘loyal member of the UK team’ (Keating 2005: 5) by using state channels to pursue Scotland’s interests in Europe rather than taking an independent line. This reminds one of Scotland’s pre-devolution role in European affairs, when Scottish Office ministers were allowed to attend meetings of the Council of Ministers as part of the UK line. Labour also argues that Scotland’s overseas trade is effectively managed through the UK’s diplomatic and commercial contacts abroad, something that an independent Scotland would be unable to replicate. Labour’s economic project for Scotland
in Europe thus centres on greater Scottish participation in the ‘UK front’, yet it is quite vague on the formal mechanisms for achieving this. There is a loose commitment to championing ‘Scotland’s interests in appropriate Council meetings of the EU and inside the UK’ (SLP 2003: Section 27). But this is an informal intergovernmental mechanism that is likely to come under severe strain when there are different parties operating at the Scottish and UK parliamentary levels.

The Scottish LibDems have anticipated this eventuality by proposing a new federal settlement for the UK that involves a system of fiscal federalism that gives Holyrood greater powers over taxation and business regulation. This would avoid the potential problems created in informal intra-state relations when there are competing parties in power at Holyrood and Westminster. Fiscal federalism, according to the Scottish LibDems, would ‘give the Scottish Parliament the opportunity to enhance and improve its policy control in key areas…allow it to influence the direction of Scottish economy…[and take a] different path to the rest of the UK’ (Steel Commission 2006: 95, 101, 103). Unlike Scottish Labour, the LibDems believe that fiscal control is necessary to shape, control and diverge in policy. A system of fiscal federalism would involve reforming the block grant so that it is determined on a ‘needs’ basis to meet Scotland’s specific economic requirements as well as ensuring an equitable distribution of resources across the UK. The LibDems also think that Holyrood should have greater powers and a formalised role in certain policy areas reserved to Westminster, for instance in energy and marine policy, asylum and immigration, strategic planning of the welfare services and employment law. This would give the Scottish government control over ‘those levers of power which most affect the Scottish economy and which increase its ability to meet key policy objectives’ (Steel Commission 2006: 118).

How might a system of fiscal federalism improve Scotland’s economic potential in Europe? The party proposes that Scotland and other constituent parts of the UK, operating within a fiscal federal system, should each ‘be expected to have a proportionate and focused involvement in EU funding’ (Steel 2006: 97). However this does not mean that they will be able to act independently of the UK: their involvement in EU funding should be as part of a UK position in order to uphold the principles of solidarity and progressive distribution across poorer parts of the country, and indeed, across the continent. On this point, the Liberal Democrats endorse Labour’s insistence on presenting a united UK front in Europe on economic matters. As well as this, the Steel Commission on Fiscal Federalism (2006) underlines the importance of maintaining the informal networks that exist between Scotland, the UK and the EU, and to ensure that they are ‘not damaged by the instigation of more formal national arrangements in a more federal system’, though it is not clear what is meant by this. In any case, it appears that Scotland’s capacity to pursue its economic goals in Europe in a system of fiscal federalism would vary little from how things currently stand, especially as these proposals emphasise the common UK position with regard to EU funding, as
well as maintaining ‘informal’ relations between parts of the UK on spending matters. The LibDems are hesitant to grant Scotland more say over EU funding, and fail to address the impact of EU sectoral policies on Scotland’s ability to exercise its increased fiscal powers.

Taking over the traditional ground of the Scottish Liberal Democrats, some Scottish Tories also wish the Parliament to have more fiscal powers, and to develop a federal arrangement in the UK so that the House of Lords is converted into a second chamber representative of the regions. A vocal section of the party in Scotland voicing demands for increased powers for the Scottish Parliament, including a plan for fiscal autonomy that involves giving Holyrood tax-varying powers. As Murdo Fraser MSP, Deputy Leader of the Scottish Conservatives, states ‘we don’t have a fully-rounded political debate in Scotland because all we talk about is how we’re going to spend money, how we’re going to cut up the cake we’re given by the Treasury in London. There is no debate about economic growth, about generating tax revenues, about supply-side arguments about how you generate more wealth in the country by growing the economy. These arguments simply don’t appear in the Scottish political debate at all, which we think is unfortunate.’ The Scottish Tories have therefore ‘accepted devolution and are working for its success to save the union’ (Seawright 2004: 18). As Fraser continues, giving Scotland fiscal autonomy would help to curb the nationalist challenge as the current settlement ‘gives us a problem of constitutional instability because if for example the Scottish economy is doing well and therefore generating lots of tax revenues, we will get no direct benefit from that at the moment because all the extra tax revenue would go down to London and we would simply get back 10% of whatever… And I think if the money coming in gets cut back, Nationalists would then use that argument to argue for Scottish independence and say the current arrangements are disadvantaging us: if we were independent we wouldn’t have these problems.’ But more fiscal powers for the Scottish Parliament does not mean that Scotland should be able to pursue a distinctive economic policies in Europe. The Tories, like the other two unionist parties, maintain that economic matters should be decided by the UK team in Europe, though with Scottish input into these negotiations.

This position is vigorously contested by the independence-seeking parties in Scotland. The Scottish National Party believes that only independence in Europe will allow Scotland to wrest control of the levers of economic development from Westminster, and allow it to fully prosper in an integrating Europe. When the SNP adopted the policy of independence in Europe in 1988, the justifications for it appeared to be largely pragmatic: not only would the European context provide an external political support system for a small country such as Scotland, but also an economic one, by removing the threat of economic dislocation from England through the European common market. The SNP has become an avid supporter of economic and monetary integration, and some

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23 Interview [1.3] with Murdo Fraser.
high-ranking members of the Party, such as Roseanna Cunningham, indicate that the SNP would be happy to grant the EU powers over defence and foreign policy. Membership of the EU thus appears to lessen many of the transition costs of independence through access to the common market, structural funds for underperforming areas, and a ready-made institutional system in which small states have a disproportionate voice. As former party leader Gordon Wilson stated, ‘within the common trading umbrella, the move to independence can take place smoothly and easily’ (cited in Lynch 2002: 6). Support for such integrationist measures, however, raise questions about the extent to which independence in Europe would furnish Scotland with the ability to manage processes of social and economic change, given that economic and social policy in European regions as well as member states is now largely impinged upon by EU regulations.

Let us for a moment consider the main thrust of the SNP’s proposals for economic independence. Since the discovery of oil in the North Sea adjacent to Scotland in the 1970s, the SNP has made the argument that Scotland is a country rich in natural resources, renewable energy potential, and an educated and skilled workforce. The problem, as the SNP sees it, is control of these resources, and all Scotland has to do to use them effectively is become independent. Nationalists point to the fact that Scotland’s economic performance has consistently lagged behind the rest of the UK, its population continues to decline, and the economy still underperforms post-devolution. With independence, the SNP argue, Scotland would become a more competitive place to do business, as Nationalists plan to cut corporation taxes and additional North Sea oil revenues would increase its overall wealth by meeting the public deficit (though there have been no academic studies supporting the SNP’s fiscal surplus position, see Midwinter 2004). For the SNP, remaining as part of the Union deprives Scotland of its natural wealth, demonstrated by the fact that successive governments in London have stolen the oil revenues that are rightly Scotland’s.

The SNP has attacked the ‘unionist’ position of Scotland’s mainstream parties. The Union is considered to be counterproductive to Scottish economic development, and with devolution it argues that the situation has scarcely improved as the regional assembly is still politically and financially subordinate to Westminster. The SNP have been disparaging of the limited fiscal powers of the Scottish Parliament, arguing that it is not a ‘real’ parliament but rather a ‘sub-committee of Westminster, spending a pocket-money budget’ (SNP 1996). Despite the decentralisation of political power since 1999, Westminster retains significant powers over taxation, revenue-raising and social security, and the Scottish Parliament is financed by a block grant determined by the Barnett Formula, which had originally been put in place for the Scottish Office in 1978. The SNP argue that Scotland is unable to steer its own economic development, as it has no control over Scottish revenues and is unable to restructure taxation. An independent parliament would hasten

24 Interview [1.6] with Roseanna Cunningham.
economic growth and population increase through SNP policies such as lowering corporation tax and business rates, investing in oil, gas and renewable energy sources, investing in infrastructure, and initiating a pro-active immigration policy that welcomes ‘new Scots’ and old ex-pats (SNP 2005).

Yet what is interesting here is that most, if not all, of these policies could be put into place by increasing Scotland’s fiscal powers without the need for independence. The SNP’s economic strategy, to ‘take control of Scottish affairs, both domestically and in the ever-important European Union, and use Scottish resources to deliver the jobs, prosperity, and social welfare demanded by the people of Scotland’ (SNP 1996) is also the benchmark of the LibDem plan for fiscal federalism. Some sections of the SNP have begun to advocate a gradualist strategy of increasing Scotland’s fiscal powers, rather than arguing for ‘independence nothing else’. There is more nuance in the SNP’s rhetoric on independence, which now means ‘the Scottish Parliament having full control over Scottish affairs and the right to decide when to share power with others’.

Europe is central to the SNP’s plans for an economically successful Scotland. It is claimed that small states in Europe are more economically successful than big ones, and the EU guarantees them ‘access to a wider marketplace’ (Hudghton 2004). Although the party does not go into the finer details of why small states perform ‘better’ than big states, it does argue that there is ‘a direct connection between the clout in Europe that statehood gives Ireland, and that country’s phenomenal economic success’ (ibid). Whilst it may be true that Ireland has been able to take advantage of EU structural funds and direct representation in the Council of Ministers to boost its economic projects, it is far from clear whether Scotland would be able to benefit in the same way if independent.

According to the SNP, what is needed for Scotland to take advantage of the economic opportunities in Europe are strong political institutions, control over economic policy and a direct voice in Europe. If and when elected to power, the SNP would use these to lower business tax and take a strong Scottish stand on the CAP and European fisheries policy, or even opt out of these policies altogether. But is unclear how a move to protectionism through enhanced fiscal autonomy, whereby ‘each state retains its own residual sovereignty in respect of constitutional and fiscal matters’ (SNP 2001: 1), fits with SNP support for further integrationist measures, or how Scotland would be able to exert full control over fiscal matters if it joins the single currency, operates within the single market, and adheres to EU regulations on sectoral policies.

Some members of the party have begun to acknowledge such contradictions. The SNP has recently begun to develop a more protectionist stance towards the threat that some European regulations pose to Scottish interests. For instance, in their 2001 General Election manifesto, they stated that: ‘The SNP is in favour of joining the common currency (‘the Euro’) … This view is, however, compatible with a rigorously critical view of excessive Euro-enthusiasm, and creeping

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25 www.snp.org/whyindependence; my italics.
integrationism. We have a robust view of the need to set clear limits to what can properly be done at the all-Europe level and what must be retained by the states and their regions in accordance with subsidiarity’ (2001: 1-2). Furthermore, as noted elsewhere, the SNP argued that in order to support the draft European Constitution, Scotland should have a greater say over the fisheries and agriculture policies of the EU. In order to achieve that goal in the short-term, the SNP has advocated the expansion of the Scottish Parliament’s powers on European matters, as well granting the Executive a representative role in European institutions on a par with the German Länder or Belgian regions. But their support for a stronger Scottish Parliament with a greater range of powers over economic and social policy appears to undermine the need for an independent Scottish member-state in an intergovernmental Europe. It also raises questions about how their support for to whether the idea of confederalism is so easily distinguishable from federalism.

Whilst the SNP has moved to opposing the encroachment of certain European regulations on current devolved competences and a future independent Scotland’s powers, other independence-seeking parties have taken the position of seeking to leave the EU and its homogenising policies altogether. The Socialists argue that ‘there is nothing intrinsically internationalist or progressive about a united Europe, any more than there is anything intrinsically progressive or internationalist about the United Kingdom’ (SSP 2004: 3). The SSP advocates fiscal independence outside the European Single Market, and rejects the European currency, which is viewed as a ‘one-size-fits-all right-wing monetary regime’ that holds states ‘economic prisoners’ to the European Central Bank (SSP 2004: 10-11). Moreover, the SSP argues that the Growth and Stability Pact, which imposes penalties on EU member-states whose budget deficits amount to 3% of GDP, undermines spending on public services and thus the welfare state itself. As discussed earlier, the SSP advocates the creation of a Scottish Socialist state that would ‘stand up to the economic power of the multinationals and political power of Washington, London and Brussels’ (SSP 2003). However, the party has refrained from providing a detailed blueprint of how Scotland would operate outside the European free market, and how feasible economic independence is in practice. The SSP, like the Nationalists, have downplayed (or avoided) the need to spell out the specific details of social and economic policy of an independent Scotland inside or outside the EU, and have instead focussed on the lure of the promise of independence, and how this might be achieved. For instance, in the SSP’s 2003 manifesto, the only mention made to the economics of independence was: ‘[once elected to office] the SSP will set a date for an independence referendum, asking the people of Scotland to give us a further mandate to break free of the United Kingdom and take control of our own finances and resources’ (SSP 2003). What ‘taking control’ means to the SSP is a question left unanswered.

Likewise, the Greens’ long-term goal is a financially independent Scotland, in which the Greens would seek to replace competitive growth with self-sufficient regionally-based economies
and public utilities would fall under ‘locally accountable democratic structures’. Furthermore, the Greens contend the SNP’s support of the single currency. They believe monetary integration ‘would speed up the damaging process of globalisation and, and would make the transformation to a sustainable Scotland impossible.’ The Greens wish to avoid locking Scotland into an inequitable common monetary policy that ‘puts low rates of inflation before protecting jobs and public services’ (SGP 2003: 5). It is argued that the unelected European Central Bank increases regional disparities and unemployment across Europe, which, in turn, undermines efforts to strengthen local economies and to secure improvement in social and environmental developments (Scottish Greens 2004: 4). To that end, the Greens would introduce reporting mechanisms to the ECB, make the EU a fair-trade zone, improve targeting of EU funds to support small-scale rural economies, encourage economic diversity and strong local economies, and ‘use economic investment to create environmentally and socially sustainable jobs’ (SGP 2004: 4). Yet whilst the party does ‘favour independence for Scotland which is free from the bureaucracy and interference of the emerging European Community superstate… we do however wish to see close cooperation will all the countries of Europe in a loose confederal structure where economic independence is guaranteed within a framework of environmental protection and social rights and justice’ (SGP: 1992: 3). These policies could be achieved by granting Holyrood more fiscal powers. For the Greens ‘devolution of power is a process. The next stage is for the Scottish Parliament to have greater control over its finances and increased powers in areas such as energy, transport, health and consumer affairs’ (SGP 2003: 4).

4.7.2 A Confluence of Autonomy and Policy goals?

The trade-off between having maximum resources and access to the centre versus more autonomy is clearly evident in the economic positions of the ‘unionist’ parties. Despite the fact that the EU now legislates in many areas affecting regional economies, Labour, the LibDems and the Tories tend to channel their demands to the state, whilst the independence-seeking parties argue that Scotland can only have full control over its economy through being a member state of the EU, or upon achieving statehood, exiting the European Union as it currently stands. Regional powers on economic matters in the EU are considered by the nationalists to be meagre. However, there are flaws in some of the arguments being put forward. For instance, the SNP argues that independence is an economic end goal, without fleshing out how an independent Scottish economy might work in an integrating Europe. Whilst European integration may reduce the economic costs of independence by providing an external support system through the single European market and the structural funds, one could also argue that it renders independence unnecessary, as regulations on subsidies, monetary policy and socioeconomic policies apply equally to states and substate governments. Moreover, as the

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latter have increased their functional abilities, allowing them to ‘concentrate on the conditions for maintaining and developing their culture, on building institutions and the capacity for self-government in civil society, and on developing an economic model that permits a degree of autonomy in the global trading order’ (Keating 2001: 38), substate nation-building can proceed without formal independence. Contrarily, unionist parties have sought to underline the economic benefits of the Union, but without developing new ideas about how Scotland should pursue a distinctive socioeconomic project in Europe. Moreover, whilst Labour promises that Scotland will have ‘voice and influence’ at the British and European levels (SLP 1994), these aspirations are seemingly inconsistent with Labour’s opposition to expanding Holyrood’s powers, and its belief that Scotland is better served through UK delegations. In short, it appears that each of the parties have failed to reconcile their constitutional aims with their social and economic policies.

This discussion indicates that whilst Europe provides opportunities networking, political representation and holds possibilities of constitutional recognition for all of the parties, when it comes to safeguarding Scotland’s economy, parties prefer to use state channels. This may be because the main benefits of remaining in the Union are seen to be economic, and these traditions of looking to the state to provide economic security are difficult to break. It may also be because parties in Scotland are more concerned about the extent to which European integration constrains Scotland’s ability to pursue distinctive socioeconomic policies. Whilst parties were more enthused about the possibilities of receiving resources from the EU after the 1988 reform of structural funds, since the late 1990s Scottish parties have become ‘more aware of the homogenising tendencies in the single market programme and the threat this poses to minority cultures, and of the way in which the EU has increasingly encroached upon matters of regional competence’ (Keating et al 2003: 40).

There is growing scepticism about European integration amongst parties, most evident in the SNP. For instance, Europe is viewed as threatening the country’s fishing and agriculture industries, and parties have proposed various methods of dealing with this. Whilst Labour and the Conservatives defend the current intergovernmental mechanisms, arguing that Scottish interests are best defended in the Union through Scottish Ministers’ participation in the UK delegation to the Council of Ministers, other parties are less sanguine. For the SNP, Scotland should opt out of the Common Fisheries Policy once independent; for the Greens and Socialists, an independent Scotland should leave the EU altogether; whilst for the LibDems, Scotland should be able to lead UK delegations to Europe. Many of these proposals require a reform of Holyrood’s financial powers. But so far, debates on expanding these powers have not had a strong European dimension. There is also a notable lack of debate about extent to which Scotland would be able to control its own economy even if the Parliament was endowed with fiscal powers, given that ‘globalisation has
Some parties have, however, acknowledged that these issues must be tackled. In March 2004, the SLD leader Jim Wallace proposed that the cross-party Constitutional Convention, which paved the way for devolution, be reconvened in 2009. The Convention would discuss the Scottish Parliament’s future powers, in particular its fiscal and legislative powers. This may include a previous SLD goal for Scotland to lead UK delegations to the Council of Ministers and to have ‘formal liaison arrangements with the Commission’ (SLD 1999: 33). This move has been welcomed by the SNP, and John Swinney now states that ‘the SNP will take part in any moves to bring more power home to Scotland’ (The Herald, 25 March 2004). Labour have stayed quiet on this issue, which may fuel divisions in the party between those who want more autonomy for Holyrood and those who take a ‘wait-and-see’ approach. This position is considered unsustainable to the LibDems, who have cautioned that ‘it would be ill-advised and disappointing should political parties in Scotland fail to grasp the importance of reviewing the future of the Scottish Parliament’ (Steel Commission 2006: 14). Given that Labour is the only Scottish party opposing this move, this warning is for them. Yet public opinion might force the hand of Labour. According to public opinion surveys, most Scots want a stronger Scottish Parliament. The Scottish Social Attitudes Survey of 2001 (Park et al 2001) revealed that 65% of Scots agreed or strongly agreed that the Parliament should be given more powers, and a MORI Scotland poll showed that this sentiment is higher amongst young people: 73% of Scots aged 18-24 want additional powers for Holyrood (Steel Commission 2006: 17).

4.8 Conclusions: Europe and the Devolution Process

In 1990 James Kellas enquired ‘as the constitutional debate has been continuing in Scotland for over one hundred years, it might be asked what’s new? In one sense, very little…’ (Kellas 1990: 437). Kellas went on to examine five constitutional options for Scotland in light of proposals put forward by the Scottish Constitutional Convention, which comprised: integration of Scotland and England, the status quo, devolution, federalism and independence. This chapter has looked at a number of these constitutional options from a different perspective. Although European integration is not ‘new’ in the sense of being a sudden development, the opportunities for substate actors resulting from the deepening of European integration since Kellas wrote his analysis, and also before, have become an important addition to the ongoing constitutional debate in Scotland.

Scottish responses to Europe have been unique due to the constitutional implications of Europe linked to a strong territorial dimension of party competition. The EU has been attractive to parties seeking constitutional reform, such as Labour and the Liberals who, in their support of
devolution, viewed subsidiarity as a vital aspect of increased Scottish autonomy, and the pro-independence SNP who view the EU as a new framework for security and trading opportunities that could replace the ‘external’ structure of the UK. Even the Scottish Conservatives, the Greens and Socialists, now admit that there are some issues in which Scotland should have direct access to decision-making in Europe, despite being sceptical of the motivations and perceived ideologies that are ‘pushing’ European integration. At earlier times during the European integration process, many Scottish parties viewed Europe more as a hindrance rather than an opportunity. Scotland, it was thought, could have been further peripheralised from the central areas of decision-making, thereby making Scottish administrators and representatives doubly distant from Brussels and London. However, this view changed during the late 1980s, and Europe came to be seen as protecting peripheries and regional interests. The opportunities for regional action and a Europe of the Regions during the early 1990s in particular encouraged parties to take a stronger position on how they wanted Scotland to fit into the newly emerging European polity. Parties altered their constitutional goals for Scotland to include the European dimension, leading to competing demands for a Europe of the Regions, a Federal Europe, and for a temporary period even the SNP acknowledged the advantages of the regionalisation project in Europe. Furthermore, with the creation of a Scottish Parliament responsible for implementing European legislation, parties became more informed about European developments and how to protect Scotland’s interests in Europe.

Yet the Scottish Parliament’s detailed scrutiny of European regulations has also uncovered deeper challenges for Scotland in Europe, that is, how to protect its territorial interests in a Europe that seems increasingly insensitive to regional specificities, demands and needs. Parties since the late 1990s appear to have adopted a more cautious approach to Europe, which came to a head during the debates leading up to the negotiations of the draft European Constitution: regions were not to have the role, responsibilities and protections in Europe that had been previously foreseen, and some parties began to criticise the continuing lack of transparency in European institutions, the lack of public engagement, and specifically the threat that an unreformed Common Agriculture and Fisheries Policies would pose to Scotland’s economy.

This has brought us to analyse also the ‘substantive’ aspects of self-determination, that is, the capacity for Scotland to mount, or protect, its own economic development project in Europe. Parties (with the exception of the Conservatives) have supported a left-of-centre socioeconomic agenda for Scotland, emphasising comprehensive education and health care and high-quality public services, and policies such as free care for the elderly have won support across the political spectrum. Civic and political support for a Scottish Parliament was largely motivated by a desire to articulate a separate socioeconomic project from the rest of the UK. Yet whilst Europe once appeared to offer an arena for pursuing this social-democratic project, there is a growing perception
that these commitments have been pushed to the wayside in Brussels and Strasbourg. Scottish parties have reacted in turn, with unionist parties demanding more Scottish influence within intra-state coordinating mechanisms to influence British policy on Europe, and nationalist parties demanding independence inside Europe (but with veto powers over certain EU policies for the SNP) or have advocated leaving the EU altogether until its structures are radically reformed. Moreover, the opposition parties have begun arguing for a system of fiscal federalism that would enable Scotland to cut business taxes to encourage economic growth and investment: for the Tories, this neoliberal agenda might require a reduction of funding in other public services.

The ability to realize these economic development projects often underlines the need for parties to trade-off autonomy gain for increased capacity, as parties understand the necessity of having access to centre decision-making, and obtain maximum resources from the state. Moreover, as we have sought to emphasise in these discussions, the external environment and conditions for realising territorial strategies of autonomy and capacity are changing, with the focus of demands and lobbying being switched from London to Brussels and back to London. Most parties understand that Scotland’s economic future is inextricably tied to Europe, and have pledged various commitments to enhance Scotland’s economic potential in European markets, obtain as much funding as possible, and give Scotland a greater say over sectors vital to Scotland’s economy, such as agriculture, fisheries and forestry. On these matters, the Scottish parties almost present a unified territorial lobby. However, these diverse economic policies are often difficult to synthesise into party programmes, with the result that the pursuit of economic resources sometimes contradicts demands for more autonomy. The SNP position is the best example of this: first, by obtaining ‘full fiscal freedom’ for Scotland, they would have to forego the generous public funding Scotland received from the Union, and second they might lose the commercial and trade links that Scotland has built up through UK networks and diplomatic missions. ‘Independence’ itself is a rather poor economic strategy, and the party has been unable to articulate a detailed economic programme for an independent Scotland other than point to increased oil and gas revenues. In fact, it appears that the SNP would advance a neo-liberal economic programme, by cutting corporation and business tax at the expense of public services – a move that is unlikely to be popular with large sections of the Scottish electorate (who have shown a preference for high spending in public services).

Therefore, although parties have pursued strategies to maximise Scotland’s political and economic influence, and increase the Parliament’s ability to act on European matters, these substantive policy demands have not always correlated with the constitutional positions of parties. One example is the Scottish Conservative Party, whose members, whilst constitutionally supporting an intergovernmental Europe based on the primacy of states, have also advocated increasing Scotland’s fiscal powers to compete in European markets. Contrarily, the Scottish Labour Party has
been an avid supporter of a Europe of the Regions, but has declined to give Holyrood more economic powers, arguing that the state should decide macroeconomic policy in an intergovernmental Europe. This is a continuation of Labour’s strategy of seeking trade-offs, which throughout the twentieth century meant withholding political autonomy for Scotland in exchange for granting the Scottish Office more access to the centre, and greater resources and influence in Westminster. These days, it appears that the trade-off now means withholding fiscal autonomy from the Scottish Parliament in exchange for granting Scotland generous public expenditures and complete discretion over how Executive spends the block grant. Contradictions also exist within the SNP’s policy programme, whose support of further European economic policy, defence and security and its support for the regionalist agenda of the European Free Alliance, sits awkwardly with the party’s demands for a confederal Europe in which regions have little say.

Moreover, whilst there is a territorial alignment in Scottish politics on the issue of increasing Scotland’s powers in Europe, the generally pro-European consensus of Scotland’s parties has not transferred as easily into public attitudes toward European integration. Although the British Social Attitudes Surveys (Park et al 2001) and Scottish Election Surveys (McCrone et al 1999) have indicated that Scottish attitudes to the EU have been slightly more positive than the rest of Britain since 1992, it is also true that all parts of Britain – including Scotland – have become more hostile to the EU since the Maastricht Treaty was signed. Scottish public opinion still remains less Europhile than that of its political elites, particularly in outlying rural regions where Scots are greatly in favour of reducing the EU’s powers (McCrone et al 1999). So far, Scottish public opinion has decided that the Scottish Parliament and the EU should be the bodies tackling social reform (Brown et al 1998), and this supports some of the territorial and pro-European strategies of political parties. But until the public begins making the same connections as political elites between European integration and constitutional reform, the growing European orientation of Scottish politicians will not translate into strong electoral support.
5. Territorial Politics in Bavaria

5.1. Introduction

The Freistaat Bayern (Free State of Bavaria) has long confounded attempts of categorisation. Depending on which field of social enquiry one is starting from, Bavaria could be referred to as simply one of the sixteen Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany; a formidable voice and heavyweight region in the EU; the greater part of an economic region that stretches across the Alps; a thousand year-old cultural and historical entity with its own language, traditions and folklore; or a modern nation whose territorial integrity spans some two hundred years. Although these definitions are not mutually exclusive, it would be rare to find a social scientist who accepts all of them. This is because Bavaria is ordinarily examined in the context of (German) federal politics, and does not translate as readily as ‘stateless nations’ such as Catalonia and Scotland into the field of nationalism. Rather than seeking to mobilise the population around claims to independence, Bavarian parties aim to secure an autonomous Bavarian Heimat within Germany and Europe.

The Bavarian-based Christian Social Union (CSU), which has governed the Land since the end of the Second World War, believes that Bavaria’s interests are best served within the German federation. Yet this faith in federalism has not prevented the CSU from pursuing an aggressive approach towards Bonn/Berlin in defence of Bavaria’s special identity and interests, or proclaiming itself to be a Bavarian party first and foremost. Some scholars argue that the CSU should be understood as a nationalist party that seeks maximum sovereignty for Bavaria: ‘The CSU rhetorically expresses love for the Bavarian Heimat and the need to preserve and defend it in much the same way as nationalists prioritise the nation… the ideology of the CSU is nothing other than a nationalist one’ (Sutherland 2000: 12). At the same time, the CSU’s federalist orientation is central to its success. The party has been able to provide a bridge to German politics through its electoral partnership with the Christian Democratic Union, which allows the CSU to contest federal elections and form governing coalitions, and to translate Bavarian interests to Germany and vice versa.

The nationalist and federalist stance of Bavaria’s ‘party of state’ has had a significant impact on party competition in Bavaria. In its quest to defend the Bavarian identity and increase Bavaria’s influence in Germany and Europe, the CSU – like the Scottish National Party – has forced other parties in Bavaria to enter the territorial debate. Regional branches of the Social Democratic Party, the Free Democrats and Greens have all acknowledged the need to take a more pro-Bavarian stance in order to succeed electorally, and have adopted more distinctly territorial identities and policies.

Heimat is a difficult word to define, but most Bavarian politicians, when asked to elaborate on the term during interviews conducted in January 2005, mentioned attachment to the land, identity, people, culture and traditions – in other words, it can be made equivalent to nationhood (Sutherland 2001).
The CSU shares another commonality with the SNP: both parties have pushed a European agenda in which greater autonomy is sought. In response, statewide parties have had to compete with the SNP’s goal of ‘independence in Europe’ and the CSU’s demands for a ‘Europe of the Regions’. While the CSU’s pursuit of a regionalisation agenda in Europe has been broadly welcomed, if we dig deeper we shall find that other parties’ interpretations of a Europe of the Regions differ greatly, often meaning the decentralisation of decision-making structures to regions below the Bavarian level. Furthermore, whilst the CSU has become more critical of EU integration, other parties have pursued a more open and participative approach towards Europe, which centres on reconciling their demands with other Länder rather than encouraging Bavaria to strike out on its own.

Bavaria has much to tell us about how European structural change has altered the scope for substate territories in pursuing autonomy and greater capacity, and how integrationist measures have forced substate parties to alter their strategies. Together with the classic ‘nationalist’ case of Scotland and the little-known ‘regionalist’ case of Sardinia, an examination of Bavarian territorial politics contributes to a greater insight into the diverse effects of European integration on substate territorial demands. As in the Scottish case, we will begin by examining the dominant political traditions that have shaped Bavarian politics, looking at how parties reconcile their territorial aims with their ideological positions. We shall also consider how parties construct the Bavarian nation, or Heimat, and how they link this to their socioeconomic projects for the territory. Following this, we will examine how Europe has altered these debates, and how integrationist measures have forced Bavarian parties to adapt their demands for autonomy and capacity within European structures.

5.2 Political Traditions and Ideologies in Bavaria

According to Peter James (1995: 1), ‘the Free State of Bavaria has operated almost as a system within a system’. Although the traditional cleavages of German politics apply in Bavaria – the left/right dimension, religion, environmental and other sectoral issues – there is an important territorial dimension to party competition in Bavaria that cuts across the other issues. Students of Bavarian territorial politics posit that the historical, social and political structures of Bavaria determine the political developments within present-day Bavaria, and not pan-German or federal issues (Mintzel 1993). Bavaria’s political system, which is dominated by the CSU has been able to maintain its distinct traditions and political culture that mark it out from the rest of Germany. The main political traditions of Bavaria prior to the creation of the Federal Republic, which have had a significant impact on its post-war party system development, were were ‘Catholicism and separatism (‘nationalism’ might not be too strong a description)’ according to Padgett and Burkett (1986: 114). However, this judgment is too simplistic. In our analysis, we will consider how the dominant ideology throughout Bavarian history, Christian (Catholic)-Conservativism, was able to
accommodate two competing strands: that of an explicitly Bavarian nationalism, and a more German-oriented federalism. We must also consider how this ideology was able to triumph over socialism and liberalism in the immediate post-war years, when the Bavarian political system was transformed from being a multi-party to a one-party system. An analysis of Bavarian political traditions will help us understand Bavarian party competition and the success of the CSU in capturing these competing ideologies and constitutional preferences.

Christian-Conservatism has been the dominant political tradition in Bavaria since the mid-nineteenth century. Its main characteristics are strongly conservative social and cultural values, economic liberalism tempered by a belief in the responsibility of the state to care for its citizens, an emphasis on individual responsibility, and (until the mid-twentieth century) religious loyalties were to the Roman Catholic Church. In Bavaria, Christian-Conservatism has taken on a particularly Bavarian hue, or put another way, has been seen as the best vehicle for protecting Bavarian distinctiveness. Christian-conservative political thinking was represented by the Bavarian Patriotic Party (BPP) in the 1860s, the Bavarian Centre Party in the 1890s, and the Bavarian People’s Party (BVP), which constituted the largest party in Bavaria until the fall of the Weimar Republic. However, the Catholic-Conservative political tradition in Bavaria has suffered from splits between two competing forces: a Bavarian nationalist wing and a more Reich-oriented federalist wing. For instance, the BVP found more explicitly nationalist competitors in the Bavarian Farming League, which represented the agrarian, petit-bourgeois values of ‘Old Bavaria’. After the collapse of the Third Reich, this fault line re-emerged in the battles between the radical-separatist Bavarian Party and the federal-oriented Christian Social Union. As we shall see, there was not enough room in the Bavarian political landscape for both parties representing Christian-Conservatism to exist.

The CSU was founded in October 1945 and licensed by the US Military Government in early 1946. The first proposed name for the party was the Bavarian Christian Social Union, but the prefix was dropped due to the Americans’ unease about sanctioning political regionalism in the new Germany. Yet this did not prevent it from developing an explicitly nationalist profile in line with its Christian-Conservative ancestors. The CSU supported a strong type of federalism, based on maximum decentralisation of authority to the Länder and a more powerful Bundesrat. Throughout the post-war period, it positioned itself as the only party capable of representing Bavarian interests in Germany, and was able to convince voters of this ability. With the exception of a break in 1954–7, the CSU has continuously governed Bavaria since the first Landtag election in 1946, without coalition partners since 1966, and with a two-thirds majority in the Landtag since 2003. As James

28 This was two years before the Bavarian Party was authorised to compete in Land elections. The occupation forces were sceptical of regionalist parties, which could thwart the development of German unity.
(1995: 93) marvels, ‘No party in the FRG has exerted as much political power and influence and regularly recorded such spectacular election results as has been the case with the CSU in Bavaria.’

The CSU’s ability to maintain its powerful position in Bavarian politics was due to a number of factors. First, it sought to advance a vision of a single Bavarian culture, to which it tied its party identity. The Bavarian party system in the immediate post-war period had been fragmented and heterogeneous, reflecting the distinct political cultures of Swabia, Franconia and Old Bavaria. On coming to power, the CSU set about promoting Bavarian solidarity by bridging the socio-cultural divide between the Catholic South and Protestant North, and integrating the diverse regional traditions. Another essential ingredient in the success of the CSU was its ability to adapt the traditional Bavarian identity to a modern industrial setting. Until the 1950s, Bavaria’s economy was predominantly agricultural, which, within less than twenty years, underwent a complete volte-face, with new technological centres sweeping across the Land. The rapid industrialisation brought enormous socioeconomic changes, which the CSU government was able to skilfully steer without major disruptions to Bavarian society. The CSU sought to satisfy the demands of farmers and property-owners, whilst remaining attractive to the new middle classes. These diverse groups would provide the electoral basis of the CSU’s success. Yet the CSU also sought to extend itself into the Liberal and Social Democratic strongholds in the north-west in its bid to become a ‘catch-all’ party. The CSU’s transformation from being a party representative of Catholic-Conservative agrarian communities to being a modern, inter-confessional mass party did not, however, entail a desertion of its strongly honed regional identity. Instead, the CSU was able to shape a strong, conservative and patriotic Bavarian political culture through the use of the media, control of the state bureaucracy, and its numerous and powerful local organisations. This allowed it to dominate the ‘social discourse’ of Bavaria and set the political agenda (Sutherland 2000: 8).

Finally, an important part of the success of the CSU was that it did not restrict its activities and demands to the Bavarian political arena. Instead, it negotiated an agreement with the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in the years 1947–9, so that the CSU was able to participate in federal politics as part of the Christian Democratic parliamentary group and fill Cabinet posts in CDU-CSU governments. This did not threaten its independence, which was manifested through separate party programmes and congresses, organisational and membership structures, and the existence of a CSU Landesgruppe in the Bundestag. Both parties agreed not to contest elections outside of their territories and the CSU became known as the CDU’s Schwesterpartei (sister-party). As a result of this agreement, the CSU developed what Mintzel (1990b: 92) describes as an institutional and political Doppelrolle (dual role) as an autonomous Land party with special federal characteristics. This means that it can contest federal elections and be involved in federal politics even if its agreement with the CDU means that it can only field candidates in Bavaria. The CSU’s relationship
with the CDU furnishes it with a political significance in Bonn that extends far beyond Bavaria. Had the CSU not made a pact with the CDU in the immediate post-war period, Mintzel (1978: 222) argues that it may simply have become another local party pursuing a ‘radical separatist patriotism’.

This is exactly what happened to the CSU’s main opponent in the 1950s. The Bavarian Party also stood for the Catholic, conservative and agrarian traditions of the rural communities of Old Bavaria. As Mintzel (1978: 201) argues, ‘with the licensing of the Bavarian Party on the Land level Bavarian patriotic and radical-federalistic forces had been able to organize themselves again all over Bavaria’. The BP was less open to seeking a rapprochement between the Catholic south and Lutheran Protestant north in Bavaria, and sought far-reaching constitutional reform, moving from support for radical federalism to outright separatism. This was to avoid being dominated by the ‘Prussians’ whose ‘dream wish’ would be to create a centralised state that favoured the north’s development.29 The BP’s programme garnered considerable support amongst the Bavarian populace, winning 17.9 percent of the vote in the 1950 Landtag election. This made a large dent in CSU support, which dropped from 52.3 percent in 1946 to just 27.4 percent in 1952. When some of the CSU’s most popular figures jumped ship to the BP, the parties embarked on a ‘fraternal war’ (Bruderkrieg). The BP joined forces with the SDP, FDP and the All-German Block/Party of Refugees and Expellees to form a ‘Coalition of Four’ in the Bavarian Landtag in 1954-57. Despite its awkward position as the only Catholic-Conservative force in the coalition, the alliance was worth it for inflicting the ‘ultimate humiliation’ on the CSU (Carl Sime 1979: 99).

In response to being ousted from office, the CSU initiated a far-reaching programme of internal reform, creating a broad organisational sub-structure by setting up municipal offices, centralising the party machine, and establishing a weekly party newspaper. The CSU’s expansion into other districts enabled it to throw off its reputation as an Old Bavarian party, and to climb back up to its 50 percent mark in elections.30 The BP, on the other hand, ‘never recovered from the resounding defeat the CSU inflicted on it’ (James 1995: 3). It was unable, and unwilling, to expand its voter base, and still seeks to represent only the Catholic rural population. As a result, since the late 1960s the Bavarian Party became a ‘micro-party’ unable to capture more than 5% of the vote. Its goal of independence in Europe, as we shall see later, allowed the party to increase its support slightly but this is still too insignificant to have any impact on Bavarian politics.31 The CSU’s vision of Bavaria in Europe continues to be much more alluring to voters than separation from Germany.

Some scholars have argued that the predominance of Christian-Conservative values in Bavaria means that the Land is not a very good breeding ground for the Left (Mintzel 1999; James

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29 Joseph Baumgartner, Chair of the Bayernpartei, in a speech to the Bavarian Landtag, 15 August 1948.
30 The CSU won 45.6% in 1958, 48.1% in 1966 and 56.4% in 1970.
31 The BP won 8.1% of the vote in the 1958 Landtag election, dropping to 0.4 % in 1978, and winning less than 1% since 1989. In the European elections, the BP increased its vote from 0.6% in 1984 to 1.6% in 1994.
1995). Our next task is to explain how the CSU’s brand of Christian-Conservatism was able to defeat the competing ideologies of socialism and liberalism in Bavaria, both of which predominated in the industrialised towns and urban areas, and the Franconian-Protestant ‘corridor’. The Bavarian Social Democratic Party is the oldest party in Bavaria (est. 1892) and the only surviving pre-Second World War party in the Landtag. Scholars argue that the Bavarian SPD has exhibited a separate identity from the rest of its counterparts in Germany (Unger 1979; Ostermann 1994; James 1995). The Bavarian SPD’s unique character derives from its long-standing sympathy with the need to preserve Bavaria’s unique identity in the Federal Republic, in addition to the challenge of operating within a conservative political context. The Bavarian SPD proudly recalls the role of party leader Wilhelm Hoegner in drafting the Bavarian constitution in 1946, which made reference to Bavaria’s uniqueness, traditions of statehood and sense of identity, and which gave Bavaria the opportunity to ‘anchor its autonomy (Eigenstaatlichkeit) as firmly as possible, in anticipation of a new German state’ (James 1995: 69). Hoegner is now remembered as the ‘father’ of the Bavarian constitution, and thus a Bavarian patriot as much as a Social Democrat.

The Bavarian SPD’s sense of patriotism has often led to tensions with the Bundespartei. During the debates surrounding the German constitution in the 1940s, the Bavarian SPD pushed for a ‘strong’ type of federalism that gave equal weight to the Bundestag and Bundesrat and that decentralised the community and economic structures of the state (Ostermann 1994: 129). This became known as ‘der bajuwarische Impetus’ (the Bavarian impetus) in social democratic circles. According to Ostermann (1994: 139), ‘Hoegner’s ideas about federalism were not compatible with the Basic Law; he feared, that on the basis of the vague formulas, the competences of the Länder would be weakened by the central power’.32 This stance led the Bavarian SPD, along with the CSU and other Bavarian parties, to reject the German ‘Basic Law’ in 1949, which clouded the relationship between the federal and Bavarian Social Democrats. The Bavarian SPD differed from its German counterparts in other ways. For instance, when the German SPD adopted the Godesberg Programme of 1956, in which the party dropped its Marxist roots and began its evolution into becoming a ‘catch-all’ party, the Bavarian SPD had already pre-empted this move the decade before by becoming ‘more Volkspartei than a class party’ (Unger 1979: 59) in response to the strongly anti-Left political landscape of Bavaria. Because the Bavarian SPD was allowed to constitute itself as a Landesverband (regional association) and not, like the other Länder, as a branch directed by the centre, this allowed for a degree of policy divergence.

In the post-war years, the BayernSPD made various attempts to steal the CSU’s thunder as the true Bavarian party, but these efforts were ultimately unsuccessful. Some authors argue that the

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32 ‘Hoegners Vorstellung von Foederalismus war mit dem Grundgesetz nicht vereinbar; er befürchtete, dass es aufgrund seiner vagen Formulierungen die Aushöhlung der Länderkompetenzen zugunsten der Zentralgewalt gestatte.’
political climate of Bavaria is not amenable to social democratic thinking because of the historical predominance of the Christian-Conservative ideology linked to Bavarian patriotism (Oberreuter 1987: 59). Others have argued that the Bavarian SPD’s weak position is due to its inability to create a Bavarian social democratic counter-culture. ‘The SPD allowed its initial progress towards attaining a distinctive Bavarian character and Social democratic identity to wither away, and it neglected to develop a specific Social Democratic regional orientation among the political-cultural developments in Bavaria’ (Mintzel 1993: 110). Attempts to reform the party in 1990 by achieving Land party status and calling themselves ‘BayernSPD’ instead of ‘die bayerische SPD’ were too little too late. In the following elections, it failed to overturn its electoral decline or surpass its best election result, which was in 1966, when it took 35.8% of the vote in the Landtag elections. Indeed, in the 2003 Landtag elections, it received only 18% of the vote. This was not helped by the party’s vacillation about demanding recognition of Bavaria’s distinctiveness, which went against the internationalist principles of the federal SPD. The SPD’s state-centrism at one point led to demands for the Bavarian party to become independent.33 But even if this were to happen, it is still questionable whether the party would be able to convince voters of its Bavarian credentials.

Similar problems exist for the development of Liberalism in Bavaria. The FDP has been equally hampered by its perception as a Bavarian ‘affiliate’ of Bonn/Berlin and by the federal party’s staunch opposition to regional patriotism. Yet there are also problems peculiar to the FDP, both within Bavaria and elsewhere. First, because of its post-war affiliation with the Christian Democrats at the federal level, the FDP has been more reluctant to criticise the CSU at the Land level. This has made the FDP an ineffective opposition force in Land politics. Moreover, in Bavaria specifically, the FDP has suffered because of its unwillingness to develop a strong ‘Bavarian’ profile for the party. For them, regional pride is associated with particularism and exclusivity. In the aftermath of the National Socialist regime, the Bavarian Liberals were committed to fighting ‘against separatism and particularism in every form, every popularistic sense of superiority’.34 To that end, the FDP has always maintained a firmly pro-federal stance in which power is decentralised and as ‘close’ as possible to the citizens. The party’s official position is that Bavaria should be treated no differently in Germany, but should enjoy strong rights along with other Länder. At the same time, the party has acknowledged the fact that it has to become more Bavarian to win more votes.35 Thus the party now insists that ‘we in Bavaria love our freedom, our independence and our traditions’.36 The Bavarian FDP’s new patriotism was evident in its demands for the reform of federalism in Germany, in which they wanted ‘a strong Bavaria’ with autonomous decision-making.

33 Interview [2.10] with Harald Schneider.
36 ‘wir in Bayern lieben unsere Freiheit, unsere Unabhängigkeit und unsere Tradition’ (FDP Bayern 2003).
capacities (FDP Bayern 1998: 46). Yet if we look closer, instead of strengthening of the regional level alone, the FDP believes that the Bavarian sub-regions should be given more autonomy. This is a strategy to offset the centralisation of power at the Bavarian level (FDP Bayern 1982: 10). But pleas for a reduction in the Bavarian state’s powers have won little support: in 1994 they were ousted from parliament, and have failed to win more than 5% of the vote.

There is indication, however, that a new political tradition is emerging in Bavaria that does not simply say ‘Please – we’re also from Bavaria!’ like the SPD and FDP (Mintzel 1999: 120). The Green Party have politicised the issue of environmentalism and framed it within a Bavaria context. Die Grünen won their first seats in the Bavarian Landtag in 1986, with 7.5% of the vote, some years after the German Green Party was created out of citizen-initiative groups to contest the 1979 European elections. Like other German Green parties, the Bavarian Greens consider themselves to be an anti-system party. Yet in the specific Bavarian context, the ‘system’ was dominated by Christian-conservatism, and the archetypal party that the Greens opposed was the ‘mass and professional machine’ of the CSU. Some scholars argue that the Greens should be considered less an ecological movement and more of a protest movement against the ‘ unholy trinity’ of the Bavarian state, the CSU and the Catholic Church (Mintzel 1990a: 172; James 1995). However, the party has been slow in committing itself to a specifically Bavarian agenda. In a series of interviews with Green MdLs, Immerfall (1996) found that one section of the party were strongly opposed to developing a strong Bavarian party identity. This was associated with their main political rival – the CSU – and party patriotism was viewed as something that had to be weakened in order to bring about an open multicultural society. Another section of the party, however, believed that non- or anti-Bavarian attitudes were a contributing factor to the weakness of the party in the Land. It is worth quoting this opinion by one Bavarian Green party member at length:

“For the time being, the Greens do not sit well with local-regional and self-conscious provincial identities …[but w]ithout the penetration of the progressive conservative camp in Bavaria, political change will not come about. As long as we are put in the same category (Fleisch vom Fleisch) as the ‘feebly’ branded social democrats, we will not be able to break our traditional south German impotence (Ohnmacht) and in the long-term forge our fate.”37

Following years of internal discussions, the party decided that the regionalisation of Green parties elsewhere was working so well that they too would become more Land-focused. This involved the creation of policies that would appeal to the strongly patriotic and conservative Bavarian electorate. These debates took place during the late 1990s, after which time the Greens increased their share of the vote from 5.7% in the 1998 Landtag election to 7.7% in 2003 – their best ever result.

In order to break their weakness in Bavaria and catalyse political change, the Greens needed to appeal to the progressive conservative stratum. This goal would be achieved through the development of a stronger Bavarian identity to sit alongside the Greens’ ecological convictions. The environment was already a central concern amongst Bavarian farmers, and the Greens were able to harness part of this vote – something that the SPD of FDP were unable to do. This territorial strategy played off well: in the countryside the Greens won support from the pro-Bavarian conservatives who were interested in environmental matters (from the CSU), and in the main towns and cities they appealed to the left-wing anti-Bavarian (and anti-CSU) vote. The Greens thus made political enemies of both the CSU in the countryside, and the SPD in the urban areas. However this was a small price to pay for the Bavarian Green Party’s success. Now that the Greens are expanding across traditionally CSU territory, the cause for social democracy (in an environmentalist guise) in Bavaria might not be lost. And the Greens, through appeals to both the conservative and progressive liberal sections of the Bavarian population, are beginning to develop the electoral base, membership and resources to compete with the CSU – even if displacing them is currently out of the question.

5.3 Party Constructions of the Bavarian Heimat

Unlike parties in Scotland who take the existence of the nation as granted, the CSU has continuously asserted the existence of Bavaria as an ‘imagined community’ and has sought to mobilise the population around a certain construction of the Bavarian Heimat to which it has tied its party identity. The CSU’s experience in government and control over state communication channels has made it difficult for other parties to articulate an alternative vision of Bavaria, and scholars have noted the repeated failure of opposition parties, particularly the SPD, to create a ‘counter-culture’ to the CSU. Recent attempts by the Greens to construct a competing vision of the Heimat have been more successful, but it remains unclear how the Greens, as well as the SPD and FDP, propose to mobilise the nation around a clear set of political, economic and cultural goals.

The CSU’s notion of the Bavarian nation is derived from an historical myth of statehood, territorial continuity and shared culture and traditions that sits with, but ultimately supersedes, the identity and traditions of Bavaria’s diverse regions. The CSU is adept at mobilising certain elements in Bavaria’s history that glorify the Land and its independent spirit, whilst ignoring other less palatable incidents, such as the establishment of first Socialist Republic in 1919. The CSU creates a ‘reusable past’, and a crucial aspect of Bavarian nationhood is its long history of legislative and administrative autonomy. Minister President Max Streibl once said that: ‘Bavarian sovereignty is the political protector of the Bavarian way of life. Bavaria, the oldest German state and one of the oldest states in Europe, should never be allowed to sink to the level of a mere administrative
province. At the same time, the CSU’s construction of Bavaria is also based upon the post-war modernisation of the Land, with the CSU at the helm. This vision of ‘modern’ Bavaria brimming with high-tech industries is complemented by safeguarding traditional economic communities, such as craftsmen and farmers, which are associated with Bavaria’s history, culture and social values.

To underline Bavaria’s territorial integrity, the CSU has sought to develop a singular political culture in which the ‘sub-cultural’ regional traditions of Swabia, Franconia and Old Bavaria are integrated into an overall vision of the Bavarian nation. This has proved difficult in some areas. For instance, people in the northern district of Franconia often consider themselves to be Franconians rather than Bavarians – the latter is still considered an alien, imposed identity associated with Old Bavaria. To combat the prevalence of local identities over the Land identity, and to ensure a sense of common purpose and belonging, the CSU has been instrumental in developing cultural and education policies that assert Bavaria’s unique identity, such as holding annual traditional festivals and cultural events, and teaching Bavarian history, literature and traditions in schools. Another, unofficial, aspect of the CSU’s cultural policy is keeping immigrants out of Bavaria, who are considered to threaten and dilute the purity of the Bavarian nation. Minister-President Edmund Stoiber advocates a reduction in the number of asylum seekers that Germany accepts, something that has prompted critics to label him, and the CSU, xenophobic. In the late 1990s he lambasted Gerhard Schröder for saying that he would work hard in the interest of Germans and people living in Germany; Stoiber took issue with the fact that Schröder pledged to work on behalf of ‘non-citizens’. The CSU insists that foreigners must integrate fully into Bavarian society, but even then, the party opposes the idea of multiculturalism. CSU Leader Edmund Stoiber once said that ‘talk of a multicultural society tears up the very roots of our national and cultural identity, developed over centuries’. The CSU’s hints that immigrants are inferior to Bavarians are replicated with regard to other Germans. In the 2005 general election, Stoiber claimed that ‘if it was like Bavaria everywhere, there wouldn’t be any problems. Unfortunately, not everyone in Germany is as intelligent as in Bavaria.’ This only serves to underline the perception of Bavaria by other Germans as arrogant, exclusivist and xenophobic. However, within the Land itself, the CSU is seen as protecting Bavarian culture and values, as well as keeping Bavarian jobs for Bavarian hands.

The CSU has been successful in tying its party identity to the Bavarian political culture that it was instrumental in creating. For instance, during the 1982 elections the CSU’s slogan was ‘We in Bavaria’, in 1986 the party declared ‘Three names, a single force: Bavaria, the CSU and Strauss’, whilst more recently the CSU adopted the straight-to-the-point slogan of ‘Vote for Bavaria’. The CSU also employs the two national symbols of Bavaria – the lion and the blue diamond – as party

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38 Speech in Munich on 6 July 1990 (Sutherland 2000: n10).
39 Stoiber’s statement was printed in Die Welt on 25 February 1989 and quoted in Sutherland (2001: 208).
symbols, which are usually located on the backdrop of the white-and-blue national flag of Bavaria. As Mintzel notes, ‘it is not even necessary to add the CSU’s name. In fact nearly everyone knows which party is meant’ (Mintzel 1990: 176). This has created enormous difficulties for other parties to break the CSU monopoly (one could say copyright!) over Bavarian nationhood.

The Bavarian SPD, as noted, has been unable to create a social-democratic ‘counter-culture’ in opposition to the political hegemony of the CSU state (Mintzel 1993: 110). Despite pledges by the Bavarian SPD that ‘we will allow nobody, and especially not the CSU, to outstrip our love for this land’ (Rothemund 1986), this ‘love’ has not been evident in party programmes or propaganda. One electoral placard in 1978 declared: ‘The powerful CSU needs to be checked by a strong Bavarian SPD. Therefore please give us your vote’ (Ostermann 1994: 160). But as Ostermann notes, if the SPD wants to appeal to sections of the electorate, it cannot just exist as the bereaved party in a competitive society. Slogans such as ‘the other Bavaria’ according to Sutherland (2000: 21) have made no attempt ‘to subvert or even challenge the CSU’s ideological interpretation of Bavaria as Heimat. Indeed, its proposed alternative is explicitly derived from the CSU’s world view’. This is certainly the view of the CSU itself. Max Streibl, referring to the SPD slogan of ‘Let’s preserve Bavaria’, commented: ‘What can this mean, then? It can only mean that Bavaria should remain the way it is. And let me add; the way it has become under the CSU!’.

Yet if we look more closely at the SPD’s construction of the Bavarian Heimat, we will find that it does differ from the CSU’s version. The SPD understand the Bavarian nation as ‘our cosmopolitan Bavarian Heimat’ and declared that ‘we are a multicultural society’ (BayernSPD 1994: 35). The party has sought to counter the CSU’s version of a homogenous political culture through its emphasis on the different regional traditions – arguing that the cultures of Swabia and Franconia deserve the same respect as that of Old Bavaria. This may be considered an electoral strategy as much as an ideological discourse on the Bavarian Heimat. The SPD performs better in communal elections, especially in the cities of Munich and Nuremberg and the industrial north-east. Support for a heterogeneous Bavaria is a way of countering the centralism of the CSU at the Land level and its continued emphasis on celebrating ‘Old Bavarian’ culture. At the same time, the Bavarian SPD support a policy of multiculturalism as a way of opening Bavaria up to outside influences, thereby challenging narrow nationalist and xenophobic tendencies in the Land. The party points out that Bavaria itself is an amalgamation of different cultures and has historically been able to accommodate cultural differences within its territorial boundaries

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40 ‘wir lassen uns in unsere Liebe zu diesem unseren Land von niemand, und schon gar nicht von der CSU übertreffen.’
41 ‘Die übermaechtige CSU braucht Kontrolle durch eine starke bayerische SPD. Geben Sie uns deshalb bitte Ihre Stimme.’
The FDP have made fewer efforts to develop an alternative construction of the Bavarian 
*Heimat*, and indeed, it prefers to focus on individuals rather than regional communities. One of the 
central themes in German Liberal discourse is the belief in an open, pluralistic society, where the 
rights of the individual are protected regardless of race, religion, gender or country of origin. The 
emphasis on tolerance and diversity is reflected in the progressive policies of the party regarding 
issues of immigration and asylum. For the FDP, the CSU’s abuse of the state government to 
promote party aims that include protecting Bavaria’s population from an influx of foreigners, and 
creating a separate political culture, goes against the grain of democratic liberal thinking. Julian 
Gyger, former Chair of the Bavarian FDP, once stated that: ‘I will not declare the Liberal party 
uniform to be *Lederhosen* and *Gamsbart*\(^\text{43}\) – we should first of all get rid of all superficial and 
hackneyed clichéd ideas about our Bavarian *Heimat* that we have internalised – that’s my point, 
how we can make organised Liberalism in Bavaria more attractive in every respect, that there is 
actually an acceptable alternative for every citizen in the face of the superior strength of the CSU’.\(^\text{44}\)

But what kind of alternative Bavaria does the FDP visualise? It appears that the party is 
trying to undermine the singular vision of Bavaria that the CSU espouses, and instead has sought to 
win over the ordinary citizen by stressing citizenship rights. The FDP objects to the emphasis on the 
Old Bavarian traditions and culture – which excludes the rest of the Land and insinuates 
homogeneity in Bavarian culture that, for the Liberals, does not exist. Gyger says, ‘when I speak of 
paying more attention to the Bavarian art of living and Bavarian lease of life, I am not referring to 
only that of Old Bavaria, but also to the Franconians, Swabians and the *Sudetendeutschen*’ (FDP 
Bayern 1983: 34).\(^\text{45}\) The Liberals do not interpret *Heimat* as the (culturally homogenous) Bavarian 
nation but rather as the towns and villages of Bavaria, and a love for the countryside. The 
geographical and physical aspects of Bavaria are more important to the *FDP Bayern* than the 
sociological references to a collective culture, traditions, dialect, history and people. And the 
Liberals emphasise the richness and diversity of the communes and town that make up Bavaria, 
rather than referencing the region as a whole. This leads to an important point. In its less ‘physical’ 
incarnations, the Bavarian Liberals view the *Heimat* in its pre-CSU form: not as a singular political 
culture, but as a hybrid of diverse and juxtaposing cultures. This fits in with the Bavarian Liberals’ 
vision of an open and pluralistic society in Bavaria, which rankles with the CSU vision of a non-

\(^{43}\) A Gamsbart is the tuft of hair from a mountain antelope that is traditionally worn as a hat decoration in Bavaria. 
\(^{44}\) ‘Ich will nicht Lederhose und Gamsbart zur liberalen Parteiausstattung erklären – wir sollten uns ohnehin einmal 
abgewöhnen, alle vordergründigen und abgegriffenen Kritikernützlichkeiten über unsere bayerische Heimat auch noch 
selfst zu verinnerlichen – mir geht es darum, wie können wir den organisierten Liberalismus in Bayern in jeder 
Beziehung so attraktiv machen, dass er für jene Bürger zu einer akzeptierten Alternative wird, die sich zwar angesichts 
der Übermacht der CSU’ (FDP Bayern 1983: 34). 
\(^{45}\) The *Sudetendeutschen* were the German population expelled from Czechoslovakia, ‘wenn ich von einem vermehrten 
Eingehen auf bayerische Lebensart und bayerisches Lebensgefühl spreche, meine ich damit keineswegs nur die 
Altbayern, sondern ebenso die Franken, die Schwaben und die Sudetendeutschen.’
multicultural, and primarily homogenous society in which foreigners not welcome. The Liberals refuse to exploit Bavarian cultural traditions for tactical reasons. However, this refusal to play any Bavarian card has left the party in the political wilderness, as the CSU increasingly sets the political agenda in Bavaria, in which there is a strong emphasis on Bavarian identity politics.

The Greens have tried a similar tactic, and have been more successful than the Social Democrats or Liberals in their construction of an alternative Bavarian Heimat. They have sought to replace the homogenous Christian-conservative, Old Bavarian-centred culture of the CSU. The Green Party found this image of Bavarian inimical to their dreams of creating an open, multicultural, pluralistic and tolerant society free from discrimination and particularism. This, however, put the Bavarian Greens in a very difficult position in their homeland, where they were faced with a strongly patriotic identity among the citizens, and an ideologically conservative political environment. The party was divided over how to advance their universalistic goals in a Land that sought to protect its distinct way of life. In the late 1990s, however, a decision was made to immerse the Green Party in identity politics.

The party began by appropriating some of the main symbols of Bavarian nationhood, whilst giving them a Green twist. To illustrate, in Green party elections posters for the Landtag election in 2003, the co-Chair of the party, Sepp Daxenburger, was wearing Lederhosen and drinking a Maß (a tankard of beer) in a beer garden. Other posters showed a group of Bavarian youths – of different ages, colours and backgrounds – enjoying a drink in the traditional beer garden. Although this message was directed for the benefit of urban voters (likely to vote for SPD or FDP), the Greens were clearly moving onto CSU territory – using traditional Bavarian images to pander to voters in the countryside. By the late 1990s, the Green Party was holding its party meetings in beer gardens – a strategy that had been monopolised by the CSU. The success of the Green vision of an open, modern and progressive Bavaria that simultaneously respects its history, regional diversity, traditions and (environmental) values, has led some authors to argue that the party is the only political force identifiable with a ‘counter-culture to the political hegemony of the CSU’ (James 1995: 103). But even though the Green Party has begun to challenge the CSU’s construction of Bavaria, it is reluctant to mobilise the nation for political ends, or to argue in defence of special Bavarian interests within the Federal Republic. This makes it difficult to convince voters that the CSU’s goals and identity, are not intrinsically Bavaria’s goals and identity.

Finally, in contrast to the CSU’s efforts to promote a singular political culture, and the opposition parties’ advancement of a multicultural Bavaria, there is one party in Bavaria that has moved backwards, to a vision of a closed society centred on the Old Bavarian culture. The Bavarian Party believes that an independent Bavaria, free from the shackles of Bonn and Berlin, should be governed according to Bavaria’s traditional conservative and Christian values instead of ‘foreign
ideologies’ (Bayernpartei 1993: 5). The BP wants to maintain a homogenous Bavarian society that can stand up to the threat of being ‘overcome’ by foreigners. In an independent Bavaria ‘our social system would no longer stand on the brink of collapse from more immigrants’. The party also argues that foreigners should not have a right to vote in elections, despite professing to support a ‘weltoffener Heimat liebe’ (a cosmopolitan love of Heimat). Indeed, the party strongly opposes multiculturalism (Bayernpartei 1993: 45). Cosmopolitanism for the BP implies only the diversity of regional traditions within Bavaria. Post-independence, the party maintains that the number of foreigners living in Bavaria would be reduced, and competences would be divided between the Bavarian state, the Stämme (tribes) of Old Bavaria, Franconia and Swabia and the communes.

5.4 Territorial Strategies: Autonomy versus Capacity?
In contrast to parties in Scotland, Bavarian political actors do not seek special constitutional recognition within Germany, or official acknowledgement of Bavaria’s cultural or political uniqueness. Instead, the CSU-led Bavarian government has focussed its attention on gaining more policy benefits for Bavaria in German and European affairs. In a sense, this is similar to the trade-off that Scotland made in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – constitutional recognition for the ability to act. But in another sense, Bavaria did not need to press for more constitutional recognition (which Scotland lacked) as this was already guaranteed in the Grundgesetz (Basic Law).

When the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) was created, Bavaria constituted the only large historical political entity among the ten German Länder, and the only Land whose boundaries had survived the territorial restructuring following the Second World War (the others were the city-states of Bremen and Hamburg). In order to protect its special interests and identity in the FRG, the southern Land time and again provided an independent, and oftentimes dissident, voice in German affairs (Dorondo 1992). The patriotism of Bavarian parties was evident in the drawing up of the Bayerische Verfassung (Bavarian constitution) in 1946, which recognises Bavaria’s uniqueness, traditions of statehood and sense of identity, and in the Bavarian Assembly’s rejection of the federal constitution (Basic Law) in 1949. Since then, the Bavarian government has consistently pursued its own policy line in the Federal Republic. For example, the Bavarian government took a hard line on Willy Brandt’s Ostpolitik – which was viewed as a threat to security and political reunification – culminating in the Bavarian government’s successful challenge to the constitutionality of the federal government’s Basic Treaty with the German Democratic Republic (DDR) in 1972.

The CSU has explicitly stated that its aims are to achieve more influence and autonomy for Bavaria – both formally through the decentralisation of powers to the Länder within Germany, and informally through Bavaria’s paradiplomatic dealings with other regions and states in Europe.

46 ‘unsere Sozialsysteme stünden nicht durch immer noch mehr Zuwanderer vor dem Kollaps’ (Bayernpartei 1986).
Bavarian Minister for European and Federal Affairs, Eberhard Sinner, argues that Bavaria should be considered like other stateless nations in Europe such as Scotland and Catalonia – as an historical political entity with a desire to obtain more autonomy.\textsuperscript{47} Yet instead of choosing independence as its preferred constitutional goal, it seeks to make its presence felt within federal German and European structures. The CSU’s core aim is ‘to protect the Bavarian Heimat, and to build a secure and good future for the unified German Vaterland’ (CSU 1990a: 41).\textsuperscript{48} The CSU vehemently defends the powers of the Länder vis-à-vis the federal government and any hint of centralisation through imprecise clauses in the Basic Law are met with strident condemnation by CSU officials. In particular, the question of fiscal equalisation between Länder, which requires Bavaria to pay more due to its wealthy status, has provoked deep resistance within the CSU.

Bavaria’s political autonomy and claims to special treatment has been bolstered by the ‘economic miracle’ it experienced, and its position as a financial contributor to poorer Länder. Yet it is important to bear in mind that in the immediate post-war period, Bavaria had a predominantly agricultural economy, with no raw materials or heavy industry to compete with the rich Ruhr area or the thriving ports of Hamburg or Bremen. With the erection of the Iron Curtain, Bavaria was severed from its traditional trading markets in the east and south, and became largely dependent on the federal government for subsidies. Yet this dependency did not endure. During the process of industrialisation in the 1950s, Bavaria’s economy became 75% more productive than its pre-war capacity (Treml 1989: 427), and this figure continued to soar as more and more people moved from the agricultural sector to manufacturing and services. The CSU developed economic policies that consisted of providing subsidies to support agricultural sector workers and small and medium-sized businesses, whilst investing important growth industries such as aeronautics, nuclear energy, electrical engineering, automobile manufacturing, petro-chemicals and the tertiary sector. To assist these dual aims, the CSU sought subsidies from the Federal Government to support Bavarian farmers, craftsmen and small businesses, whilst winning tax concessions to develop a large industrial base. This was largely achieved through the powerful CSU Landesgruppe in Bonn, which ‘acted as a powerful lobby for Bavarian economic interests’ during the years of rapid industrialisation (Carl-Sime 1979: 100). The southern Land is now the largest food producer in the FRG (James 1995: 133), it produces the greatest amount of genetic technological research and has the biggest aerospace industry in Germany (Stoiber 1999). Bavaria’s transformation from being one of the poorest regions in Germany to one of the richest has affected its strategy in Bonn/Berlin. Whilst the Bavarian government once supported equalisation measures (as well as tax concessions

\textsuperscript{47} Interview [2.3] with Eberhard Sinner.
\textsuperscript{48} ‘Bayern als Heimat bewahren und gestalten, dem geeinten Vaterland DL eine sichere und gute Zukunft bauen.’
and agricultural subsidies) to enable Bavaria to modernise and expand its economy, these days the CSU argues that Bavaria should not have to give its hard-earned cash to other Länder.

Debates about increasing Bavaria’s autonomy over its own political and socioeconomic development have inevitably been affected by European developments. Once considered to lie on the periphery of the EEC, Bavaria is now at the ‘centre’, being in an advantageous trade position between the east and west. In the two decades preceding the ‘acceleration’ of European integration in the late 1980s, there was a strong consensus amongst political parties that ‘ever closer union’ was a guiding value for German politics. The future of Bavaria, as well as the development of federalism in Germany, was linked to the European project by political parties, and the economic benefits that a single market portended was gleefully anticipated by Bavaria’s party of state. Thus, whilst in Scotland concerns in the 1970s and 1980s were expressed about the peripheralisation of Scotland from economic and political centres of decision-making, in Bavaria parties looked forward to increased trade for an economically powerful Bavaria at the centre of Europe.

5.5 Europeanisation and Bavaria’s Parties

In contrast to the United Kingdom, the process of European integration has been unequivocally welcomed by all of the mainstream parties in Germany. Germany’s future has been tied to that of Europe’s and as such, political parties have argued that Germany should be the driving force towards further integration. Roberts (2000: 176) calls this a ‘symbiotic relationship’ whereby Europe and Germany both need, and have benefited from, each other. At the substate level, Bavarian parties have displayed a consistently positive attitude towards Europe. Franz Joseph Strauss, for instance, saw European integration as a way for uniting the ‘two Germanies’ and emphasised the importance of Europe for the future of Bavaria and Germany (Strauss 1968, 1976). When direct elections to the European Parliament were introduced in 1979, the CSU saw its role as creating a Christian Democratic Europe as an alternative to the socialist-communist Europe to the east (CSU 1979b). The CSU had material as well as ideological interests in supporting European integration. For instance, the Single European Act of 1987 was seen as providing new markets for the robust business community in Bavaria. The importance of Europe to CSU rhetoric is captured in the phrase ‘Bavaria is my Heimat, Germany is my Vaterland and Europe is my future’.

However, the debates surrounding the deepening of European integration since the late 1980s have taken on a much less enthusiastic tone in Bavaria. A feeling began to emerge that the federal government – which was in charge of European (considered as ‘foreign’) policy – was ‘europablind’ (Jeffery 2003). During the late 1980s, the Länder governments united in lobbying for the implementation of laws to prevent their competences being transferred to Europe. For the CSU, a potential solution to maintaining Länder autonomy was encapsulated in the idea of a ‘Europe of
the Regions’. Yet we must not confuse the CSU’s understanding of this concept with that of the Scottish Labour Party. Whilst, for the latter, a regionalised Europe was seen as offering the promise of more autonomy for Scotland to act outside the state, in Bavaria this concept was developed to limit Europe’s encroachment on regional competences. The CSU insisted that the deepening of integration must not jeopardise or interfere with the rights and responsibilities of the German Länder. Even by 1979, the party spoke of the necessity of implementing the principle of subsidiarity to prevent the creation of a centralised European state (CSU 1979c).

To avoid this scenario, during the years between the Single European Act and the Maastricht Treaty, the Länder sought to halt, and even push back, some of the perceived European encroachments on their own competences. Bavaria was instrumental in pushing through laws that strengthened Länder rights of participation vis-à-vis the Bundestag in European matters, such as the amendment to Article 23 of the German Basic Law. This lays out the constitutional basis for German membership of the EU, in which the Federal Republic was forbidden to cede Länder competences to the EU without the approval of the Bundestag. European integration was recognised as a domestic policy, and the Länder were guaranteed a delegate, selected by the Bundestag, to represent Germany in Europe where the policy responsibilities of the Länder were concerned. A Committee of Länder Ministers for European Affairs was also established to coordinate strategies in 1992 (Roberts 2000: 174). But perhaps the most important development during this period was a series of conferences organised by the CSU, entitled Europe of the Regions, from 1987-1991. The CSU argues that the activities and proposals of these conferences directly led to the entrenchment of the principle of subsidiarity in the Maastricht Treaty, the creation of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) in 1994, and provided the catalyst for a mushrooming set of regional networks and exchanges across Europe. Bavaria was at the forefront of demands to entrench Länder rights and competences (Jeffery 2003; Bauer 2006). It was motivated was the belief that European integration must go hand-in-hand with the safeguarding of regional rights, ‘to strengthen the Länder and regions – i.e. federalisation – is our answer to centralisation and internationalisation. Only this path can guarantee in the future the necessary capacity to act for state-level politics’ (CSU 1998a: 18). If we read between the lines, we can see that the CSU is willing to support the project of European integration as long as it does not diminish the autonomy of Bavaria.

Despite party support for the principles and project of Europe, the CSU has often been critical of certain aspects of European integration. And as the CSU has become more Eurosceptical since the 1990s, other parties have adopted more pro-European positions. The Left has historically displayed a more critical attitude towards Europe. For instance, the SPD opposed Germany’s

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49 ‘Die Länder und Regionen stärken, also Federalisierung, ist unsere Antwort auf Zentralisierung und Internationalisierung. Nur dieser Weg garantiert auch in Zukunft der Landespolitik den Handlungsspielraum, den sie braucht.’
member of early European organisations such as the European Coal and Steel Community. In the mid-1990s, the SPD briefly toyed with the idea of opposing the single currency project and rejected the blueprint for a European constitution in 1994. Despite its own temporary opposition to the single currency, the CSU argues that progress towards a unified European should be undertaken without and against the SPD (CSU 1994a: 19). If we look more closely at SPD policies, we can see that there is also a strong pro-European discourse. The SPD has always viewed itself as a European party, pointing to its goal of creating a United States of Europe in 1925. It was the ‘kind’ of Europe that was being developed that they did not support. They criticised economic integration for creating greater disequilibrium amongst rich and poor in the absence of a comprehensive European social policy. However, since the late 1980s, the SPD saw the benefits of a ‘social’ Europe that could regulate and buffer the impact of economic integration (SPD 1989). By the late 1990s, the rhetoric was this: ‘The Bavarian SPD is a European party. We will help to make sure that the interests of broad strata of the population in Europe are moved back into focus. For this to happen, economic policy must be brought together with social policy in Europe’. The SPD believes that the power of Europe must be harnessed for the right social and environmental causes, in order to make European integration a bulwark against globalisation (BayernSPD 1998: 55).

The Free Democratic Party of Germany is, like its liberal-democratic sibling in Scotland, unswervingly pro-European. The FDP substantiates its support for European integration by referring to the interests of Germany, of peace between historically divided neighbours, and of the opportunities it presents to the citizens of Europe. On the latter point, the FDP believes that an open, competitive market economy in Europe will guarantee more jobs for European citizens, which along with the development of European social policies, will save them from poverty and destitution. These commitments mean the FDP is ‘the most enthusiastic of all parties on European matters’ (Roberts 2000: 174). The Bavarian Liberals, in line with the federal party, strongly support the creation of a proper European political union in which subsidiarity is key, and stress the benefits of further economic and monetary integration to Bavaria.

Finally, the Greens, who first came together to contest the 1979 European elections, have joined other parties in welcoming European integration. But this support is conditional. The Green Party, like its siblings across Europe, has raised concerns about the centralisation of competencies in Brussels that removes power even further from the people, and the lack of transparency to keep these powers in check. There are fears of an increasing democratic deficit in the EU, and that environmental concerns are being pushed aside in favour of economic growth. However, the Bavarian Greens cannot be likened to the anti-European position sometimes evident within the

Scottish Green Party. One party official indicated his astonishment at the Europhobia evident amongst UK Greens – something that would, of course, never happen in any German Green Party.\(^{51}\) Yet this has not prevented the German Greens from ‘taking a more critical view of progress towards European integration’ (Roberts 2000: 175). This Euro-critical attitude was more visible in the early years of the party, when their self-understanding as an ‘anti-system’ party was much stronger, and when left-wing and social democratic parties were in general less than enthusiastic about European integration. In the mid-1980s, the Green Party argued that ‘Das Europa in Brüssel ist tot’ (Muenter 2001), whilst in the late 1980s, they opposed the European single market. The Greens were vocal in opposing nuclear arms, and they have a strong anti-NATO policy in keeping with their commitment to the principle of non-violence. So whilst the Greens are committed to Europe in principle, they have often showed Euro-sceptical colours about certain aspects of integration.

In summary, the CSU-led Bavarian government moved from a position of enthusiastic promotion to ‘realistic but critical acceptance’ of European integration by the end of the 1980s (Sutherland 2000: 220). The CSU distinguishes between the principle and practice of European integration, and on the latter point, it believes the EU should be subject to the same scrutiny and criticism as the German federal government. It has become openly critical of policies it considers to compromise or threaten Bavarian interests. And the CSU has a number of direct and indirect institutional routes to Europe to make its demands and criticisms known. As party of regional government, the CSU can lobby the European Commission through its regional office (which is larger than that of some member states) in Brussels, through its active involvement in the organisation Regions with Legislative Powers (REGLEG) of which it has held the presidency, through the Committee of the Regions, and perhaps most importantly, via-a-vis the constitutionalised coordination structures for European policy-making in Germany and its right to represent Germany in those Council of Ministers meetings that concern Bavarian competences. As a party, the CSU is well-represented in the European Parliament\(^{52}\) and the European People’s Party.

To protect its autonomy, the CSU and other Bavarian parties have advanced competing constitutional preferences regarding their ‘ideal’ European construct. The Bavarian government is unique in Germany for what Jeffery (2003: 103) calls its ‘heroic aspirations to decentralize the Union’. Yet for the CSU, this heroism is partially motivated by self-interest and protectionism. The CSU believes that ‘we’re not properly represented by the Federal government. Germany is not standing up for the regions; we have to build up our own representation and influence it our own way. Brussels is nearer to Bavaria than Berlin.’\(^{53}\) In the 1990s the CSU-led government took

\(^{51}\) Interview [2.5] with Alex Burger.
\(^{52}\) Out of the 11 seats allocated for Bavaria in the European Parliament, the CSU elected 8 of its members in 1994; 10 in 1999; and 9 in 2004). The CSU also forms a group with the CDU in the EP, known as the CDU-CSU Europagruppe.
\(^{53}\) Interview [2.2] with Markus Ferber.
matters in its own hands by increasing Bavaria’s autonomy within the EU through regional organisations, networks and trade links and by proposing an alternative vision to perceived centralising tendencies in Europe. A stronger role for regions in Europe would also strengthen the position of regionalist parties. A regionalised Europe would be an attractive construct for the CSU, as it could act as the uncontested representative of a territorial unit bigger than Denmark or Belgium (Wagemann 2005: 183). Thus, rather than going the separatist way, the CSU prefers to trade-off independence with being a strong player in the German and European political arenas.

5.6 Constitutional Autonomy in Europe

The following discussion will examine how parties in Bavaria have advanced different territorial strategies for securing constitutional autonomy in Europe. These constitutional demands will be divided into three ‘ideal type’ categories: independence, decentralised federalism and centralised federalism. It will be shown that the debates on Bavaria’s constitutional future in Europe are quite different from those being articulated in Scotland. For one thing, independence is only a minority preference amongst Bavarians. Instead, most party demands focus on a federal model for Europe. However, understandings of ‘federalism’ vary widely, ranging from support for more or less centralisation of powers at the European level, with different emphasis on the role that states, regions and communes should play. For this reason, ‘federalism’ is divided into two categories: centralising and decentralising. Although both types of federalism have overlapping features, they may be distinguished by the fact that the former emphasises the gradual accretion of powers to the European level and the standardisation of some policies across regions and member-states, whilst the latter does the opposite: by decentralising powers to the lowest possible level to allow regions to pursue their own agendas. In addition to these two constitutional ideal types, we may also distinguish between two contrasting types of economic federalism. ‘Cooperative federalism’ places an emphasis on interregional solidarity and common socioeconomic standards, whilst ‘competitive federalism’ is of an asymmetrical nature that allows Länder and member-states to opt-out of certain policies. Parties’ economic demands will be more fully examined in Section 5.7.

5.6.1 Independence

Whilst in Scottish political life, debates over the merits or pitfalls of independence have been a constant theme since the 1970s, in Bavaria support for statehood virtually vanished following the CSU’s defeat of the Bavarian Party in the 1950s. Currently, the BP constitutes a ‘micro-party’ in Bavarian politics, unable to influence Bavarian politics in any significant way. However, its aim of independence is considered here to ascertain, in the broader context of this discussion, how it accommodates European integration in its constitutional programme; to explain why Bavarian
parties and the electorate prefer to see Bavaria’s future guaranteed within a federal German state; and in a comparative fashion, to evaluate the SNP and BP’s ‘independence in Europe’ platforms.

The Bavarian Party since its incarnation in 1946 has identified a place for an independent Bavaria within a European political framework. For instance, the Bavarian Party’s ‘Ur-Programme’ from 1947, written in English for the benefit of the American military government’s licensing requirements, included the demand for ‘the creation of a “United States of Europe” on the basis of self-determination and the equality of rights for all European States and Länder’ (Bayernpartei 1947). In 1949, the party’s manifesto for the Bundestag election made the claim for an independent Bavarian state within a ‘Pan-European Economic and Security Union’ (cited in Bayernpartei 1996). That year the party won 20.9% of the vote, making it the third largest party in Bavaria. In competition with the CSU, the BP claims to have been the first party after the war to recognise the importance of European political integration and to accommodate this in its party goals (Bayernpartei 1993: 9). However, the Bayernpartei has not always been an unconditional or enthusiastic supporter of European integration. From the late 1980s in particular, the party has adopted a pronounced Euro-sceptical stance on a number of important issues. Under the leadership of Hubert Dorn, the BP opposed what it saw as attempts to create a centralised European state: ‘The central bureaucracy that grows out of Brussels removes all parliamentary control. We reject this centralisation and the Maastricht Treaties’.\(^{54}\) Instead, the BP wants ‘an independent Bavarian state within a European confederation’.\(^{55}\) It supports an intergovernmental Europe in which Bavaria is a full member, in a programme that echoes that of the SNP.

The BP has at times supported the idea of a Europe of the Regions. In 1990, the party issued a manifesto that argued for a greater role for the regions in European decision-making. The BP’s ‘Europe of the Regions’ programme entailed four parts: (1) EU laws guaranteeing the rights of Länder in their spheres of sovereignty; (2) the establishment of a second European ‘Regional Chamber’ like that of the German Bundesrat; (3) the creation of a ‘Regional Commissioner’ post in the European Commission; (4) the creation of a Bavarian ‘representation’ in the EC, which specifically promotes Bavarian interests (Bayernpartei 1990: 11). Clearly, these goals imply that the party is prepared to accept something other than full independence for Bavaria, though an interview with Hubert Dorn clarified that support for the creation of this type of a Europe of the Regions is only a short-term goal, whilst the central long-term aim of the party is full independence. The BP has thus advocated a ‘stepping-stone’ approach, similar to the SNP’s support for devolution. However this concept was viewed as a tactical opportunity, and the term quickly dropped out of use. The reason for this, according to BP General Secretary, is because regionalism is ‘not so

\(^{54}\) ‘Die Zentralbürokratie, die in Brüssel heranwächst, entzieht sich jeder parlamentarischen Kontrolle. Wir lehnen diesen Zentralismus und die Maastrichter Verträge ab’ (Bayernpartei 1993: 9).

\(^{55}\) ‘einen selbstständigen bayerischen Staat in einem europäischen Staatenverbund’ (Bayernpartei 1993: 4).
important these days’.\textsuperscript{56} Instead, the member states are becoming stronger – and that is a status that the party ultimately wants for Bavaria.

The party makes two general justifications for having an independent Bavaria in Europe: the first is based on the fact that Bavaria constitutes one of the oldest, largest and richest states in Europe and is thus \textit{a priori} entitled to state sovereignty; the second maintains that there are principles developed in European law that safeguard the rights of peoples to be self-determining, to enjoy linguistic and cultural rights and have their identity recognised, and Bavaria ought to benefit from these developing legal provisions (Bayernpartei 1993: 7-8). The first, older ‘argument’ for Bavarian sovereignty is undoubtedly the more powerful: ‘a Land of 12 million people must have more say and the ability to decide its own cultural and economic projects’.\textsuperscript{57} On the party’s website, there is a list of all of the EU member states that are smaller or poorer than Bavaria (evoking similarities to the SNP’s homepage). The party also makes comparisons with Ireland, emphasising its strong rural traditions (whilst ignoring the recent modernisation of the economy). The party seems to have determinedly ignored Edmund Stoiber’s ‘High-Tech Offensive’ in their quest to maintain, or rather, re-construct the old ways of life. The BP believes that Bavaria’s economic future lies in its agricultural traditions, and seeks to protect its homogenous culture and ethnic group from the threat of ‘foreign’ influences. The Bavarian party has a closed vision of Bavarian society, and a narrow understanding of Bavarian autonomy, in which European integration is useful insofar as it guarantees Bavarian sovereignty. But within Europe, Bavaria must not become ‘Europeanised’ – the party argues vehemently against a multicultural society. The BP has not ‘opened up’ their ideology to European influences, unlike other nationalist parties in Europe.

The Bavarian Party has isolated itself from regionalist party networks in Europe, and has thus resisted pressures to conform to the European ‘ideology’ of promoting cultural diversity, free trade, and territorial criteria for membership. It wishes to avoid compromising its identity and constitutional preferences through cooperation with other parties. It has never sought to obtain membership of the European Free Alliance (EFA). Instead it prefers to ‘work independently’, through creating bilateral links with other nationalist parties in South Tyrol and Austria, where common concerns are shared regarding the preservation of a distinct ‘Alpine’ culture. Because of this, party officials argue, contacts with other nationalist parties renders membership of the EFA unnecessary. It is unlikely that EFA would accept them anyway – the Bavarian Party is too ‘ethnically’ nationalist and ultra-conservative to fit with EFA’s programme and principles.

The Bavarian Party’s main goals for the establishment of a ‘sovereign Bavarian state’ in a European \textit{Staatenverbund} (confederation) is similar to the SNP’s plans for Scottish independence.

\textsuperscript{56} Interview [2.6] with Hubert Dorn.
\textsuperscript{57} Interview [2.6] with Hubert Dorn.
within a European confederation of states, and the BP has used some of the same tactics as the SNP to obtain this goal. However, it seems that this is where the similarity between the parties ends. Unlike the ‘civic, not ethnic’ nationalism of the SNP, the Bayernpartei envisions a closed, homogenous society based on the cultural and socioeconomic traditions of Old Bavaria, which should be protected from dilution by immigrants and foreigners. Furthermore, the BP has taken a decidedly anti-European position since the late 1980s whilst most of the other nationalist and regionalist parties turned towards Europe for providing opportunities of regional action, coalitions, and shared practices. The BP remains stubbornly closed to the possibility of entering coalitions or networks, and prefers to criticise Europe from afar. In its constitutional programme, the BP sees Europe as a backdrop to their goal of independence, making the party seem less ‘separatist’ and more ‘internationalist’. But in reality, the party is opposed to the direction of European integration and its principles of social justice, the free market and multiculturalism. The BP has isolated itself in Germany and Europe through its closed ideology and insular, fixed identity, putting forward ‘Bavarian statehood against the Federation as much as against a European central bureaucracy’ (Bayernpartei 1993: 47). Due to its weak electoral support and ultra-conservative position, the BP’s demands have had little impact on the constitutional stances of other parties during the period of deepening integration, which have all endorsed federalism within both Germany and Europe.

5.6.2 Decentralising Federalism

The Christian Social Union is a staunch advocate of securing greater regional autonomy in Europe through a process of decentralising federalism. This would individual regions and states to set their own agendas and have exclusive control over a range of policy issues, rather than trying to impose a centralist solution from Brussels. The CSU is not the only party in Bavaria to argue that powers should be decentralised downwards – the Greens also support a Europe that is closer to the people (burgernähe). But whilst the CSU think competences should be decentralised to the Bavarian level, the Greens think this should go further, arguing that towns, communes and municipalities should also be given the appropriate decision-making powers in Europe in order to combat centralisation at the Bavarian state level. There are other differences between these two parties’ visions of a decentralised federal Europe: whilst the CSU’s goal is competitive federalism, whereby regions and state compete for resources and investment, the Greens would prefer to see cooperative but decentralised federalism, guaranteeing common standards, equality and solidarity across Europe.

The CSU calls for the creation of a decentralised federal Europe, in which decisions are taken as close to the citizens as possible, the regions constitute a third level (dritte Ebene) alongside the member states and the EU, and Brussels should only take decisions in the event that the issue

58 ‘der Staatlichkeit Bayerns sowohl gegenüber dem Bund als auch einer europäischen Zentralbürokratie’. 

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cannot be dealt with at a lower level. It should be noted here that this type of Föderalismus implies
that the powers lie with the parts of the federation, who decide which powers the centre may enjoys,
and not the gradual accretion of powers to the federal axis, which will be discussed in the next
section. In this way, decentralised federalism is much more akin to the concept of confederalism,
which is evident in the CSU goal of creating a European Staatenverbund (confederation) rather than
a Bundesstaat (federal state), so that the EU is structured on intergovernamental lines, rather than
decisions being issued from Brussels. The way in which the CSU is able to reconcile its support for
an intergovernamental Europe in which powerful member states are stronger than the central
European authority, and a decentralised Europe in which regions become important political actors
and centres of decision-making in their own rights, is through a careful elaboration of the concept of
subsidiarity. This means that ‘decisions are to be taken where one can judge them best. There are
also no policies to be directed from above downwards, instead it is reversed from below upwards’.59
For the CSU, ‘federalism and the principle of subsidiarity each fundamentally postulate a primary
responsibility of the smaller unit’.60 They are both geared towards empowering the lowest level of
decision-making, which for the CSU means the region (Bavaria). This interpretation of subsidiarity
allows the CSU to support the integrity and sovereignty of the member states of the EU, whilst also
believing that European states must give up some of their sovereignty, especially in the areas of
foreign and security policy and international crime (CSU 1993: 121-2). This does not mean that
member states should relinquish their sovereignty altogether – rather, that the EU, member states
and regions should not interfere in one another’s responsibilities.

In order to further its goal of securing regional autonomy within a decentralised Europe, the
CSU has actively promoted the idea of a Europe of the Regions. In line with its stance on a federal
Europe, this policy envisions the creation of a decentralised confederation whereby regions
constitute a third level of authority, alongside states and European institutions. A Europe of the
Regions for the CSU, however, is strictly taken to mean the regionalisation of the EU, as opposed to
the Europeanisation of the regions. This reflects the central motivation behind the CSU’s European
policy in the late 1980s, which was ‘to protect, as much as possible, the autonomy of the Free State
in a Europe that is growing together’ (Hübner 2002: 250).61 Subsidiarity would provide the most
effective guarantee of Länder rights by empowering the regional level in Europe and limiting the
ability of the Commission to encroach on regional competencies. Or put another way, it would
prevent Brussels from interfering with decisions made by the Bavarian government. CSU support
for a Europe of the Regions may be considered as a more powerful way of saying that Bavaria

59 ‘Entscheidungen werden dort getroffen, wo man sie am besten beurteilen kann. Es gibt also keine Politik von oben
nach unten, sondern umgekehrt von unten nach oben’ (CSU 1994b).
60 ‘Föderalismus und Subsidiaritätsprinzip postulieren grundsätzlich eine Primärzuständigkeit der jeweils kleineren
Einheit’ (CSU 1991).
61 ‘die Eigenständigkeit des Freistaats auch im zusammenwachsenden Europa so weit wie möglich zu bewahren.’
should be granted an influential place within an integrating Europe, instead of arguing for the more technical notion of a ‘decentralised federal Europe’, which does not automatically insinuate that Bavaria should be recognised in Europe as an historical, cultural and political entity.

The CSU claims to support the integrity of nation-states whilst seeking to exercise greater autonomy for Bavaria within Europe. One might think that these two goals contradict one another. But for the CSU the continuing sovereignty of Germany and the increasing autonomy of Bavaria in Europe are entirely compatible. Former Leader of the CSU European Group, Ingo Friedrich stated: ‘We need a Europe of shared sovereignty, in which the regions and nations, thus Bavaria and Germany, have their own rightful place’. The CSU is aware of the dynamics of interdependence and shared sovereignty arising from the European project, and the spaces that this creates for the regions. This contrasts with a party like the SNP whose pursuit of Scottish autonomy in Europe is deemed incompatible with Scotland residing within the UK state. However, the CSU is also not oblivious of the threat posed to both Bavarian autonomy and German sovereignty should the deepening European integration go unchecked, and to that end calls for a clear separation of powers between the different levels so that, primarily, Brussels does not step on Bavaria’s feet.

The CSU is vocal in lobbying for a more powerful role for the regions in Europe, and amongst them, a leading role for Bavaria. According to the CSU, the Länder ‘must be given rights of initiative and participation in the European decision-making process where their rights and interests are concerned’ as well as an independent legal right before the European Court of Justice. Although CSU lobbying in Europe has so far failed to obtain the latter goal, Bavaria’s access to European decision-making is understood to be the best amongst the German Länder (Jeffery and Collins 1998). The Bavarian government’s relative strength in Europe enables the CSU to mount powerful European election campaigns, and the party has found a niche for itself amongst the German Länder for being the European affairs expert. It has become the norm for other Länder to solicit information from Bavaria regarding new European developments, and rely on Bavaria for leading the Länder response to European laws and policies, owing to the size, research facilities and general importance of the European Ministry within the Bavarian State Chancellery.

The CSU’s initial strategy for increasing regional powers in Europe was to present a united front with other German Länder, that did not draw attention to Bavaria’s peculiarity or special claims. This was partially successful, with the result that the Länder representatives issued a joint declaration that federalism and subsidiarity should be the building blocks of future European

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62 ‘Wir brauchen ein Europa der gegliederten Souveränität, in der die Regionen und Nationen also Bayern und Deutschland, ihren abgestammten Platz haben’ (Friedrich 1991: 33).
63 ‘müssen ein Initiativ- und Mitwirkungsrecht am europäischen Entscheidungsprozess erhalten, soweit ihre Rechte und Interessen betroffen sind’ (CSU 1993a: 91)
64 This was confirmed in an interview with a civil servant in the Bavarian Ministry for Europe. He stated that ‘other Länder rely on Bavaria to do something about Europe.’
integration. As the CSU boasts, ‘it is to Bavaria’s credit that the German federal states have spoken with one voice against this [the expansion of the European Commission’s activities] and have made their position clear’ (CSU 1989a: 3). Yet since then, this position of presenting Bavaria as just another one of Germany’s sixteen Länder has been dropped, and the CSU-led Bavarian government has instead concentrated on coordinating responses with more like-minded Länder, such as Baden-Württemberg, whilst criticising other Länder for not supporting them or demanding more in Europe.

Since the failure of the CoR to become anything other than a weak advisory body, and the impasse regarding regional developments in European institutions, the CSU is now trying another track in Europe. It has reverted to lobbying for Bavarian interests and the protection of its competences within the German federal state, rather than to focus solely on increasing regional rights of participation in Europe. In particular, its growing pessimism with the stalling of the ‘Europe of the Regions’ agenda and its disappointment with the European Constitution (which failed to include significant rights for the regions), has led it to concentrate on reform of the German federal state to limit unwanted EU directives. The CSU feels that European integration is disempowering Bavaria, as one of Europe’s strongest legislative region, because of the way in which competences are demarcated between the member states and the EU. For this reason, the CSU has focused on increasing its powers within Germany, whereby the central guiding philosophy has been: if you protect the ‘hard shell’ of the state, you also protect the Länder (Jeffery 2004).

The Green Party in Bavaria is also a strong proponent of the decentralisation of political structures in Europe. Like the CSU, the Greens oppose any tendencies towards centralisation that might result in the creation of a European state, and to that end, both parties found agreement in their criticisms of the Maastricht Treaty for concentrating too many competences at the European level (Süddeutscher Zeitung, 13 October 1993). Indeed, the Green Party challenges the CSU in its claim to have developed the concept of a ‘Europe of the Regions’. Since 1979, the Greens have given prime importance to developing a strong regional voice in Europe, in order to bring decisions closer to the people. The Green Party’s support for a regionalised Europe was one of their defining policies in the 1980s, and was envisioned to provide an alternative to the existing structure of the European Community that was dominated by states: ‘The endeavours towards centralisation must emphatically be replaced by a Europe of the Regions’ (Die Grünen 1979). The Green’s preferred federal construct was to be achieved through the strengthening of decision-making apparatus at levels below the state, in order to create an ‘official alternative’ construction of the EU.

However, the party’s interpretation of a Europe of the Regions, and its motivations for decentralising political structures and policy competences in Europe, differed greatly from the CSU.

65 ‘Es ist Bayerns Verdienst, dass sich die BundesLänder hiergegen einstimmig ausgesprochen und ihre Position klargemacht haben’ (CSU 1989a: 3).
66 ‘Den Zentralisierungsbestrebungen gegenüber muss das Europa der Regionen mit Nachdruck vertreten werden.’
Whilst the latter seeks to strengthen Bavaria’s position vis-à-vis Europe in an intergovernmental Europe, the Greens staunchly oppose this tactic. Decentralised federalism for the Greens is to be achieved not by strengthening ‘egoistic’ regional or state interests, but by bringing powers closer to the citizens – to the level of the towns and communes. The Greens, in their articulation of a new image of Bavaria, have sought to deconstruct and reinterpret the pro-federalist attitudes in Bavaria in a way that does not lead to provincialism and the aggrandisement of Bavarian interests above all others. In a debate on federalism in the Bavarian Landtag on 4 February 1998, Green MdL Elisabeth Koehler stated that: ‘This concept [of federalism] must be radically infused with new meaning today. The CSU’s favoured version points backwards. It emphasises that what of your opinion of typically Bavarian, is to be defended from foreign influences […] Today, federalism means: recognition of unity in diversity, openness to others as accepted partners, cooperation and shared efforts to solve common problems’ (cited in Münch 1999: 145).

The Greens also disagree with the CSU on the substantive policy dimension of federalism. As opposed to the CSU, which seeks to increase Bavaria’s economic position and political influence vis-à-vis other regions and states in Europe through a form of competitive federalism, the Greens seek to create minimum standards in socioeconomic policies across Europe to guarantee equality of opportunities for regions and communes, social solidarity, sustainability and common environmental standards (Schopper and Daxenberger 2006). This is akin to the model of ‘cooperative federalism’ that has prevailed in German politics since the 1990s, where the emphasis is on sozialer Ausgleich rather than Wettbewerbschaft. At the same time, the Greens strictly oppose the centralisation of powers at the European level, arguing that structural policies should be renationalised whilst meeting minimum social, economic and ecological criteria (Die Grünen in Bayern 2003b). In particular, the Greens do not believe that Bavaria should have any rights to be treated as a special case amongst the German Länder or Europe generally. Indeed, their support for a Europe of the Regions is tempered by their disapproval of particularism – for them, a regionalised Europe should have nothing to do with regional chauvinism or separatism (Die Grünen 1994).

Whilst the German Greens have offered support to the claims of the substate nations of Europe to self-determination, their sympathies do not extend to the cause of Bavarian autonomy, which is not considered a nation by the party. For instance, during the first European electoral campaign in 1979, the Greens sought to create a ‘Europe of the Regions’, that is built upon clearly defined spaces of self-government’. At this point, the Green Party suggested that the purpose of a

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67 'Dieser Begriff [Föderalismus] muss heute radikal mit neuem Inhalt gefüllt werden. Die von der CSU favorisierte Lesart weist in die Vergangenheit. Sie betont das, was ihrer Meinung nach typisch bayerisch ist, um es gegen fremde Einflüsse zu verteidigen […] Föderalismus heißt heute: Anerkennung der Einheit in der Vielfalt, Offenheit gegenüber anderen als akzeptierte Partner, Kooperation und gemeinsame Anstrengung zur Lösung gemeinsamer Probleme.’


Europe of the Regions was to accommodate the claims of minority nationalists, whereby the rights of minorities were considered to belong to the category of basic rights, which must be entrenched in Europe. ‘The right to self-fulfilment of national minorities must become self-evident. A Europe of the Regions could protect the self-government and individuality of, for example, the Bretons, Basques, Corsicans, and South Tyroleans, without disturbing the cooperation between everyone’. Note that Bavaria is not mentioned here. In their 1989 party programme, the concept had taken on a broader meaning to include the communes as well as the regions of Europe, which was then understood as: ‘a new distribution of responsibilities between the EC, the member states and the regions and communes. With this, the Greens want to strengthen the rights of the regions’. During the following decade, however, the Green Party began to change its tune on the regionalisation debate in Europe. In their 1999 European election manifesto, there was no reference to a Europe of the Regions, but only the strengthening of structurally weak regions. And in their 2004 manifesto, there was no mention at all of the regions, but instead emphasis was placed on the communal level, citizen democracy and cultural diversity as the basis for a European identity.

With the change in interpretation of a ‘Europe of the Regions’ from the Land to the communal level, it became evident how the Green’s understanding of the concept radically diverged from that of the CSU. Whereas the CSU’s support of a Europe of the Regions was motivated by a desire to increase Bavaria’s autonomy in Europe, for the Greens it meant the opposite: of recasting the political structures of Europe to avoid any future likelihood of centralisation, state arrogance or power-thirsty regional governments, by bringing decisions as close to the people as possible. Previously, both parties had believed that the creation of a Europe of the Regions – to either replace or sit alongside member states – would benefit the stateless nations and regions of Europe in enabling them to exercise forms of self-government without needing to go the separatist way. However, the difference between the parties was that the CSU believed that Bavaria fell into this category, whilst the Greens clearly did not. Bavaria was not meant to benefit as a ‘stateless nation’ from a Europe of the Regions, as its individuality is already protected by the Grundgesetz and by the structure of the Federal Republic, which protects the individuality of all the other German Länder. For the Greens, a Europe of the Regions should be oriented towards helping national minorities whose claims have not been accommodated within their host state, and who in response are seeking separation from the state. The Greens refer to the classical examples of stateless nations in Catalonia, the Basque Country and Scotland. At the same time, the Bavarian Green Party is trying to develop a certain ‘image’ of the Bavarian nation as multicultural and weltoffen, through

the promotion of inter-cultural dialogue, tolerance and acceptance in the schools and communes of Bavaria (Die Grünen in Bayern 2003a: 27). European integration can help to create the multicultural society that the Greens seek to build, through opening up Bavaria to multicultural influences and immigration. Whereas Europeanisation is ordinarily considered to be a two-way process, it seems that the CSU celebrates one strand – of increasing Bavaria’s influence in Europe, whilst Greens seek the opposite development – of increasing Europe’s influence in Bavaria.

5.6.3 Centralising Federalism

Whilst the Christian Social Union and the Bavarian Green Party oppose the creation of a European centralised state where powers are accumulated on the federal axis, the Free Democrats and the Social Democrats are in favour of a European *Bundesstaat*, or a ‘United States of Europe’. This should not necessarily be understood as the complete centralisation of power in the federal government, as both parties are committed to subsidiarity and *burgernaehe* policies. But they do believe that the EU should take the form of a political union. Their separate interpretations of what we shall call ‘centralising federalism’ on the European level differs in two important respects, however. First, while the FDP supports the model of competitive federalism put forward by the CSU, the SDP is committed to the uniformity of living standards and conditions for European citizens and the reduction of inequalities through common standards. Second, both parties have quite different ideas of Bavaria’s place in a European federal state. For the FDP, individual and communal rights supersede regional identities, and are thus opposed to Bavarian ‘provincialism’, whilst the Bavarian SPD argues for a stronger Bavaria in Europe and acknowledge the Land as an historic cultural entity with claims to special recognition.

The BayernSPD is officially committed to creating a *Vereinigten Staaten von Europa* (United States of Europe), which was adopted in the German SPD’s Heidelberg Programme of 1925. The SPD justifies its commitment to this goal by arguing that ‘the democratic states must bundle their powers together, in order to assert, and also to work towards, a European peaceful order’ (SPD 1998: 16). It is the states, then, that are to be the central actors determining European integration. This ties in with their commitment to the ‘integrity and sovereignty of all states in Europe’. However, at the same time, the party demonstrates its sympathy for minority groups, ‘we want to further develop... a United States of Europe, in which the cultural identity of the peoples is protected, linguistic and cultural minorities are respected and all citizens are assured of their
freedoms and equal chances to develop’ (SPD 1998: 17), as well as its desire for the state to be brought closer to the people to encourage greater participation (SPD 1998: 48).72

In response to the popularity of the Europe of the Regions debate in Bavaria, as pushed by the CSU and the Greens, the BayernSPD has also accommodated this goal in its platform, arguing for an increased role for Bavaria and the regions in EU decision-making. In a press conference entitled ‘The Heart of Europe beats in Bavaria’, the Chair of the SPD parliamentary party in Bavaria stated: ‘the age of the nation-states is coming to an end; the economic and political integration of the Community marches on. Bavaria will, with the Eastern enlargement of the EU, become the heartland of the European Union. Old cultural ties – for example with the Czechs, Slovaks or Hungarians – will be picked up and newly revived’ (Maget and Kohler 2000).73 How are these positions compatible, for the Bundespartei on one hand to maintain the centrality of the nation-state and for the BayernSPD to herald its demise? For instance, in his analysis of SPD politics, Ostermann says that unlike elections manifestos and action programmes, the goals of the party programmes are where the federal and regional branches of the SPD must agree. That does not seem to be the case here. Perhaps these issues are better explained through consideration of the fact that the BayernSPD sees itself, like the CSU, as a Bavarian party.

The Bavarian SPD during the late 1980s and early 1990s supported the goal of creating a Europe of the Regions, in which Bavaria would have a strong voice. It argued that without politically strong regions, Europe would become weaker (BayernSPD 1994: 42). In fact, the party went so far as criticising the CSU for not defending Bavarian interests strongly enough. The Bavarian SPD accused the CSU of wanting to strengthen Bonn against Brussels, whereas the SPD declared themselves as protectors of the Bavarian identity, seeking to ‘strengthen Bavaria against Brussels and staunchly defend Bavarian interests in Europe’ (BayernSPD 1994: 42). One of the party’s aims was to convert the European Committee of the Regions into a ‘real regional chamber with legal guarantees of involvement’. Yet the Bavarian SPD slowly changed tactic. Instead of advocating the opportunities for Bavaria in a Europe based on the principle of subsidiarity, the SPD in the late 1990s went a step further – or perhaps lower – in arguing that the regions within Bavaria should be strengthened. The Bavarian SPD began drawing attention to the fact that the municipalities ‘have been denied an independent role in the process of European integration’ and that their role within Bavaria must be strengthened (BayernSPD 1992b; BayernSPD 1998: 51).74

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72 ‘Wir wollen die...Vereinigten Staaten von Europa weiterentwickeln, in denen die kulturelle Identität der Völker bewahrt, sprachlich-kulturelle Minderheiten respektiert und für alle Bürger gleiche Freiheiten und gleiche Entwicklungschancen gesichert werden’.
74 ‘den Gemeinden … eine eigenständige Rolle im Prozess der europäischen Einigung verweigert wird.’

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The BayernSPD were responding to the CSU’s interpretation of this concept as the centralisation of powers at the Bavarian state level. It argued that if the CSU-led Bavarian government won more powers in Europe, these would be used only to further the interests of the party, rather than protecting Bavarian interests per se. ‘The CSU has turned moaning about Europe into a principle. Behind this is hidden their fear that they will lose more weight and influence as a regional party in Germany and in an increasingly integrated Europe’ (BayernSPD 1997). Thus, demands for a stronger regional role in European integration are placed secondary to a stronger municipal role. In competing with the CSU, the BayernSPD also positions itself as part of a pan-German social democratic movement. The Bavarian SPD is disparaging of the CSU’s efforts to ‘go its own way’ in Europe, and their habit of using ‘Bavarian interests’ as a stick with which to beat down any European development that the party disagrees with. For the Bavarian SPD, subsidiarity should not be interpreted as strengthening the regional level against others, nor must it become ‘a licence for nation-state or regional eccentricity’ (SPD-Landtagsfraktion 1995: 2). Instead, its commitment to a Europe of the Regions actually means support for a communal Europe, much in the same way of the Bavarian Greens.

The German Free Democratic Party also supports the creation of a unified, federal Europe in which decisions are taken as closely to the citizens as possible. The centrepiece of FDP demands is a Europe of the Citizens (Europa der Bürger), which means that: ‘politics must be organised from below upwards: first the citizens, then the municipalities, then the regional level (Land), then the member state (Bund), then Europe.’ Although the FDP shares a similar understanding of Föderalismus as the CSU – decentralised power-sharing, whereby the parts decide what competencies the centre enjoys – there are large discrepancies between the two parties’ visions of Europe. The main difference lies in the degree of integration sought: whereas the CSU supports the development of a confederal Europe (Staatenverbund) that is drawn along intergovernmentalist lines, the FDP’s demands are for the creation of a united federal state (Bundesstaat) that is based more on supranationalism. This entails ‘the maximum amount of self-determination and cultural identity of the member states, an Executive that is appointed by the Parliament, the Council as a European Senate, and the Court of Justice for the direct application of the Community laws through the national courts’. Although the term Bundesstaat has in CSU terminology been associated with ‘Socialist’ centralisation by the CSU, it means decentralisation for the FDP.

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75. ‘Die CSU hat die Europa-Nörgelei zum Prinzip erhoben. Dahinter steckt ihre Angst, als Regionalpartei im geeinten Deutschland und in einem zusammenwachsenden Europa noch mehr an Gewicht und Einfluss zu verlieren.’

76. ‘Freibrief fuer nationalstaatliche oder regionale Eigenbroetelei werden.’

77. ‘Politik muss von unten nach oben organisiert werden: erst die Bürger, dann die Gemeinde, dann das Land, das Bund und Europa’ (FDP 2004).

78. ‘ein Höchstmaß an Selbstbestimmung und kultureller Identität der Mitgliedstaaten, eine Exekutive, die vom Parlament ernannt wird, den Rat als einen europäischen Senat, und den Gerichtshof für die direkte Anwendung des Gemeinschaftsrechts durch die nationalen Gerichte.’ (FDP 1989)
The German Liberals want a ‘proper political union’, but this does not mean that ‘the European Union should not become a centralising European super-state, but rather a modern and democratic federal state’. The way in which the Liberals would assure the creation of a European Bundesstaat, and avoid any possibility of this turning into a Superstaat, is through a firm application of the principle of subsidiarity, which means that ‘Europe shall only be responsible for political questions that cannot be properly decided by the individual states, regions or local authorities’ (FDP Bayern 1998: 47). However, the type of subsidiarity that the FDP sought to incorporate into the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 differed quite significantly from that envisioned by the CSU. For the Liberals, subsidiarity does not stop at the level of the regions, or even at the level of the communes, but at the level of the individual, which means that new ways of increasing citizen participation in decision-making must be sought. Subsidiarity implies the empowerment of the individual, and her ability to affect decision-making at higher levels and become involved in policy-making through her involvement in city councils, town halls, municipalities and communal bodies, petitions and direct elections (FDP 2004: 15).

Bringing decisions as close to the people as possible requires a clear separation of competences between the regional, national and European levels. In the debates on the draft European Constitution, of which the Liberals were strongly supportive, the party called ‘for the strict observance of the principle of subsidiarity (higher levels may only assume the tasks that lower levels are not in a position to do) and for the introduction of the principle of connectivity (whoever arranges for a measure to be taken must provide the finances for it)’ (FDP Bayern 2003: 49). The resulting draft Treaty on the European constitution was ‘an acceptable compromise’ and the Bavarian Liberals, in line with the federal party, believe that the European Convention has created a constitution that will further the development of a ‘democratic, transparent Union that is close to the citizens’ (FDP 2004: 13). However, there are some differences between the federal party and Land branch in their attitudes towards European integration. For example, the Bavarian FDP support Turkish membership of the EU, whilst the federal party is opposed. This is part of their vision of opening up Bavaria (and Europe) to multicultural influences, and also, more tactically, in opposing the CSU’s aggressive stance on Turkish membership. It remains to be seen whether the Bavarian FDP will seek more independence from the Bundespartei to pursue more divergent policy lines.

79 ‘Liberale wollen daher eine echte politische Union.’] and [‘Die Europäische Union soll kein zentralistischer europäischer Superstaat, sondern ein moderner und demokratischen Bundesstaat werden’ (FDP 1994b: 126).
80 ‘Grundlage [der Europapolitik] ist dabei das Prinzip der Subsidiarität: Europa soll nur für politische Fragen zuständig sein, die nicht sachgerechter von den einzelnen Staaten, Bundesländern oder Gemeinden entscheiden werden können.’
81 ‘Die bayerische FDP unterstützt und fördert den Europäischen Konvent zur Ausarbeitung einer europäischen Verfassung…Die Liberalen fördern weiter die strikte Beachtung des Subsidiaritätsprinzips (übergeordnete Ebenen dürfen nur die Aufgaben übernehmen, zu denen untergeordnete Ebenen nicht in der Lage sind) und die Einführung des Konnexitätsprinzips (wer eine Maßnahme veranlasst, muss auch die Finanzen dafür bereitstellen).’
The FDP have also acknowledged the importance of the regional level, and the importance of involving regional parliaments more in European decision-making process. ‘A “deep living democracy in Europe” must also guarantee the rights of the national and regional parliaments. In a Europe of the Regions, the diversity of the German federal states and the rights and interests of communal self-administrative bodies must be adequately taken into consideration’ (FDP 1994a: 127).82 This is one of the few references in FDP literature to a Europe of the Regions, and we can see that in similarity to the SPD and Greens, the Liberals understand this concept to be geared towards the communal level as much, if not more so, than the regional level. The FDP are opposed to regionalism as a political movement, or to any other type of particularism that goes against individual rights or the universalising project of European integration. The party argues that the principle of subsidiarity must not be misused by those with a nationalist agenda, who seek to block advances in the integration process to their own benefit or to turn it into more of a competitive intergovernmentalist political arena (FDP 1994b: 11). Regionalism is still linked to exclusionary politics which could undermine or even threaten the European project, as well as German federalism, whereby ‘[g]rowing regionalisation can fragment/shatter the national state into a multitude of egotistical communal and regional interests’ (FDP 1988).83

Both the BayernSPD and the FDP Bayern have been active in creating bilateral links with other Social Democrats and Liberals in Austria and the Czech Republic (BayernSPD 1994: 10). They are also represented through the federal parties in the European Socialist Party and the European Liberal Party, respectively. However, there appear to be fewer direct links between the Land parties and the Europarties – and it also appears that the former are quite content to be represented by the federal parties in Europe. At the Bavarian level, whilst the FDP is politically isolated (and here, cannot play the role of ‘kingmaker’ as it has done so in federal politics due to the CSU’s electoral might) the SPD has considered working in coalition with the Greens. Both parties are in favour of strengthening the power and role of the Landtag in determining Bavarian European policy, as they are also in favour of making the European Parliament more powerful, which they see as a democratic necessity. However, even if they did join forces, they would still not have enough votes to oust the CSU from power, and have thus refrained from coalition-building in Bavaria.

5.6.4 Summary

In the case of Bavaria, as we have seen, it is quite difficult to place party constitutional demands into clear-cut boxes, as most of them endorse many of the same principles, such as subsidiarity,

82 ‘Einen ‘lebendige Demokratie in Europa’ muss auch die Rechte nationalen und regionalen Parlamente sicherstellen. Auf die Vielfalt der deutschen Bundesländer und die Rechte und Interessen der kommunalen Selbstverwaltungs-körperschaften muss in einem Europa der Regionen angemessen Rücksicht genommen werden.’
83 ‘Wachsende Regionalisierung kann den Nationalstaat in eine Vielzahl egotischer kommunaler und regionaler Interessen zersplittern.’
bringing decisions closer to the citizens, and federalism. Independence is not a viable option, and with the lone exception of the electorally insignificant Bavarian Party, all parties take great pride in Bavaria’s place within a federal Germany. Rather, the emphasis has been on articulating different visions of European federalism, which I have broadly divided into two categories: one of which emphasises the decentralised, intergovernmental aspect of integration (supported by the CSU and Greens), the other the unifying, supranational aspect (backed by the SDP and FDP). This has cut across demands for competitive or cooperative federalism (with the CSU and FDP favouring the former, and the SDP and Greens preferring the latter). Furthermore, these types of federalism have no particular relation to demands for a Europe of the Regions. All parties in Bavaria have supported the goal of a ‘Europe of the Regions’ at different times and interpreting it according to their own aims. For the CSU it meant strengthening Bavaria’s powers in Europe, for the BP it meant guaranteeing Bavarian sovereignty within a wider European framework, and for the Reds, Greens and Liberals it meant strengthening the communal level against perceived Bavarian centralisation.

The parties also visualise the place of Bavaria within a regionalised Europe differently, based on their constructions of the nation. So for the CSU, Bavaria should have rights to national self-determination, for the Bavarian SPD, the nation’s distinct character and regional diversity should be recognised, the FDP are against regional rights and ‘eccentricity’ and believe Bavarian citizens should be empowered as individuals, and the Greens want a multicultural Bavaria that is as much Europeanised as Europe should be regionalised.

The most consistent constitutional claim of any of the parties, which brings together demands for decentralised, competitive federalism in a Europe of the Regions, is that of the CSU. Undoubtedly, the CSU’s strong position in Bavaria means that it shapes and determined constitutional debates, and the other parties must respond to this. However, this does not explain why other parties in Bavaria have been so inconsistent in their constitutional demands. For instance, the Greens favour a decentralised Europe based on cooperation and common standards, and have in the past supported rights of stateless nations to self-determination. However, they do not recognise Bavaria as such, despite pandering to national identity there and seeking to create an alternative multicultural Heimat. The Bavarian SPD, alternatively, does recognise Bavaria as an historic and cultural entity with a strong sense of patriotism, and their initial use of the concept reflected their desire to create a strong Bavaria in Europe. However, demands for a regionalised Europe did not sit well with federal party support for a United States of Europe, in which the key decision-makers were states, and where the dynamics of federalism focused on accumulating powers on the federal axis to produce common European standards rather than decentralising downwards to individual regions. Furthermore, the party ended up spurning attempts to empower Bavaria through a Europe of the Regions, instead focussing, like the other opposition parties, on the lower communal level.
This last position is precisely what the FDP have argued all along, in line with their ideological opposition to what they call ‘regional eccentricity’ and nationalism, and their emphasis on individual rights. Yet still, their desire to create a European Bundesstaat does not sit easily with their demands for a more competitive federalism in Europe, and moreover, their recent attempts to appeal to Bavarian patriotism undermines many of the principles they stand for. Finally, the Bavarian Party has tried to incorporate the idea of a Europe of the Regions with its long-standing goal of independence in Europe, but it appears that the term was initially adopted as a temporary measure, designed to fit in with the public mood in favour of subsidiarity and regionalisation. This term was phased out of BP literature and the party has reverted back to claims for independence, nothing less. Despite the centrality of this goal to party identity, however, the BP has not addressed how an integrating Europe may threaten Bavarian aspirations of independence. Although the party has been highly critical of some aspects of European integration, it has failed to draw up any substantive proposals on European structural policies, security, foreign relations or defence.

The way in which parties interpret the concept of a Europe of the Regions therefore differs depending on how much autonomy they believe Bavaria should have in Europe, and their understanding of Bavaria as merely another Land in Germany, as an independent Free State, as a nation, as a ‘closed’ homogenous community, as particularistic or as an ‘open’ European society. Thus on one hand the CSU, the SPD and the Bavarian Party believe a Europe of the Regions means a stronger Bavaria in Europe; whilst for the Greens and the FDP, it means bringing power down to the most appropriate level possible. Party constructions of the Bavarian identity and Heimat have furthermore created tensions with their federal counterparts. For example, the BayernSPD generally follows the Bundespartei line and is accused by the CSU of being centralist and allowing the federal government to give away Land powers. But in Bavaria, it has to take strong local identity into account and be seen as standing up for Bavarian interests in Europe, which does not sit well with the party’s internationalism, nor its more recent strategy of emphasising the communal dimension. The FDP Bayern is accused of being uncritically European, and also toes the federal party line, although the party has come into conflict with the Bundespartei over certain European issues such as Turkish membership of the EU. The Greens in Bavaria see Europe as an opportunity to make Bavaria more multicultural, bringing Europe into Bavaria, and not the other way around.

On the latter point, one could argue that one of the CSU’s motivations for trying to regionalise Europe (instead of allowing Brussels to Europeanise the regions) has been to ensure that Bavarian society would not be ‘diluted’ by foreigners arriving from across Europe and beyond, so that Bavaria could continue to enjoy a more or less homogenous (political) culture. This unofficial strand of CSU policy regarding the composition of the Bavarian Heimat raises very interesting questions for, in particular, scholars of nationalism: having never been described as a nation or an
‘ethnic’ group, Bavaria’s party of government was pursuing a policy that sought to protect the unique Bavarian *Heimat* and populace from unwanted racial, ethnic and religious diversity and multiculturalism. As a result of this position, the CSU was adamant in opposing policies that would further open Bavaria up to immigration, and any possibility that Bonn/Berlin or Brussels may be able to assume control over these matters. So, whilst, most EFA card-carrying, self-proclaimed nationalist parties in Europe have long abandoned the ethnic criterion for national membership, and have internationalised their goals and rhetoric to conform to ‘civic’ values and play the European ‘ideological game’, the CSU, a primarily Christian-conservative party, whose passionate defence of Bavarian autonomy, coupled with a resistance to the infiltration of foreigners in Bavarian society, has gone unnoticed by nationalism scholars, exhibits an attitude that has long been associated with the closed nationalism of earlier culturally-exclusive territorial movements.

In summary, support for a Europe of the Regions at one point in the early 1990s created a convergence of party attitudes towards Bavaria’s place in Europe. Since then, however, the opposition parties have offered a communal interpretation of a Europe of the Regions, whilst the CSU has changed tack by seeking more influence within the German federal state to protect Länder competences rather than more direct participation in Europe. Moreover, anti-EU parties have appeared in Bavaria, such as *die Republikaner*, which made electoral leaps in the *Freistaat* at the end of the 1980s and early 1990s, thus reflecting the general malaise towards European integration among the Bavarian populace. Since the late 1990s, some federal parties have even expressed more critical attitudes towards integration processes. For instance, the Greens disapprove of the centralising aspects of EU, and their support for a Europe of the Regions highlights the importance of bringing power to the citizens at the lowest level possible, somewhat similar to the SPD. Bavaria’s opposition parties have had to resist the reinforcement of the CSU’s dominance over Bavaria. But instead of rejecting outright the CSU’s main strategy for achieving this – a Europe of the Regions – they have sought to offer different interpretations of the concept to mean anti-centralisation at the state and regional levels. Meanwhile, the CSU has sought to protect Bavarian competences in Europe through a reform of German federalism, and through the advocacy of competitive, rather than cooperative, federalism, as will be discussed below.

### 5.7 Territorial Capacity in Europe

This discussion will consider how parties have responded to the challenges European integration has posed to Bavaria’s policy-making capacity, and the opportunities it presents for further socioeconomic advancement. As in the Scottish case, the option of trading-off autonomy with the use of state channels to influence European decision-making will be explored. But in the case of Bavaria, this debate has taken on a very different flavour, which pits central *coordination* of policy
against *competition* between autonomous units. ‘Access’ to the centre is less a motive for Bavarian political actors, due to the constitutionally enshrined rights of the Länder. However, the ‘centre’ is important to Bavaria in other ways, namely to provide a bulwark against encroaching European competences and, for some parties, to ensure the implementation of common standards in social, environmental and labour market policy.

The main debate about Länder control over social and economic policy matters centres on the juxtaposition of competitive versus cooperative federalism. On one hand, the cooperative model, which was institutionalised in Germany following reforms in the 1960s, explicitly requires the equalisation of living conditions among the sub-units (Art. 72.2), which was to be achieved through joint decision-making mechanisms and ‘interlocking politics’. An important aspect of cooperative federalism is thus the responsibility of the federal government to redistribute finances across Germany from richer to poorer states. Competitive federalism, on the other hand, entails the distributive conflict between the Länder, requiring more autonomy over economic and social policy to pursue differentiated responses to globalisation. This model is associated with a clearer division of competences between different levels, or ‘disentanglement’ (*Entflechtung*), in order to limit creeping European powers. The trade-off involved in the cooperative federalism model may be understood as accepting fewer legislative competences at the Länder level in exchange for greater participation in legislation at the federal level, whilst the trade-off in a competitive federal model is gaining more legislative competences at the Länder level in exchange for a weaker Bundesrat.

Another way to consider the trade-off, then, is between participation and autonomy. The political parties in Bavaria, like the German Länder themselves, have tended to fall into two camps – those who have sought increased participation only (‘let us in’), and those who want more autonomy in Europe (‘let us alone’) (Jeffery 1996, 1999; Grosse-Hüttemann 2004). At the Länder level, one could be more specific and argue that the ‘let us alone’ camp really consists of Bavaria – which seeks to protect its autonomy from European encroachments, with occasional and lesser support from Baden-Württemberg and Hesse. Bavaria has been at the forefront of Länder demands to secure their interests, preserve their competences, increase their influence over European decision-making, and to halt the perceived trend towards centralism. This is clearly been the position of the CSU, whose socioeconomic programme we shall consider first. But what of the opposition parties in Bavaria? Whilst some parties endorse particular aspects of the CSU’s programme, others oppose what they consider to be a self-interested and populist agenda, arguing instead that Bavarian interests are best served by strengthening social standards across Germany and Europe as a whole. Let us now consider party preferences for what Follesdal (2001) refers to as ‘trade-offs between sub-unit autonomy and redistributive claims among sub-units’.
5.7.1 Autonomy versus Access to the Centre

In the immediate post-war period, Bavaria was physically on the periphery of the European (Economic) Community. It had a predominantly agricultural economy, and was a recipient state funding (the only state, in fact, to ever move from being a recipient to a contributor in the FRG’s history). It is now at the centre of Europe since enlargement, with access to cheap markets and goods in the east, in addition to being a recipient of Objective 2 structural funds from the EU. The CSU has realised that ‘it is not so much the large and powerful states that face each other in the global competition, but more so the economic regions that compete with one another’ (Stoiber 1999). The Bavarian government has sought to make its economy the most competitive in Europe by investing in research, science, high-tech industries and services whilst maintaining its traditional economic base. The CSU’s economic policy is based on the concept of the ‘social market’, which emphasises a dominant role for the market alongside state intervention to prevent social hardship. This policy endeavours to preserve Bavaria’s cultural heritage by supporting the traditionally important Bavarian farmers, craftsmen and small businessmen and maintaining the values of these communities, whilst encouraging the location of multinational corporations in Bavaria in order to attract investment and grow the economy. This is presented as ‘the Bavarian Way – a combination of tradition and progress’ (Stoiber 1999). The traditional economies of Bavaria must be protected to maintain Bavaria’s distinct cultural identity, but this should be fused with investment in new high-tech industries to generate economic growth and investment. Thus the CSU promotes a mixed economic policy of ‘Laptop und Lederhosen’ that combines market liberalism with an active policy of state economic intervention and social protection. However, in recent years, the CSU’s economic strategy has deviated somewhat from these claims and the party has begun promoting ‘less state, more freedom’. The Bavarian government has undertook a large-scale privatisation of the public sector, especially the energy sector, and has decreased employment protection legislation.

Bavaria’s robust economy means that it is now a large contributor to the federal equalisation programme, which aims to create uniform living standards throughout Germany. The CSU believes it would be far richer if it did not have to finance poorer Länder, and that enforced self-reliance would also benefit their economies. To that end it argues for a model of competitive federalism in which Bavaria would have more autonomy in areas such as health, energy and unemployment. Within the EU, the CSU believes that a decentralised federal Europe should be based on competition between states and regions, a situation it believes would be to Bavaria’s advantage. Certain aspects of integration that do not heed Bavaria’s particular social market economy are accused of being ‘centralising’ and to the detriment of a proper free-market economy.

In earlier times, European policies were more advantageous to the Bavarian economy. The EEC supported the development of arts and crafts, which was a vital component of Bavaria’s
economy, for symbolic if not only economic reasons (James 1995: 136). Bavaria promoted the feasibility of small and medium-sized businesses as the ‘driving force of the social market economy’ (James 1995: 137). Furthermore, despite the proliferation of large-scale industry, the agricultural sector remains important to Bavaria’s economy. Its decline was managed through EC and federal subsidies (Padgett and Burkett 1986: 119). The creation of the Common Agricultural Policy was initially advantageous to the Bavarian economy as it meant that the costs of supporting this sector were borne by Brussels, freeing up the state government to focus on the development of local industry (Paterson and Southern 1991: 195). The maintenance of the CAP in its early years was a key CSU policy. James (1995: 146) argues that with the introduction of the Single Market in 1993, Bavaria was ideally placed to take advantage of expanding trade links between the east and west, and winning back old markets that it had lost with the creation of the Iron Curtain.

However, deepening European integration has seen a change in Bavarian socioeconomic policy towards Europe, especially as its ability to control the economy has been weakened by the transferral of competences to Brussels. The Bavarian government’s policy of active state intervention in the economy to support small- and medium-sized businesses has been challenged by EU competition policy. The CSU has demanded a change in EU competition rules so that it does not undermine the Bavarian state’s ability to subsidise public services (Daseinsvorsorge). Furthermore, the CAP, with its bias towards large farms, is increasingly perceived as detrimental to the interests of Bavarian farmers and the CSU-led Bavarian government is pushing reform so that its small farms do not continue to lose out to large-scale farms with strict quotas on, for instance, dairy products. The CSU seeks to ensure that regions and states take more responsibility for supplementary income subsidies, co-financed by member states. Of course, Bavaria is in a position of strength here as it can more easily provide co-financing than poorer countries.

The CSU also wishes to reform the EU Regional Development Policy, so that the current system of redistribution via the cohesion fund is replaced by direct transfer payments to weaker states through a Solidarity Fund. This would reduce the scope for Brussels to ‘control regional development centrally’ (Stoiber 2002: 3), give regions and states more autonomy over regional policy, and make sure that poorer regions become more the responsibility of the member state rather than the EU. In tandem with direct transfer payments, the CSU proposes that stronger states should be given greater scope for national subsidies for regions not covered by EU funding, thus again increasing the responsibility of the state for ensuring financial solidarity. This is clearly a strategy of strengthening the ‘hard shell’ of the state to foster socioeconomic development, and ties in with the CSU’s realisation that Bavaria is in a stronger position to influence German European policy than the Commission itself. During the debates on German federal reform, the CSU pushed for greater competition between regions, thus protecting its own economy and interests and ensuring that its
contributions to equalisation subsidies are reeled back. Its desire to apply the model of competitive federalism in Europe is more difficult, as it believes that ‘the EU keeps grabbing new powers’ and has a ‘tendency to want comprehensive jurisdiction’ (Stoiber 2002: 4), and the only way to prevent this is to retain maximum functional responsibilities at the state (which also mean the Länder) level.

The need to strengthen the member states (and thus the regions) against encroaching European centralisation is particularly salient with the enlargement of the EU. The CSU argued that strict conditions be met before central and eastern enlargement could commence, in order to keep down German net contributions to the EU budget as well as protecting Bavarian border regions from low-cost competition. This is intrinsically linked to their proposals for reform of the CAP and European structural funds, which must be phased in (or cut back) so that current EU members are not forced to increase their net contributions to subsidise poorer states.

It is clear that the CSU is not in favour of continuing the tendency towards ‘cooperative federalism’, that is, implementing common socioeconomic standards across Europe based on the principles of solidarity and equalisation, which is considered to stifle innovation and over-tax the EU’s citizens (or more specifically, citizens of wealthier regions in the EU). Instead, the CSU maintains that economic policy coordination must by the responsibility of the regions, so that the decentralisation of legislative powers would allow a more precise targeting of economic regulations to the needs of local industries. Attempts by the EU to impose uniform requirements with regard to employment, schools or pensions, for example, are considered by the CSU to be counter-productive as they ‘restrict fruitful competition between different policy approaches’ (Stoiber 2002: 6).

The model of competitive federalism has also been supported by the Free Democrats in Germany, who are enthusiastic supporters of a market economy. The Bavarian Liberals demand the dismantling of European-wide subsidies, the strengthening of disadvantaged regions by means of infrastructural reform and obtaining maximum assistance from Europe to increase Bavarian farmers’ powers to innovate (FDP Bayern 2003: 49). The party argues that regional policy should be decentralised and that regions should be granted maximum powers to compete autonomously in the European single market. In line with their recently developed patriotic character, the Bavarian FDP also refer to enhancing Bavaria’s well-placed position ‘in the middle of Europe’, and the benefits of re-building trade links between Bavaria and Eastern and Central Europe (FDP Bayern, 2003). The Liberals agree with many of the free-market policies that the CSU has instigated.84 However, in the FDP’s understanding of competitive federalism, the regional tier should not be strengthened against European centralisation, but rather the communal tier needs to be protected

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84 Interview [2.1] with Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenburger, who voiced her support for CSU economic policies, and vowed to continue with these fiscal measures if the FDP took power.
from Bavarian centralisation. One of their proposals is to dismantle the Bavarian bureaucracy to promote free competition against neighbouring states and regions (FDP Bayern 2003).

As Scharpf (2005) argues in his analysis of competitive federalism in Germany, there is a strong normative dimension to these arguments – a means of readjusting the balance between state and market. For the CSU, the implementation of a more competitive federalism is another strategy for Bavaria to reduce its financial contributions to recipient Länder and poorer regions in the Europe through German net contributions to the EU budget – of which Bavaria contributes a significant share. As Jeffery (2003: 102) points out, this type of federalism has yet found no institutional form in Germany (or Europe), but informally the practice of competitive federalism – in which Länder compete for inward trade and investment – is flourishing within these ‘cooperative’ structures. The Bavarian Ministry of Finance acknowledges this development, arguing that the current ‘system of financial equalization among the states strives for balance in a field of conflict, i.e. between the federal states’ sovereignty and their loyalty to the confederation (sic)’ (Beierl 2001: 6; my italics). The CSU-led government aims to institutionalise this development by increasing the fiscal autonomy of Länder (which means granting the regions revenue-raising powers and legislative authority over certain taxes, and not just freedom of spending). This will ensure that richer states like Bavaria do not have to ‘pay billions from their own budgets to poorer states’ and that poorer states themselves break out of a ‘subsidy-minded mentality’ (Beierl 2001: 6, 7).

The CSU’s proposals for competitive federalism are extended to Europe: ‘we believe that the principles of competition, a subsidiary character (sic), and diversity should also become the role model for the architectural structure of Europe’s nations’ and importantly, that the ‘extent of financial solidarity towards the new European neighbours must not be overstrained’ (Beierl 2001: 9). The CSU’s reservations about EU enlargement to poorer countries in the East, its attempts to cut back its contributions (through Germany) to the EU budget, and its emphasis on competition rather than social solidarity, can be understood as a form of protectionism. Competitive federalism is a strategy to safeguard Bavarian political autonomy from creeping centralisation at the European level, to protect Land control over socioeconomic policy from European competition policy and other common sectoral policies, and to advance Bavarian interests. Yet as Jeffery (2003: 105) notes, this should not be taken for pure economic protectionism on the part of the Bavarian government. Rather, it is linked to a wider agenda about decentralisation in Europe that guarantees the autonomy of its constituent parts and allows the development of territorially based responses to globalisation. As Stoiber said, ‘we struggled to secure our sovereignty during the establishment of the German Federal Republic…we do not wish to give up this sovereignty to Europe’ (Süddeutsche Zeitung, 2
Bauer has demonstrated that during the years 2000-2, Bavaria opposed several proposals during the negotiations about the constitutional treaty that were considered to be a threat to its sovereignty, whilst it only backed a handful of issues that dealt with transparency and democracy more generally (Bauer 2006). Furthermore, his analysis demonstrated that the Bavarian government clearly prioritised increasing its substate autonomy in Europe rather than increasing participation rights in EU affairs, which broke from the common position of the German Länder.

The CSU-led Bavarian government maintains that it has in the past tried to foster cooperation between Länder in response to European developments. In reference to the Lisbon strategy, a civil servant at the Bavarian Ministry for Europe protested that ‘we try to develop a common Länder position – but we get cut off.’ This is also part of how the Bavarian government sees the federal government, and also other Länder, as trying to hold it back. Minister for European Affairs, Eberhard Sinner also expressed the sentiment that Bavaria is often a lonely voice amongst the German Länder in seeking more autonomy and protecting regional competences. Though one also suspects that the CSU rather enjoys playing the ‘lone wolf’ in German politics. It has certainly not prevented the CSU from advancing its own, unique, territorial strategies in Europe.

Indeed, the CSU has developed two principal territorial strategies to protect Bavarian sovereignty in Europe. Its first tactic was to increase Bavaria’s autonomy in Europe by bypassing the German state and going directly to Europe to secure regional participation. This was evident in the period leading up to the signing of the Maastricht Treaty. This tactic changed to seeking to bolster the structure of the German state to protect Bavaria’s competences from unwanted European influences at the end of that decade. It may be argued that the first strategy accords with Jeffery’s (1999) model of ‘let us in’, whilst the second involves ‘leaving us alone’. Ideally, the CSU seeks to maximise both strategies, by lobbying for a stricter demarcation of powers that favours regional autonomy to be institutionalised in the European Constitution, whilst at the same time strengthening the German state to limit EU encroachments on regional autonomy (Jeffery 2003: 16). If it pursues a lone strategy of lobbying within the German state, this risks putting Bavaria into a position of dependency on the state, which is anathema to Bavarian nationalist thinking. It would also be seen to undermine all the work that Bavaria has done to act as an independent voice in Europe.

To that end, the party has not relinquished its activities in the European sphere altogether. Bavaria’s Minister for European Affairs, Eberhard Sinner, took over the Presidency of RegLeg in 2005, which may prompt the CSU into reformulating its strategy of direct action in Europe. Sinner himself reiterated, in an interview with the author, his commitment to a Europe of the Regions and the Bavarian government’s attempts to increase Bavaria’s autonomy in both Germany and Europe.

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85 ‘Wir haben unsere Staatlichkeit bewahrt in heftigen Auseinandersetzungen bei der Gruendung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland…Diese Eigenstaendigkeit wollen wir nicht fuer Europa aufloesen’.
86 Interview [2.2] with Markus Ferber.
Instead, the CSU-led Bavarian government has been active in creating horizontal alliances with other European regions, international missions, creating mini-embassies in Brussels and other counties, signing international agreements such as the 2001 Flanders Declaration and 2004 Edinburgh Declaration, and generally engaging in a type of ‘paradiplomacy’. For instance, the Bavarian government has signed numerous trade agreements with regions and states throughout the world, it has become active in cultural and educational exchanges in Europe, especially with the Czech Republic, and it has been involved in INTERREG programmes. Bavaria continues to want to exert maximum authority in both the European and German spheres, and as a result, it cannot afford to cut itself off from participation, lobbying and networking at either level.

In opposition to the CSU’s attempts to increase Bavaria’s capacity to set its own economic agenda, and to shield this from the European Commission’s ever-expanding policy portfolio, the SPD and Greens support the continuation of the model of cooperative federalism at the European level, as at the German level. They oppose the CSU’s plans to endow regions and member states with more autonomy in deciding financial and economic policy, and in Sharpf’s (2005: 9) words, see competitive federalism as a ‘derogatory label for the neo-liberal, or perhaps merely self-serving, rejection of the solidaristic commitments engrained in the post-war political culture and institutionalized in the constitution of West Germany’. Instead, the political Left in Bavaria believe in creating a ‘social Europe’ that guarantees minimum socioeconomic standards, a European employment pact and sustainable development policies. This requires the transfer of a certain amount of powers to the European level, and coordination amongst different tiers of government – European, state, regional, communal – in jointly deciding and implementing policy. The political Left in Bavaria support the notion of financial solidarity and strongly defend the fiscal equalisation programme in Germany from the CSU, whom it accuses of pursuing a ‘race to the bottom’ in social standards through its espousal of free-market competition between regions. The SPD and Greens apply their preference for cooperative federalism to Europe, where they prioritise social and economic cohesion and environmental coordination above regional or state autonomy. This also means, from the Bavarian perspective, that the political Left not only seek access to the centre (which Bavaria, to a great extent, already has), but loyalty and (economic) obligations to the centre.

In analysing the Green and SPD’s preferences for cooperative federalism, which is marked by a centralisation of socioeconomic policies geared towards protecting labour markets and a sustainable environment, it is important to bear in mind that the political Left in Germany once opposed what it considered to be a neoliberal agenda in Europe, where the centralisation of economic and monetary policy presented a threat to social solidarity. Whilst the SPD saw dangers in European (monetary) integration of being too neglectful of the social dimension, the Greens focused on the potential threats to the environment resulting from an integration project based on
economic growth. Although both the Greens and Social Democrats have since become ‘pro-European’ parties, there are continuing reservations about the EU impacts on the labour market and environmental policy, as well as misgivings about the lack of social accountability and transparency in Brussels. For instance, in February 1992, during the debates on the single market, BayernSPD officials Renate Schmidt and Gerhard Schmid issued a statement declaring that ‘We say Yes to European political and economic integration and to a strong European currency…we say No to the Bundesrepublik leaving its economic and monetary policy management in the hands of the Council and Commission that operate beyond parliamentary control, as the voters will have no influence over these decisions’ (BayernSPD 1992a).87 Both the SPD and the Greens have advocated the creation of a ‘social Europe’ that promotes social solidarity and prevents ‘social dumping’ through common European-wide standards in employment, real wages and social benefits. The SPD is particularly forceful in pursuing a strong social dimension to European integration ‘The road to economic and monetary union can no longer be associated with social “clear-cutting”, economic malaise and permanently rising unemployment. Only when Europe proves itself in the workplace will it be accepted by the people’ (BayernSPD 1998: 13).88

Since the early 1990s, the SPD has adopted a more ‘pragmatic’ approach to Europe (Sloam 2002). This was characterised by greater ‘ideological flexibility’ on the part of SPD leaders, who began to develop a ‘mixed’ policy programme of creating a social Europe within the context of economic globalisation. The SPD pushed for the creation of a European Employment Pact to flank the 1997 Stability and Growth Pact in order to create a linkage between the Economic and Monetary Union and a commitment to an ‘active’ employment policy (Dyson and Gretz 2003: 209). Social Democrats also sought to concentrate EU structural funds on the poorest regions, whilst cutting back Germany’s net contributions to the EU budget, and increasing co-financing in relation to agricultural subsidies. The SPD thus mixed domestic concerns with a multilateral perspective based on common European interests. This was taken forward in a paper co-written by Gerhard Schroeder and Tony Blair (1999) in which they presented a ‘way forward for European social democracy’ characterised by Neue Mitte (third way) politics of combining labour market reform with cut-backs in state spending. However, these policies met with opposition amongst rank-and-file Social Democrats who opposed any measures to cut back state-funded public services such as regional banks and local transport, despite pressures from EU competition regulations to do so.

87 „Wir sagen Ja zur politischen und wirtschaftlichen Einigung Europas und zu einer harten Euro-Währung…Wir sagen Nein dazu, dass die Bundesrepublik ihre wirtschafts- und währungspolitischen Steuerungsmöglichkeiten aus der Hand an parlamentarisch unkontrollierte Gremien und Kommission abgibt, weil auf deren Entscheidungen die Wähler keinen Einfluss haben.’

88 „Der Weg zur Wirtschafts- und Währungsunion darf aber nicht länger mit sozialem Kahlenschlag, Konjunkturflauten und staendig stiegender Arbeitslosigkeit verbunden sein. Nur wenn sich das geeinte Europa auch auf den Arbeitsmaerkten bewaehrt, wird es von den Menschen angenommen.’
Instead, since 2001, the SPD has become more critical of certain aspects of European integration, such as competition policy, and more accepting of others, such as EMU itself.

The Bavarian SPD now speaks of creating a ‘balance between competition and workers’ rights’ (Bayern Vorwärts, March 2005). In particular, the party proposes a harmonisation of taxation policy, the creation of minimum social and environmental standards, workers’ protections and common policies guaranteeing environmental sustainability to prevent *einem Wettlauf nach unten* (a race to the bottom). The Bavarian SPD take the Scandinavian model as a blueprint for economic growth mixed with social solidarity (Bayern Vorwärts, June 2006), and contrast this with the CSU’s disregard for the social dimension of integration: ‘The CSU refuses to have intimacy with Europe. Mr Stoiber is against an EU social union and against an EU employment pact. His CSU rejects all measures to combat unemployment on the European level and limits the European ideal to the interests of money and big business’.89 Instead, the Bavarian SPD argues that the most important task in the EU is the institutional coordination of economic policy, whereby there are common rules governing currency, finance and wages (Bayern Vorwärts, June 2006). On that basis, the Bavarian SPD endorses a model of cooperative federalism in Europe, based on that of Germany, which would guarantee workers rights through common European standards in social and economic policy, and entrench the principle of social solidarity amongst regions. Despite arguing for some measures that protect Bavarian interests – such as reforming the CAP ‘for our farmers’ so that agriculture is returned to being a state responsibility (Kreissl-Doerfler 2004) – the BayernSPD submerge Bavarian interests within a common German agenda, which means continuing Bavarian contributions to federal coffers in the interest of social cohesion and solidarity.

The SPD’s argument to the Bavarian electorate is that they will achieve more together with the rest of Germany, than apart with the CSU. As Ludwig Stiegler MdB, Chair of the Bavarian SPD, put it: ‘The CSU, CDU and FDP want another kind of republic. Our task is to continue to make social progress and to improve the standard of living of the people of the Land’.90 However, this argument rests on whether or not the Bavarian public believes the CSU is also able to advance the social cause whilst maintaining the Land’s high standards of living. As a party that combines support for free-trade with advocacy for state involvement in the economy to protect Bavarian farms and small businesses, the CSU’s welfare-statism appears to satisfy voters’ demands for a strong social policy (though its privatisation of state-owned companies may call this into doubt). The BayernSPD’s bid to convince Bavarian voters that it is in their long-term interests to prioritise their (economic) obligations to Germany and Europe over their desire to protect their own territorial

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89. ‘Die CSU verweigert sich Europa. Herr Stoiber ist gegen EU-Sozialunion und gegen EU-Beschäftigungspakt. Seine CSU lehnt alle Maßnahmen zur Bekämpfung der Arbeitslosigkeit auf europäischer Ebene ab und beschränkt die europäische Idee auf die Interessen des Geldes und der Großkonzerne’ (BayernSPD 1997, Das Aktuelle Strichwort).
interests, judging by the party’s election results in the last European election (in which they took an all-time low of 15.3%), appears to fall on deaf ears.

The Greens in Bavaria have also sounded calls for a ‘social Europe’ that is based on cooperation and joint decision-making between states and regions to develop common European standards in areas of public policy. Their economic model is based on ‘fair competition inside a social and ecological framework’, environmental sustainability and a progressive labour market (Schopper and Daxenberger 2006: 14). In some areas, the party proposes more radical reforms to social policy than the SPD. It demands a reform of EU structural policy based on the principles of ‘solidarity and sustainability’, which means concentrating funds on poorer regions and minority groups (Die Grünen in Bayern 2003b). They also voice concerns for the environment due to emphasis on economic growth, and argue for the creation of a common energy tax at the European level and an end to the Euratom Treaty. Furthermore, the Greens are opposed to genetically modified foods, and believe there should be a harmonisation of consumer protections and food safety regulations in Europe. In the debates surrounding the European Convent, the Bavarian Greens were broadly in favour of the proposed constitutional treaty as long as key aspects included ‘environmental protection, equality of rights between women and men and social justice’.92

So far, so cooperative federalism. But the Greens also argue that ‘not everything should be decided at the European level’. For instance, the Greens argue that Europe should not decide questions of essential public services (Daseinsvorsorge). They demand further decentralisation, especially to towns and communes, who should be given stronger financial powers. The Greens also want a stricter demarcation and disentanglement of competences between the EU and member states. In order to create ‘solidarity and sustainability’, for instance, they think EU structural policy should be re-nationalised (Die Grünen in Bayern 2003b). And for those policies that are harmonised at the European level, the Greens argue that the European Parliament should have a stronger role in decision-making, so that their decisions are democratically accountable. The Greens therefore have an ambiguous position on what type of federalism they want: decentralised but cooperative. Some policies, such as energy, food safety, consumer protection, environmental sustainability, immigration and transport, should be harmonised at the European level, along with foreign and security policy (Die Grünen in Bayern 2004). Others should be decided at the national or regional level, such as the renationalisation of structural funds. But the decentralisation of legislative powers to regions should not result in a Dumpingwettlauf (dumping race) and falling, differentiated social standards (Runge 2006), which it fears is the objective of the CSU in its bid for more regional competition. There must be limits on the ability of the Länder to diverge, in order to guarantee

91 ‘fairen Wettbewerb innerhalb eines sozialen und oekologischem Rahmens’.
92 ‘Umweltschutz, Gleichberechtigung von Frauen und Maenner und soziale Gerechtigkeit’ (Grünen in Bayern 2003b).
93 ‘muss nicht alles auf europäischer Ebene entscheiden werden’ (Grünen in Bayern 2004).
social protections and common living standards. The Greens accuse the CSU of losing its orientation between social and neoliberal forces, trying to portray the party as anti-welfare state. It points to the CSU’s ‘radical cost-cutting policies and ecological blindness’ in threatening social solidarity (Schopper and Daxenberger 2006: 1). Even within Bavaria, the Greens argue that there is no equality of opportunities for the different communes and districts that make up the Land, due to the centralisation of power in the south, and the CSU’s disregard of ‘peripheral’ regions in the north and east of Bavaria. They also think it disgraceful that Bavaria should receive significant structural funding from the EU, whilst poorer regions continue to lag behind (Runge 2006).

5.7.2 A Confluence of Autonomy and Policy goals?

Debates about federal reform in Germany are intrinsically linked to the need for constitutional reform at the European level. In fact, it may be argued that deepening European integration has catalysed the need for federal reform in Germany. As Scharpf (2005: 8) maintains, the affirmation of the virtues of competitive over cooperative federalism ‘can be seen as a response to the challenges of European economic integration which had the effect of opening national markets to competitors from all member states’. What is important to substate parties is not just the attainment of symbolic constitutional goals, but the need to protect, or expand, the capacity of the region to control social and economic policy, to advance territorial interests and to diverge from the centre to reflect political traditions and to become more competitive in European and global markets. The trade-off for the CSU is not between autonomy and influence at the centre (which Bavaria has in the Bundesrat), but protection by the centre. In other words, the CSU need to strengthen the German state, and its influence over European policy within it, in order to protect the Länder competences. But this empowerment of the German state should not come at the sacrifice of regional autonomy to exercise control over, and diverge in, policies. Herein lies the CSU’s dilemma. Alternatively, the FDP and SPD are less concerned with Europe taking responsibility for a larger area of policies from the state, due to their commitment to a European Bundesstaat. But whilst the SPD wish to see the creation of a cooperative federal Europe, the FDP endorse the model of competitive, decentralised federalism. Thus, for the political Left, the trade-off involves deciding between enhanced regional autonomy versus loyalty to the centre to provide fiscal redistribution, whilst for the Liberals the question is how far regions should be able to diverge without undermining the basis of European political integration.

An important finding of this research is that support for cooperative and competitive federalism cuts across constitutional demands to create a federal or confederal Europe. This counters the assumption in much of the literature that competitive federalism correlates with decentralisation of legislative competences, and cooperative federalism with centralisation. As we
have seen, the Greens and the FDP in particular have had difficulties in combining their ideological or capacity-related aims with their constitutional demands. The Greens take the position of favouring decentralisation of political structures and legislative competences in Europe, like the CSU, but demand that there should be limits to this to protect social cohesion, equal opportunities and to avoid a ‘race to the bottom’, like the Social Democrats. In contrast, the FDP supports the creation of a European Bundesstaat, but endorses the model of competitive federalism that sets regions against each other and allows for policy divergence. The party most consistent in its constitutional and capacity goals is the CSU, which demands more legislative autonomy for Bavaria in a competitive federal European context. The SPD also (more-or-less) consistently argues in favour of joint decision-making and the harmonisation of economic and social policy, in order to guarantee minimum social standards and avoid widening the economic gap between East and West. They believe that Bavaria should share the burden of economic inequalities across Germany and Europe in order to create equal living conditions, which means continuing its contributions to the tax-sharing regime and fiscal equalisation transfers. In the context of German federal reform the SPD equates ‘the transfer of legislative competencies in the fields of regional economic, labor-market and social policies, or for the dismantling of jointly-financed programs of regional industrial policy [and] the prospect of allowing divergent Land legislation in these fields… with repudiating the constitutional promise of equivalent living conditions’ (Scharpf 2005: 18). To a significant extent, we can duplicate this position to the party’s vision of European federalism.

For Bavarian political parties, Europe provides a new ‘centre’ from which to extract concessions and to seek influence within. Yet it also means, especially for the CSU, a threat to Bavarian autonomy through the transferral of Land competences to the European level. As more and more federal legislation has come to be determined by EU directives during the 1990s, the CSU-led Bavarian government has sought to slow down the integration process (Stoiber 1993), and failing that, has demanded that selected policies be renationalised (meaning re-regionalised). The CSU’s main strategy has thus changed from seeking to influence European institutions through the lobbying activities of its grandiose mini-embassy in Brussels in the early 1990s, to strengthening the collective role of the Bundesrat in European affairs and with it the hard shell of the German state from the end of that decade. Opposition parties, when criticising integration processes, have done so from a multilateral perspective (for instance, citing the democratic deficit, the need for a stronger European Parliament and the reform of structural funds to favour disadvantaged regions) rather than arguing in the defence of Bavarian territorial interests per se. As the CSU proclaims, it is indeed the only party in Bavaria to fight for purely Bavarian interests in Europe, in both an economic and a constitutional sense. For the CSU’s opponents, even though their lack of a patriotic guise may have contributed to their electoral weakness, one wonders if they do not mind the CSU’s
claim to this title, especially as some consider such regional self-interest to ‘smack of crude populism and nationalism’ (*Bayern Vorwärts*, 2003: 11).

### 5.8 Conclusions: Europe and the Defence of the Länder

As we can see from this discussion, the Europe of the Regions debates were clearly linked to debates on the constitutional reform of federalism in Germany. Whilst some scholars have argued that European integration would lead to a reduction in power of the Länder governments (Scharpf 1992), others maintain that there could be a revival of regional autonomy ‘because the Länder governments could gain power by directly contacting European institutions and by-passing the federal government’ (Clement 1993: 117; cited in Benz 1998). The reality is that both have occurred at different periods of time. After the Maastricht Treaty, the role of the German Länder in EU was strengthened, leading to expectations that this would lead to a Europe of the Regions to sit alongside, or even replace, a Europe of the states. However, this notion lost its impact by the end of the 1990s due to disillusionment with the CoR, the transfer of more and more Länder competences to the European level, and the difficulties created for state structural policy by EU competition policy. This resulted in a realisation on the part of the Länder of the need to defend their interests, as decisions over Länder competences were being made in Brussels without their direct input. Their dissatisfaction with the lack of regional guarantees in the Nice Treaty led directly towards the establishment of the Convention on the Future of Europe (Bauer 2006).

The Bavarian CSU-led government was mainly concerned with increasing centralisation in Brussels and reduced Länder say over European decision-making. Whilst in the late 1980s and early 1990s, its response to perceived European centralisation was to obtain more direct representation of regions in European fora, since then its disappointment with regional opportunities in Europe forced it to resort back to using state channels to protect Länder interests. At the time of writing, both strategies are being pursued, though with varying emphasis, through Bavaria’s involvement in transregional lobbying as well as in demanding more influence within intra-state decision-making mechanisms to shape European policy. But whilst for Scotland the constitutional and symbolic aspects of autonomy are perceived to be of the utmost importance in Europe – captured in the former First Minister of Scotland’s words to put Scotland on the world map but without needing to obtain independence to do so – Bavaria was more concerned with protecting its policy capacity. Certainly, Bavarian leaders such as Eberhard Sinner have realised the benefits of symbolic or discursive claims to recognition – for instance, Sinner argues that Bavaria is as much a nation with a right to self-determination as Scotland or Catalonia. This is a relatively new strategy, that is more likely to be aired in the corridors of Brussels rather than in the Bundestag in Berlin. It is also an interesting development for scholars of nationalism – Bavaria, in allying itself with the other
minority nations of Europe through regional networks – has begun to adopt some of the rhetoric of minority nationalist movements elsewhere.

However, more radical constitutional demands in Bavarian parties’ rhetoric is noticeably absent. Bavarian leaders place the emphasis on protecting the division of powers between Länder, states and Europe that presently exists rather than advocating a more constitutionally formidable Bavaria in Germany or Europe. Independence, in other words, is off the cards and remains a minority taste to supporters of the ultra-Conservative Bayernpartei. This is not to say, however, that Bavaria would not like to wield its powers in a more informal manner in Europe. Just because Bavaria exists in a symmetrical federation does not mean that they do not want more than what the other Länder have. Indeed, Bavaria prides itself in having a special identity in the German state. But it is crucial to note that politicians – the CSU and others – realise that Bavaria wields greater strength by being a powerful Land in the German federal state than being an independent member-state of Europe. Moreover, the CSU has realised that its territorial strategy of seeking strengthen its position within Germany with a view to influencing European policy, is more effective than trying to ‘bypass’ the state as a ‘regional player’ in Europe. Successive Bavarian CSU-led governments have relished their dual role in the German and Bavarian political arenas – and would be keen to add an additional role in Europe to their repertoire. And thus far, a strong case can be made for concluding that this is exactly what they have achieved – a triple role in Bavarian, German and European politics through the manipulation of the linkages between the different political arenas. Such an achievement is the envy of many of their regional counterparts in Europe.
6. Territorial Politics in Sardinia

6.1. Introduction

As we have discovered in the last two chapters, European integration processes have produced uneven effects in different places. Some parties have viewed Europe as a new context in which to advance autonomy, whilst others have considered it as a threat. In both Scotland and Bavaria, it is clear that Europe has become a significant point of party competition, and the constitutional question in each case – of devolution in Scotland, and of protecting Länder competences in Bavaria – was linked to European integration. What has not been examined so far is when parties have failed to take advantage of opportunities in Europe to advance their territorial projects, or when domestic constitutional reform is not connected to the transformations occurring in Europe. An examination of the case of Sardinia helps to fill this gap. Because European integration has not had the same effects everywhere, this increases the need to examine cases of difference; to understand why some parties have sought to use Europe to advance territorial projects whilst others have not.

Sardinia has been largely ignored by scholars of nationalism and regionalism. This is not because territorial claims have omitted independence, or have failed to use ‘nationalist’ parlance (as in Bavaria), but because Sardinian nationalism has failed to pose a major threat to the territorial integrity of the Italian state or to catalyse any constitutional reforms, in contrast to the Lega Nord. In fact, many scholars posit that Sardinian nationalism has already had its day. In the period immediately following the First World War, the main Sardinian nationalist party – Partito Sardo d’Azione (Psd’Az: Sardinian Party of Action) – won 36% of the vote in regional elections, thereby unifying a largely disparate and divided island under the banner of Sardinian autonomy. However, the ‘special statute’ granted to Sardinia in the 1948 Italian Constitution served to subdue nationalist claims. In the following decades, the Psd’Az was relegated to being a minor party, receiving only 6-7% of the vote. Its fortunes returned during a Sardinian ‘revival’ in the late 1960s, which began as a cultural movement and ended up re-mobilising the Psd’Az, which won 10-15% of the vote during the 1980s. Ortu (1998) calls neo-sardismo the first ‘proper’ nationalist movement in Sardinia, which caught the attention scholars such as Rokkan and Urwin (1983), who examined Psd’Az efforts in harnessing the cultural agitation of neo-sardism for political ends, and also students of comparative nationalism (Petrosino 1988; Mazzette and Rovati 1993; Tidore 1993).

However, since this ‘identity boom’ the Psd’Az has suffered a series of splits, due to disagreement between the independence-seeking and pro-federalist wings. There are now half a dozen autonomist parties in Sardinia, and whilst together they have been able to win 10-20% of the vote (in the 2005 administrative elections), separately they are weak. For this reason, it is important
to look at the wider political context of nationalism. In Sardinia, as in other Italian regions, ‘the national political parties are themselves sufficiently fragmented to give regional demands a degree of leverage inside the parties’ (Hine 1996: 115). The regional branches of statewide parties have been expert at playing the Sardinian card and have pressed for some linguistic and educational rights. Support for a ‘real’ autonomy has gained momentum across parties, and a declaration of the sovereignty of Sardinia was approved by a majority of members of the Regional Council in 1999. In particular, the election of a broad centre-left alliance in 2004 called Il Progetto Sardegna (the Sardinia Project), headed by the media-communications baron Renato Soru, marks an important change in Sardinian politics. The group’s programme has sought to link ‘innovation with the preservation of the environment and identity, claiming an ethnic revival of regional politics and increasingly restive with national decisions over the regional territory’ (Casula 2005a: 15). The success of the PS may be interpreted as a reaction to the old regional class, which is accused of deliberately maintaining the stagnation of the Sard economy in order to protect personal interests.

It is within this context that some politicians have begun making links between economic and political reform in Sardinia and the ‘modernising’ influence of Europe. Yet whilst all of the mains parties in Sardinia claim to be unswervingly pro-European, few of them address issues of European integration in any great detail. In principle, most parties submit to the idea of creating a Europe of the Peoples or a Federal Europe, but in practice, constitutional questions are submerged under the more pressing need for economic modernisation, and the costs and benefits that Europe offers in this regard. In this chapter, we explore how Sardinian parties have developed their territorial strategies in response to Europe, beginning with an examination of the political traditions and constructions of the nation in Sardinia, and how these inform parties’ constitutional and socioeconomic demands. Moreover, we will highlight the trade-off that successive governing parties have made between exercising a ‘real’ autonomy and obtaining resources and patronage from Rome, and how Europe has altered this context by providing a new ‘centre’ for territorial demands.

6.2 Political Traditions and Ideologies in Sardinia

From the outset it appears that Sardinia has followed Italian political traditions and voting patterns, whereby the Christian Democrats were dominant in post-war period, and the Left formed a permanent – though divided – opposition. But on closer inspection there are particular nuances in the Sardinian party system that differentiates it from other regions and Italian politics in general.

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94 The PS began not as a ‘party’ but as a coalition, and the parliamentary group includes representatives from outside politics – predominantly from academia, industry and civil society – as well as centre-left parties. Its party members include Sinistra Federalista Sarda (DS), La Margherita, Udeur, Italia dei Valori, Socialisti Democratici Italiani, Partito Comunista Rifondazione (RC), Comunisti Italiani (PCI) and i Verdi (Greens). The Sardinian Party of Action (Psd’Az) is not an official member of the coalition, but stood as part of the PS list in the regional elections in 2004.
These include the presence of the oldest nationalist party in Italy, the Ps’d’Az, whose ideological flexibility enabled to act as coalition partner to the governing DC for almost four decades, and later electoral ally of the Left; the strongly pro-autonomist positions of Sardinian branches of statewide parties; and the advent of independence-seeking parties that have sought to capitalise on the popular nationalism of the neo-sardismo cultural movement. The strong territorial dimension of politics in Sardinia has meant that ‘autonomy’, and less class and religion, is the ‘central axis’ upon which Sardinian parties compete (Tidore 1992: 29). According to Paolo Pisu, ‘in Sardinia we’re all federalists, autonomists or separatists’.95 There is no such thing as an ideology of ‘unionism’ that exists in Scotland, or opposition to regionalism as in Bavaria. This necessitates an examination of how the political traditions of Christian Democracy, Communism, and Socialism have addressed the territorial question. But any historical analysis of Sardinia’s political system, and discourse on ideological traditions in Sardinia, must begin with an examination of the development of the nationalist ideology and identity (Sardità) through the vehicle of the Partito Sardo d’Azione.

The Ps’d’Az was formed by ex-soldiers from the famous ‘Brigata Sassari’ (Sassari Brigade) – a Sardinian section of the Italian armed forces who fought in the First World War.96 Headed by the charismatic Emilio Lussu, the Ps’d’Az benefited from a surge of mass popular nationalism in Sardinia in the 1920s. The war provided the first large collective experience of the Sardinian people, who had been isolated from each other in closed communities spread across the island. Their involvement in the war ensured that ‘for the first time ever [the Sards] engaged in contact with the reality of the national vision’.97 In return for the sacrifices of the ‘intrepid Sardinians’, the Ps’d’Az demanded self-determination in order to protect the Sardinian identity, language and culture. These goals won the support of large strata of the population, especially former soldiers, peasants and miners. The first party congress was held in April 1921, making the Ps’d’Az ‘the first and most important autonomist movement’ in Italy (Vallauri 1994: 199).98 In the elections that year, the party won 36% of the popular vote, establishing itself as a mass movement for the autonomy of Sardinia. The following year, the party developed a specific orientation as a federalist party and began making references to a Federazione mediterranea (Cubeddu 1995: 270; Mattone 1982: 74). However, its ideological position was less clear. Attempts to pull the party in the direction of socialism in order to represent the struggle of the workers in an autonomous Sardinia were met with opposition. And when the Italian Fascist Party began making headway in Sardinia in 1923, many of the party’s conservative leaders broke with Lussu’s radical socialists to merge with the Fascists

95 President of Commission V in the Sardinian Regional Council and member of Rifondazione Comunista: ‘siamo tutti in Sardegna federalisti, autonomisti oppure separatisti’. Interview [3.7].
96 The party was a successor of the Sardo Autonomo party, which had been established in 1918 by Deputato Orlando Cao following the establishment of an Office for Sardinian Affairs, to protect the interests of the Sardinian people.
97 ‘per la prima volta entrarono in contatto con la realtà della vista nazionale’ (Melis 1982: 23).
98 ‘Il primo e più importante movimento autonomista’. Other autonomist movements were not established until after 1945, in Valle d’Aosta, Piedmont, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Venetia and Trentino-Alto Adige.
This was motivated by Mussolini’s promise of ‘autonomy’ for the island. But what this actually meant was the reward of one billion lire for Sardinia to be spent on public works and land reclamation. Meanwhile, the project of granting Sardinia some special recognition was abandoned in the lead up to the war and Mussolini’s imperial adventures in Ethiopia, when state centralisation and territorial expansion were the key orders of the day.

Meanwhile, the rump of the Psd’Az, under the direction of Lussu, vigorously opposed Mussolini’s project and re-emerged following the fall of Fascism in Italy in 1943 after years in exile. By this time, the autonomist movement had come to mean many different things for different groups, such as anti-fascism, the struggle of the peasants and miners, and the first mass popular movement against the war (Melis 1982). However, it was unable to galvanise the pre-war levels of support, as the reputation of the party had been tarnished by its association with Fascism and it could not depend on the automatic assistance of the ex-servicemen’s associations. Despite this, the party was still considerably large and influential and set out on putting forward its programme for a federal Italian state: ‘the Psd’Az is firmly convinced that only a restructuring of the state along republican-federal lines will save and reinforce national unity, guarantee and intensify the exercise of individual, communal and regional rights, and allow for the realisation of a substantive social justice’.

That year, the Psd’Az also put forward proposals for a Special Statute for Sardinia, seeking exclusive legislative competences across a wide range of areas including policing, work and pensions, health, finance, public works, industry, agriculture and education (Mattone 1982: 30). It failed to obtain many of these powers. Months of internal bickering among Sard parties about the content of the Statuto, and the Sardinian Consultative Council’s rejection of the offer to extend the text of the Sicilian statute to Sardinia, led the Italian government to take charge and draw up the Statuto, which was then approved by constitutional law in the Italian Parliament. In short, Sardinia was handed a watered-down constitution decreed by Rome that had no popular backing.

The Psd’Az suffered another set-back in 1948. Emilio Lussu decided that he had had enough of the conservative elements in the party, and established his own Partito Sardo d’Azione Socialista (Psdas) in order to revive the socialist sardism of the post-First World War era. During the elections that year, the Psd’Az obtained 10.5% of the vote with seven seats in the Assembly, and the Socialist Psd’Az took 6.6% and three seats. The split served to benefit neither party: ‘one lost its radical wing and found itself weakened in the face of moderate Christian democracy, the other, viewed with suspicion as a potential rival by the communist party, was never able to find its own niche’ (Addis

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99 The Psd’Az had 40,000 members, making it the strongest mass party on the island.
100 ‘Il Partito Sardo d’Azione è fermamente convinto che soltanto una struttura repubblicana federale dello Stato salverà e rafforzerà l’unità nazionale, garantirà e intensificherà l’esercizio delle libertà individuali, comunali e regionali e consentirà la realizzazione d’una sostanziale giustizia sociale’ (1946 programme, cited in Melis 1982: 30).
Lussu’s Psdas finally merged with the Italian Socialists in 1949 whilst the Psd’Az veered to the right. It began a long collaboration with the Christian Democrats, allowing it to enter a number of regional governments. But due to the failure of the government’s economic development plans and its inability to break Sardinia’s dependence on the central state for favours and patronage, the Psd’Az also suffered from this collaboration. The Psd’Az entered a period of crisis in the 1960s and 1970s, unable to win more than 5 percent of the vote (Tidore 1992).

However, the precarious position of the Psd’Az was soon reversed as it began to capitalise on the burgeoning success of a new cultural nationalist movement, known as neo-sardismo, in the 1970s. This movement, based on linguistic and cultural demands, was headed by a number of cultural groups and intellectuals. But it soon acquired political overtones, namely a demand for independence that was framed in the language of anti-colonialism and third-worldism. Its new political protagonists included *Il Fronte Indipendentista Sardo*, *Sardinyna e Libertat* and *Su Populu Sardo*. The latter organisation, established in 1973, temporarily merged with the Psd’Az in 1981. As a result of this, and the party’s adoption of specifically cultural and linguistic goals, the party enjoyed a boom in electoral support, and in 1985 the Psd’Az received over 15% of the vote. Its involvement in the neo-sardism movement had other effects on its organisation and policy. In 1979 the party officially changed its main goal from federalism to supporting independence (Petrosino 1988), which led many neo-sardisti to join the party, thus expanding and diversifying the party’s membership. In response to its new membership, the Psd’Az moved again to the left. However, the goal of independence was unclear: it did not actually detract from support for the federal reform of the Italian state. Within a few years, the party had moved back to demanding a vague form of self-determination. This ambivalence frustrated its new members, leading to internal divisions and a significant drop in electoral support. The party’s reluctance to press for independence, in addition to its association with the government’s failed economic plans, damaged its reputation: it was seen to have failed on its key commitment to securing a ‘real’ autonomy for the island.

The Psd’Az was not the only party to have been tarnished by its failure to improve the lives of the Sardinian people. The Christian Democrats (DC—Democrazia Cristiana) were the party of government in Sardinia from 1948 to 1991 (with a short break in the 1980s when a left coalition came to power). This meant that, within the Sardinian autonomous institutions that they presided over, the *DC Sarda* was also the party of autonomy. During the drafting of the Italian Constitution in 1946-48, the *DC Sarda* enthusiastically supported the creation of autonomous institutions for Sardinia. This was in keeping with the state party’s stance, which favoured a decentralised Italian state in line with its commitment to ‘local participation’ and the Catholic notion of subsidiarity.

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101 ‘l’uno, perduta la sua ala radicale, si ritrovò più debole di fronte alle lusinghe del moderatismo democristiano, l’altro, guardato con sospetto, come potenziale concorrente, dal partito comunista, non riuscì a trovare un suo spazio’. 
Thus, the Sardinian DC’s regionalist orientation did not create a problem for the national party. Not did its long-term governing alliance with the Psd’Az. At times, it seemed that the DC had stolen the Partito Sardo’s clothes, in their desire to increase the powers of the region. However, as Clark points out, there was a clear difference in the constitutional demands of the two parties: whilst the Psd’Az called for the creation of a federal Italy in which Sardinia could exert its own authority, the DC believed that whatever Sardinia’s devolved powers, it should remain firmly in the ambit of Italian state politics (Clark 1989: 423).

During the 1950s, the most urgent task of the DC Sarda government was to re-build Sardinia’s predominantly rural economy, which was one of the poorest in Europe. In the discussions that ensued, a small group of left-wing progressives put forward the idea that the solution to Sardinia’s economic woes was to industrialise. The ‘Young Turks’ advocated a ‘modern’ autonomy for Sardinia that was linked to economic development based on industrialisation. In 1962 they got their wish: the Italian Parliament allocated one hundred billion lire to Sardinia’s piani di rinascita (‘plans of rebirth’). Based on the concept of growth poles, the aim of the first plans in the 1960s was to create high-technology industries such as petrochemicals, steelworks and oil refineries on the island. The state-run Cassa per il Mezzogiorno administered the projects with little consultation from Sardinian authorities. Unsurprisingly, the imposition of an alien form of industrialisation on an island with poor infrastructure, and without the involvement of local practitioners, spelt disaster. As the industrial plants failed to provide many jobs and the traditional agro-pastoral economy was ignored, the Sardinian people turned against the ‘cathedrals in the desert’.

Popular resistance to the modernisation plans in the late 1960s and early 1970s, which degenerated into criminal activities such as banditry and kidnapping in the pastoral and mountain areas of Sardinia, precipitated a crisis within the DC Sarda. After years of having been complicit with the Italian government’s dubious economic experiments in Sardinia, the Young Turks in the DC Sarda now embarked on a politica contestativa: ‘a politics of open confrontation with Rome and the same political class in Sardinia that, with a considerable influence in all of the parties and a presence in the national parliament […] was accused of not doing enough possible for the interests of the island and, on the contrary, of favouring government projects and programmes that undermined the autonomy and self-determination of the Sards’ (Brigaglia et al 2002: 76). The DC Sarda tried to defuse the radical neo-sardism movement by developing a new plan of rebirth in

102 Although the Italian DC was later reluctant to give more powers to the Communist-controlled regional governments of the central Italian ‘red belt’ (Clark 1984), in principle the party supported a type of administrative decentralisation.  
103 Whilst 53,000 jobs were lost in agriculture, only 5,000 were created in industry during 1963-75 (O’Neill 2005: 97).  
104 Between 1966 and 1968 there were 33 known kidnappings.  
105 ‘una politica di aperta contestazione nei confronti di Roma e della stessa classe politica sarda che, presente nel Parlamento nazionale e con una influenza notevole in tutti i partiti […], era accusata di non fare quanto era possibile per gli interessi dell’isola e, anzi, di favorire i progetti e i comportamenti del Governo che mortificavano le istanze di autonomia e autogoverno dei Sardi’.
1974 that tried to compliment Sardinia’s traditional economy (ibid: 81). With more powers for the regional council, the plan offered grants for reforestation, cheese-making cooperatives and decreased grazing land rents to allow shepherds to buy land. But when it became apparent that the DC’s economic programme still centred on the ‘regional distribution of patronage’ (Clark 1996: 90), the autonomist movement became associated with the Left. Sards voted in a coalition more favourable to linguistic and cultural concerns in 1984: the Psd’Az-Socialist-Communist coalition.

The Left in Sardinia has not always been supportive of demands for autonomy. During the 1940s, both the Socialist Party (PSI) and Communist Party (PCI) were stolidly against giving autonomy to the regions, as this was perceived as being detrimental to the goals of creating a centralised, unitary state. As Cento Bull (1997: 2) points out, the Communists and Socialists ‘were suspicious of any form of federalism in case it promoted reactionary political tendencies at the periphery’. The PCI was most hostile to decentralising power to the regions, which was viewed as a threat to their main goal of creating a centralised system along Soviet lines in which the revolution would occur. However, in the Sardinian branch there also existed a ‘tepid autonomist position’ (Sotgiu 1996: 31) that acknowledged the specificity of Sardinian identity, history and traditions. For some party members, the party did not go far enough in recognising the unique culture and identity of Sardinia and in 1944, Antonio Cassita broke away and established the Partito Comunista Sardo. The PCS sought to create ‘a Federal Socialist Republic in which Sardinia will be inserted as an Autonomous Sardinian Republic’ (cited in Mattone 1982: 29). Its position helped force the hand of the PCI, which moved towards supporting a more ‘moderate regionalism’ (Melis 1982: 34). But the ambiguity in its territorial goals remained. Its main challenge was to integrate those Sards who were sympathetic to the ideals of Communism but who also wanted to give autonomy a class-based interpretation. But it could not make ‘autonomism’ synonymous with communism, as many right-wing Sards supported autonomy and moreover, demands for special recognition were antithetical to the Marxist interpretation of class struggle. For this reason, the PCI had to officially oppose ‘particularism’, and any measures that could potentially unite Sardinians against the Italian state.

In the immediate post-war period, the Socialist Party seemed equally hostile to Sardinian autonomy. The Cagliari branch of the PSI was convinced that socialism would answer the problems of ethnic difference by levelling them (Pintore 1996: 9), which would thwart the domino effect of regional demands leading to independence, and prevent the demise of Italy. Yet the party was soon forced to reconsider this position when Lussu’s breakaway party, the Socialist Sardinian Party of Action, joined the Italian Socialists in 1949. It sought to change the PSI’s views on the regional

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106 ‘una Repubblica Socialista Federativa in cui la Sardegna sarà inserita come Repubblica Autonoma Sarda’.
question, and to some extent succeeded: ‘the entrance of the socialist Sardisti accelerated the process, already begun, of the conversion of the party to the idea of autonomy’ (Contu 1992: 29).\textsuperscript{107}

Furthermore, following the rise of the neo-sardism movement in the 1960s and 1970s, the PCI and PSI in Sardinia were both forced to re-evaluate their positions on the regional question (Ortu 1998: 87). This was in part motivated by a concern that their resistance to reforms safeguarding the Sard language and teaching of Sard history would lose them electoral support. It was also motivated by statewide factors: in the 1970s, regional governments had been established elsewhere in Italy. This solved the DC’s twin problems of needing to manage an expanding public sector, and of excluding the PCI from any role in government. The process of empowering the regions, which had been promised in the 1948 constitution, transformed Italy into a ‘regional state’ (Clark 1984: chap. 18). Following the reforms, the PCI was able to manage power at the regional level – which, in return for its support of government, was part of the ‘historic compromise’ with the DC. Its experience in regional institutions made the party more open-minded to claims for autonomy. But this was ‘autonomy’ of a particular kind: the PCI insisted that regional authorities be empowered to draw up and execute a new set of economic development programmes so that Sardinia could ‘catch up’ with the rest of Italy (Ortu 1998: 80; Accardo 1998: 130).

The PSI took a similar stance, arguing for more effective exercise of current regional powers, rather than more powers (Accardo 1998: 133). The Left maintained that the previous plans of rebirth had failed due to the DC regional elite’s misuse of authority\textsuperscript{108} and argued that they would far better use the resources available to increase the welfare of the Sardinian people. They got their chance when a coalition of the Psd’Az, PCI and PSI were elected to government in 1981-2 and 1984-89. But even the Left were unable to overturn Sardinia’s ailing economy or to break their dependence on the state, and the failure of their socioeconomic reforms incited voters to call the DC back into government in 1989. The political climate of frustration with the local political classes, their patronage, clientelistic networks, lack of vision and failure to improve the welfare of the Sard people, would soon hit crisis point, though for extra-Sardinian reasons. At this point we must move from an examination of Sardinian party competition in the First Republic to considering how Sardinian politics changed after the birth of the Second Republic.

In the early 1990s, the Italian political system underwent a meltdown. A group of judges in Milan uncovered widespread corruption amongst the highest-ranking members of government in the DC and Socialist Parties, a phenomenon since called Tangentopoli (‘bribesville’). The Christian Democrats and Socialist Party were dissolved, followed by the break up of the Communist Party after the fall of the Berlin Wall, which was succeeded by handful of smaller parties divided along

\textsuperscript{107} ‘l’ingresso dei socialsardisti accelerava il processo, gia avviato, di conversione del partito all’idea autonomistica’

complex ideological lines. With the collapse of the old political system, and the introduction of a more bipolar politics following a referendum in 1993 that introduced a majoritarian electoral system in Italy, most Sardinian autonomists have joined forces with the Left. In 1996, the Psd’Az entered the L’Ulivo (later renamed L’Unione) alliance, hoping to reinforce its socialist credentials and to pressure the centre-left alliance from within in favour of regional autonomy. But in 2001, the party congress voted against renewing its pact as Romano Prodi’s coalition ‘did not have any arguments in the interests of Sardinia’ (La Nuova Sardegna, 1 May 2001). The Union’s rhetoric about strengthening Sardinian identity and autonomy was criticised as an empty gesture to ensure the support of the Psd’Az, whose partnership it needed to form a government. Its reluctance to recognise regional claims may have been because at the state level, any endorsement of the right to self-determination could play into the hands of Bossi’s demand for independence.

Yet there have been noticeable changes within the Sardinian branches of statewide parties. Since joining Soru’s centre-left coalition in 2002 (which also temporarily included the Psd’Az), the Democrats of the Left (DS) have more openly favoured the creation of a cooperative federal state in Italy whilst the Sardinian Refounded Communists (RC) are enthusiastic supporters of increased autonomy for the island. On the other side of Italy’s political divide, within the Pole of Liberty (renamed House of Liberty in 1996), both Forza Italia Sarda and Alleanza Nazionale proclaim to be pro-federalist and acknowledge the specificity of Sardinian language, culture and identity. Both statewide alliances have moved to the centre ground on the territorial question: endorsing federalism, increased powers for the regions as long as it does not threaten the state, and acknowledgement of regional identities. As Pintore (1996: 56) jokes, ‘federalism is a bit like autonomism a while ago: a good enough pot for all soups’.109

Meanwhile, the goal of independence has been spearheaded by other nationalist parties in Sardinia. Sardignia Natzone (SN) is a successor of the neo-sardist group Su Populu Sardo. The SN has maintained the rhetoric of the earlier cultural movement, which uses the language of anti-colonialism to wage its battle against the Italian state. In an effort to distinguish itself from the Psd’Az and to expand its potential pool of voters, SN proclaims to be beyond any ‘ideological’ group.110 But despite its criticisms of its ‘soft’ position on autonomy, the SN entered a temporary strategic relationship with the Partito Sardo in the 2001 regional elections. The alliance opposed the ‘false federalism’ being pushed by the Lega Nord, and demanded that Sardinia be made independent immediately, with the possibility of entering a European federation (Indipendentzia 2001: 1). Other smaller right-wing and left-wing nationalist groups have split from both the Psd’Az and the SN. Sardistas was established by former Psd’Az candidate for President, Efisio Serrenti in

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109 ‘il federalismo, cioè, sia un po’ quello che era un tempo l’autonomismo: una pentola buona per tutte le minestre’.
110 It is neither left-wing nor right-wing, says National Coordinator Bustiano Cumpostu [Interview 3.9].
1999 due to a clash following his election with the support of Forza Italia and Alleanza Nazionale, which was opposed by left-wing Psd’Az members. It joins the micro-nationalist parties Fortza Paris and Unione dei Sardi (UDS) on the right, the latter of which is headed by ex-DC President of Sardinia, Mario Floris. On the left, Indipendentzia Repubblica de Sardigna (IRS) broke away from the SN in 2001 and strives for an independent republic of Sardinia. Clearly, the different strands of sardism that were prevalent in the early days of the movement still exist today.

All of the parties in Sardinia, whether centre-left or centre-right, have taken to arguing for Sardinian interests and have proposed various forms of federalism to ensure that Sardinia is guaranteed the autonomy that it should have exercised since 1948. This has not always been the case. At earlier times, the positions of many Sard parties were unfavourable to autonomy, seeing any form of particularism as backward. Now Sardinian parties have put forward various different political projects for increasing Sardinian control over its resources, culture and industrial development. Importantly, the guiding factor of the constitutional goals of parties is the socioeconomic rehabilitation of the island. The question for most parties, as we shall see later, is whether, in order to maximise Sardinian political and socioeconomic interests in Rome (and in Brussels), it is necessary to achieve more autonomy for the island, or to trade this off with increased access to, and resources from, the centre.

6.3 Party Constructions of the Sardinian Nation

Sardinia is commonly referred to as an ‘aborted nation’ by its intellectuals and politicians, an idea that was famously introduced by Camillo Bellieni – one of the founders of the Partito Sardo d’Azione – during the 1920s (Clark 1989: 397). This term conveys a sense that throughout its history (as a singular territorial entity), Sardinia never quite managed to achieve the cultural, political and economic self-determination that so many of its inhabitants desired. The expression that ‘los sardos son pocos, locos y mal unidos’ (Sardinians are few, crazy and disunited) reflects this sense of national inadequacy. Sardinia’s culture was considered to be deformed and archaic, its economy primitive, and most importantly for Bellieni, its political status and system after seventy years of ‘fusion’ with Piemonte and then Italy was entirely ‘italianized’ (Accardo 1998: 181; Ortu 1998: 54). For Bellieni, in order for Sardinia to be a proper nation, Sardinians had to think in Sardinian terms, and that transformation in national self-consciousness required autonomy from the Italian state. This sentiment fuelled much of the idealism of the territorial movement during the early interwar years, when it seemed possible – perhaps even imminent – that Sardinia might finally constitute the nation it should have been. Twenty years later, after the fall of Mussolini’s fascist dictatorship and the creation of a Special Statute for Sardinia, the realisation of this dream for
Lussu’s *Sardisti* was still distant. The Statute was ultimately decided and dispensed by Rome due to prolonged disagreements between Sardinia’s political parties as to what it should contain.

However, the Psd’Az itself at times seemed unsure of how to approach the question of Sardinian nationhood. Until the advent of the *neo-sardismo* movement of the 1970s, the party made few references to Sardinian culture, language and heritage, instead focusing on political and economic demands for the island. The party’s discussions centred on how to make Sardinia an autonomous political nation with the powers to steer economic modernisation, and halt its dependence on the state. *Neo-sardismo*, in contrast, was a response to the failure of one model of autonomy – focussed on state-driven economic integration, material benefits and standardization – and the demands for another, cultural and linguistic-based autonomy that sought to break with the state altogether. Proponents of neo-sardismo argued that once independent, Sardinia would have full control over its own legislation, and could thus pass laws on bilingualism, preserve Sardinia’s customs and traditions and encourage the teaching of the Sard language and history in schools. The movement’s focus on culture and language, as opposed to economics, was not lost on the Psd’Az, and it made adjustments to its policies in order to woo the movement’s supporters into its own political wings. For instance, the party sought to make the Sard language official in public institutions and taught in schools, whereas previously language was barely mentioned in its policies (Clark 1989: 452). Furthermore, one of the party’s most prominent intellectuals, Antonio Simon Mossa, sought to instil a strand of cultural nationalism in the party by arguing that Sardinia must be recognised as an ethno-linguistic minority. However, any references to Sardinia constituting an ‘*ethnie*’ have, in line with the party’s distaste for cultural or ethnic nationalism, been dropped.

Unlike some nationalist movements in Italy, the Psd’Az prides itself in articulating a pro-European forward and outward-looking ‘civic’ brand of nationalism (Melis 1994), denouncing the *Lega Nord* as ‘Northern racists’. Although the party acknowledges the unique culture, identity and history of the Sard people, in similarity to the Scottish National Party it sees the Sardinian nation as a given and does not attempt to mobilise the sense of belonging or strong emotional attachments that Sards have to their island. Instead, the focus of the party is to obtain resources and a semi-sovereign status for the territory. The party advocates a number of policies such as creating a *zona franca*, promoting local business, improving transport links and creating a Sard energy programme, but there is a lack of an over-arching vision for the future of Sardinia behind these policies. This is perhaps due to the party’s reluctance to position itself in left-right ideological terms, preferring to focus on the ‘idea’ of self-determination. Despite assertions like ‘Regions don’t exist for us. We are a stateless nation’, the main hurdle that the Psd’Az must overcome is to convince Sards that electing the Psd’Az to government would not result in a directionless nation.

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111‘Per noi non esistono le regioni. Noi siamo una nazione senza stato’. Interview [3.1] with Antonio Moro.
Unlike the Psd’Az, the Christian Democrats have no reservations in viewing Sardinia in cultural terms. According to one of the leaders of the Sardinian DC, Antonio Segni, Sardinia constitutes ‘a distinctive entity with a pronounced personality’ (quoted in Mattone 1982: 29) – which appears to attribute a lot more to Sardinia than the basic ‘unit of administrative decentralization’ that the Italian DC envisioned for the regions (Pintore 1996: 8). One can identify a strong strand of nationalism in the UDC’s rhetoric. As Vice Regional-Secretary of the UDC, and former MEP Felice Contu, says: ‘we are a nation because we are not Italians, we are Sardinians, like the position of the Scots who make-up part of Great Britain… I am an Italian citizen, but in rational terms, I am not Italian.’ Such sentiments could easily have come from any member of the Psd’Az. But they are also unsurprising, given the DC’s institutional role as the party of an autonomous Sardinian government, their long-standing coalition with the Psd’Az and their support for subsidiarity. In the post-Tangentopoli period, the UDC (the centre-right successors of the DC) joined forces with the centralist Forza Italia, Alleanza Nazionale and the separatist Lega Nord in the Pole/House of Liberty. Ironically, the UDC – which favours devolving powers to the lowest level as part of its commitment to subsidiarity – did not give its full support for Umberto Bossi’s ‘devolution’ plans, which were put forward by Berlusconi’s government in 2005. This was because it perceived them to be a sop to the Lega Nord, and disagreed with the legislative reforms linked to the devolution plans, in particular those that would vastly increase the powers of the Premier.

In contrast, the Left in Sardinia has been forced to articulate a stronger idea of the Sardinian nation, in part because of the success of the neo-sardismo movement, and in part because of its alliance with the Psd’Az. At the party conference of the Communist Party in 1980, entitled ‘The Autonomist and Struggle and the Politics of Revival’113, the Sardinian PCI came out in favour of strengthening the region in the face of threats from international capitalism, by supporting the creation of a zona franca. It also presented an (unsuccessful) bill in parliament in favour of bilingualism in 1989. Likewise, the Sardinian PSI presented a motion for the acknowledgement of special ‘ethnic’ regions at their national conference in 1990 (Contu 1992: 32). This demonstrates an astonishing turnaround for a party that once reviled regional identities, let alone ‘ethnic’ ones. As for the PCI’s successors, the Democrats of the Left have become more attuned to appeals to national identity, advocating bilingualism and safeguarding Sardinia’s unique culture (Contu 1992: 32), whilst the smaller Sardinian Communist Party adopts a more traditional Marxist approach to the question of regional identities. It does not consider Sardinia to constitute a nation, but rather a region within the ambit of the Italian nation: ‘we are incredibly proud of being Italians’.

112 ‘noi siamo una nazione perché noi non siamo italiani, siamo sardi, così come lei dice sono scozzese, ma fa parte della Gran Bretagna…sono cittadino italiano, ma razionalmente parlando non sono italiano.’ [Interview 3.15].
113 ‘Lotta autonomistica e politica di rinascita’.
Meanwhile the Rifondazione Comunista have taken an unambiguous stance on the national question. For the Sardinian RC, there does not exist an Italian ‘people’ or an Italian nation. ‘In Sardinia, ‘national’ means Sardinian. In Sardinia the sardist and nationalist sentiment is strongly radicalised, also in the expressions that we use. We do not say that we are an Italian people, we say that we are a Sardinian people, within the Italian state.’\(^{115}\) Cherchi argues that Sardinia has its own territory, people, history, language, culture and traditions that make up the basis of the ‘nation’. In a globalising world, he goes on to argue, the Sardinian RC want to preserve Sardinia’s national characteristics, and support the protection of distinct identities elsewhere, to avoid creating a generic, homogenous global society. However, the party’s strong nationalist position has caused deep consternation within the state party. The statewide party is not as keen on recognising minority nations and regions, indeed, Levy (2002: 3) argues that the Italian RC was the only party to oppose regionalisation in the 1990s as a neo-liberal ploy of Bossi’s Lega Nord. Nor do Bertinottti’s Communists support federalism, which the Sardinian branch vigorously advocates.

In Sardinia, the parties of the centre-left, under the umbrella of the Sardinian Project led by Renato Soru, have been associated with a new programme that calls for the ‘valorisation’ of the Sardinian nation, and the strengthening of its identity, language and culture as a means of building self-confidence and to underpin the modernisation of the island economy. This contrasts with previous state-run development projects that ignored Sardinia’s local traditions and skills. Indeed, Hospers and Benneworth (2005: 343) believe that one of the aims of the Italian government’s southern development policy had been ‘to “italianise” the obstinate Sards and their centuries-old local culture’. In contrast, the Sardinian Project seeks to break Sardinia’s dependence on the state and to revive the sense of Sardinia being a self-determining nation with control over its economic and cultural resources. The PS wants ‘a strong Sardinia, that walks on its own feet, that ensures that autonomism and identity are no longer a false imagining, but a reality that guides us towards the future’ (Sardegna Insieme 2004: 11).\(^{116}\) The PS have also sought, unlike the other parties, to construct a sense of nationhood that is integrated into their socioeconomic and political programmes. The Project’s plans include ‘saving the coasts’ (Salvacosta) to increase the potential of tourism, to ‘export not emigrate’, to protect the environment, cut down on regional government bureaucracy, and underlying all of this, to bolster the Sardinian identity through plans for bilingualism and other cultural initiatives that ‘stimulate communications with the outside world’ (PS 2005). These proposals have won the support of a large section of the population, as well as other parties such as Sardigna Natzone, which has long battled to protect the island’s language.

\(^{115}\) ‘In Sardegna per “nazionale” intendiamo sardo, in Sardegna è fortemente radicato il sentimento sardista e nazionalitario, anche le espressioni che usiamo, noi non diciamo che siamo il popolo italiano, noi diciamo il popolo sardo, dentro lo stato italiano’. Interview [3.5] with Roberto Cherchi.

\(^{116}\) ‘Una Sardegna forte, che cammina a schiena dritta, che fa dell’autonomismo e dell’identità non più un’immagine sbiadita, ma una realtà che la guida verso il futuro. Un grande progetto per la nostra Sardegna.’
Indeed, since the Sardinian Project took office in 2004, there has been something of a revival of cultural nationalism in Sardinia. This is largely related to the passing of a regional law that makes the Sardinian language official, called ‘sa limba sarda comune’ (a communal Sardinian language) in 2006. In justifying the law, President Soru argued that ‘we are the largest linguistic minority in Italy, however we are the only one that has still not decided to make its language official’.117 The recognition of Sardinia’s most powerful cultural characteristic – its language – has encouraged a renaissance in traditional Sardinian dancing, singing and cultural festivals, not only amongst the older generations of Sards, but is being spearheaded by its youth. The renewed pride in Sardità (the Sard identity) indicates that the neo-sardismo movement of the 1960s, though greatly absorbed over the years, never entirely disappeared. This has forced regional branches of statewide parties to alter their position on nationality-related issues accordingly. Now, even the Forza Italia Sardinia demands that the Sardinian Special Statute include ‘a restatement of the instruments that strengthen the Sardinian culture, which is an ancient culture, with some particularities in particular in its language, and that could be used as a resource, not only on the social level but also on the economic level’.118

### 6.4 Territorial Strategies: Autonomy versus Capacity?

In Sardinia, the question of increasing the autonomy and legislative capacity of the island, at the risk of undermining its position as a recipient of state development funds and patronage, has been a burning issue since the Second World War. As we have seen, the main parties in Sardinia came together to formulate a Special Statute, but due to in-fighting and indecision the final text was drawn up by the Constituent Assembly in Rome in 1948. The Assembly severely moderated the powers that the Sardinian Consultative Council had proposed (Mattone 1982: 31). For instance, Sardinian legislative power could be superseded by national law, many important matters were ‘concurrent’ with Rome, and there was no reference to the Sard language. Yet rather than demands for more self-government from the Italian state per se, the most pressing issue of the day was the modernisation of Sardinia’s economy. This was reflected in a unique reference in the Statute that did not exist in any other regional constitution in Italy.119 The Sardinian political elite had opted for a commitment by the state to ‘the economic and social rebirth of the island’ (Art.13, Constitutional Act 1948). As Martin Clark argues, ‘thus in Sardinia autonomy does not signify self-determination,

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117 ‘Siamo la minoranza linguistica più ampia d’Italia, però siamo l’unica che non aveva ancora scelto una sua lingua ufficiale (Il Manifesto, 26 April 2006).
118 ‘una rivendicazione di strumenti di valorizzazione della cultura sarda che è una cultura antichissima, con alcune particolarità anche in particolare nella sua lingua, e che potrebbero essere una risorsa, non solo sul piano sociale ma anche sul piano economico.’ Interview [3.10] with Giorgio La Spisa.
119 Sardinia, in addition to the Sicily and the three border-regions in Northern Italy, was given ‘special status’ in the Italian constitution and a larger degree of autonomy that was ascribed to the 15 other regions in Italy – primarily because of the existence of a strong minority nationalist or irredentist sentiment in these respective territories.
but the request for material concessions and modernisation’ (Clark 1989). Demands for autonomy were underscored by the need to modernise and to obtain economic resources. Sardinian politicians thus made an early trade-off between real autonomy (or even influence in Italian affairs), and increasing Sardinia’s economic capacity – and more often than not, personal financial interests – through patronage and regional funding from the state.

The disastrous effects of this trade-off would quickly become apparent. The failure of Sardinia’s autonomous institutions to set a realizable path of economic development, to improve the lives of its people and to give them a sense of national self-confidence, imbued the term ‘autonomy’ with the opposite meaning of what it once had. It came to be seen as a façade, masking a very real and continuing dependence on the Italian state that, crucially, was not in the interests of the indigenous political elite to break. The ruling Christian Democrats discovered that ‘autonomy’ served to reinforce their position, through clientelism and corruption. This new settlement arguably advantaged the regional elite much more than if Sardinia had been merely an administrative region without legislative powers. This is because the introduction of an illusory form of ‘autonomy’ rendered obsolete the calls for independence coming from the Psd’Az, allowing them even to bring the nationalists into coalition with them. The masses – who in the interwar period had taken to the streets to demand a better quality of life – had been tamed, and even ‘managed’. One could make the argument that Sardinia’s was an even worse situation than many of those regions and nations – including Scotland – that were not granted a degree of political autonomy until recently. For the autonomy granted to Sardinia in the 1948 constitution failed so miserably to advance Sardinians’ way of life that it dampened the desire for more. This can be contrasted with Scotland up until the 1990s, where the continuing perceived oppression – or at least centralisation and homogenisation – by the British state kept the dreams of national self-realisation (largely) untainted.

Thus it came about that the demands of the once formidable nationalist movement won less and less support in the two decades following the war, as the ‘individuality’ of Sardinia was accommodated by the Italian state. Moreover, it was felt that the regional institutions did not represent the people, but were in fact controlled by Rome, so that the ‘culture’ of the regional governments ended up being the same as that of the state (Melis 1982: 1). This was evident in some of the earlier collisions between Rome and the Sardinian parties, and when the Italian government decided to impose its own ‘braccio di ferro romano’ (the iron fist of Rome) through the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno without consulting the regional council. This type of ‘top-down’ action came to signify the general state of relations between the ‘autonomous’ region and its benefactors in Rome.

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120. Così in Sardegna autonomia non significò autogoverno, ma richiesta di concessioni materiali ed di modernizzazione."
The island’s reliance on hand-outs from the state’s regional development funds led to a structural and political dependence on the Italian state, and stymied efforts by the regional government of pursuing local projects itself. This weak capacity of local political leaders to pursue and sustain projects of economic development was prevalent in many of the Southern Italian regions (Piattoni 2002). But in another sense, regional governments were institutionally disabled from setting their own path of economic development until regional policy was devolved to the regions. When the Cassa was created, and the first of plans of rebirth put into place, Sardinian authorities were excluded from the design and administration of the economic programmes; instead, these tasks were the realm of state agencies. The ‘Sardinian question’ was incorporated into la questione meridionale by the Italian state, and it continued to remain a basic ‘recipient’ region without consultation or access to decision-making in areas concerning its economic development. Sardinia’s weak autonomous institutions seemed to be all but ignored. But despite this, the regional elite eagerly accepted the programmes, and the funds coming their way.

This highlights problems emanating from local circumstances as well as state constraints in Sardinia’s relationship to Rome. As Levy (1996) points out, Sardinia has never had its own indigenous autonomous elite, in the sense that the majority of regional politicians did not try to pursue an independent line, but followed the instructions of the parties in Rome. This can be contrasted with its island neighbour to the south, Sicily. Sardinia’s dependence on the redistribution of resources from the central government meant that Sardinian politicians sought even closer ties with Rome. Furthermore, as is widely practised in the south of Italy, parties in Sardinia undertook clientelistic policies for their own personal or party gain. Whilst clientelism may be used as device for building up cooperation, trust and exchange amongst regional elites (Piattoni 1998), in Sardinia this created a negative business climate, undermined local development initiatives and caused great resentment amongst the population. Clientelism had serious effects on the popular and political desire for more autonomy. According to Casula, ‘regional politicians used the autonomist argument as a means to bargain with the central government over the quantity, not the quality of development plans for the region’ (Casula 2005a: 9) and the practice of ‘clientelismo e sottogoverno’ (Melis 1982: 2) meant that the such politicians siphoned off the regional funds to strengthen their own party bases. Thus, the autonomous institutions of Sardinia were run by the entrenched regional political class that were strongly linked to, and highly dependent on Rome.

As a result, the regional government has been unable to advance Sardinia’s economic autonomy, as the development schemes – soon known as ‘cathedrals in the desert’ – were run by state agencies without local consultation. Nor was it been able to advance Sardinia’s cultural autonomy, as laws relating to the implementation of bilingualism or the teaching of Sard in schools are subject to the approval of the Italian Parliament. As for Sardinia’s physical territory, the
regional elite was excluded from deals between the Italians and Americans to use the island for US military bases. Arguably, this type of negotiation would only come under Sardinia’s control if the island became independent. With regard to Sardinia’s political autonomy, the special statute is only now being re-written in the wake of the amendments to the Italian constitution. A number of issues are to be tackled, such as Sardinia’s lack of representation in Italian delegations to Europe, its capacity to sign political, cultural and trade agreements with other regional and state governments, and its lack of a guaranteed seat in the European Parliament. But even if all this was changed, what kind of impact would greater political, economic and cultural autonomy have on the party politics in the island? Would also they be able to break their dependence on the Italian state?

It appears that many Sardinian parties have become disillusioned with state development schemes, state control over legislation concerning education and industrial development, and state abuse of Sardinia’s environment and coastline. One of the central questions for Sardinian political parties in recent elections is how to overturn Sardinia’s economic ‘backwardness’ by wresting control of Sardinian resources, developing indigenous development projects and severing Sardinia’s political and economic dependence on the Italian state. Since the 1990s in particular, ‘Sardinians, of all parties, are disillusioned with mainland ‘development’ schemes that have gone wrong’ (Clark 1996: 100) and have united behind demands to give the region greater powers over cultural matters and industrial development. Sardinian autonomy came to mean the ‘demand for resources to be placed in Sardinian hands’ (Clark 1996: 86). In particular, with the reform of Italy’s centralist regional policy in 1992, the Sardinian government has been in a stronger position to independently address the island’s problems (Hospers and Benneworth 2005: 342).

The reform of Title V of the Constitution in 2001, in which the Left coalition in Rome approved a strong reform of Italian regionalism, had other effects on Sardinia’s institutional configuration and the parties’ perceptions of autonomy. The new law adapted the constitutional framework to the Bassinini reform of 1997, in which many administrative powers were devolved to the regions. This reform increased the autonomous powers of the 15 ‘ordinary’ regions, and also precipitated something of a crisis of identity in the five ‘special regions’, who were stripped of their specialità and placed on the same level as other regions. In response, all parties in Sardinia – including those who were traditionally more centralist – began advocating Sardinian ‘sovereignty’ and the rights of the Sard people. This could be seen as a way of reinforcing Sardinia’s nationhood and its claim to differential treatment and rights, as well as trying to undermine other regions’ demands for more autonomy. Yet despite being made more or less equal to the other Italian regions, the constitutional amendments did give Sardinia greater control over its finances and more legislative powers regarding town planning, tourism and hotels, roads and public works, agriculture, forestry, fishing and arts and crafts (Fabbrini and Brunazzo 2003: 101). Since 2001, the Sardinian
government has promoted tourism and its related activities as the mainstay of the economy, as well as the export of Sardinian food products and arts and crafts, and the creation of biotechnology research centres. There has also been widespread denunciation of the clientelistic policies of the old regional political class. According to its members, the Sardinian Project was established to provide an alternative to, and more ambitiously, and end to the *classi dirigenti* (political classes) that were considered to be motivated by narrow *egoismi localistici* (Sardegna Insieme 2004: 1).

Although Sardinia continues to be a small, poor, isolated and peripheral region, there are other opportunities for it to break its dependence on the Italian state: it can find economic and political support, networks and investment from elsewhere, in particular from Europe. From 1988 to 2006, Sardinia was designated an ‘Objective One’ area in the EU cohesion programme, and has obtained significant funds to improve its economy. But in seeking merely funds from Europe, some parties argue that this is another form of economic dependence. The Sardinian Project has outlined detailed plans for hastening economic self-sufficiency to make the Sardinian economy more competitive in European and global markets instead of permeating its dependence on European and state hand-outs. These include increasing exports and improving infrastructure and transport links, encouraging start-up companies and expanding access to education, which we shall discuss in detail later. These policies are all the more urgent as Sardinia exits the Objective One category, so as to avoid returning to, or even increasing, Sardinia’s dependence on Italian state funds. But it remains to be seen whether the Sardinian government can create a perception of the political and economic opportunities in Europe for advancing both its autonomy and capacity that is not tainted by notions of dependence, hand-outs and elite complicity.

6.5 Europeanisation and Sardinia’s Parties

From the creation of the first European institutions in the 1950s, many Sardinians were sceptical about the supranational project, which was viewed as another form of distant foreign authority that was dominated by the interests of the large financial and industrial capitals (Cardia 1982: 188). This was compounded by the fact that Sardinia’s first experience of the economic aspects of European integration was of ‘a cruel and cutting form’ (ibid). Sardinia was not alone in Italy, nor in Europe, in its fears of the exacerbation of economic inequalities, further peripheralisation and isolation from the main centres of economic trade. Southern Italian regions were ‘sceptical of the potential side effects that integration, and the necessary austerity measures that go along with it, would have on relatively poorer regions’ (Gold 2003: 96), in contrast to richer Northern regions. So whilst some authors have argued that ‘European unity is not a political issue in the country’ because all of the main parties in Italy have been consistently in favour of closer integration (Cento Bull 1996), if we look closer we shall see that Sardinia diverged from the norm: many Sardinian parties vigorously
opposed the island’s insertion into the European political and economic arena, which was thought as too centralising, too distant, and too unrelenting on peripheral economies.

More specifically, European integration began the process of transforming the local economy from the pastoral traditions of old to large-scale farming methods. Owing to the requirements of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), traditional pastoral areas were supplanted by modern ‘agro-zootecnica’ producing meat and dairy products. Furthermore, the CECA required the closing of coal mines, placing even more importance on Sardinia’s agricultural, then tourist, economies. These developments were resented by the local population, who had little understanding of the reasons for change, and no say over the changes themselves. Europe for them was merely a far-away bureaucratic structure issuing orders that nobody wanted and few understood. The principal political debates during the first direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979 therefore revolved around how to reverse Sardinia’s economic problems and how to make modernisation less destructive of the traditional ways of life in Sardinia (Cardia 1982: 189).

Yet aside from material concerns, since the 1960s there has been a strong tradition among Sardinian intellectuals of looking to Europe as a greater context for their claims to autonomy. Important figures such as Antonio Mossa, Michelangelo Pira and Giovanni Lilliu have long argued that Sardinia must be part of some sort of Europe of the Ethnies, Peoples or Regions, and have sought to influence their respective political parties of the need to recognise this, to varying degrees of success. Mario Melis – a former President of the Region as well as MEP for the Partito Sardo d’Azione during the 1980s – was also aware of the importance of European political integration and moves towards building a federal construct. He was among the first to use the concept of a Europe of the Regions in his proposals in Brussels (Melis 1994). However, even Melis was highly critical of the undemocratic structures of the EU, in which the interests of the rich North overtook the needs of the South. In 1987, he asked: ‘Europe today, what is it? It is the aggregation of the interests that gathered together in the triangle between Milan, Paris and Bonn; the industrial interests of Germany, the agricultural interests of France, with the devastating penalisation of all of southern Europe’ (quoted in Lepori 1991: 125). As a solution to these problems, he argued that the egotistic-centred Europe of the States must be replaced with a decentralised Europe of the Regions. Yet for most of Sardinia’s parties, a regionalised Europe of the peoples remained a far-off dream, and their focus remained on the short-term rehabilitation of the island through economic means.

In the late 1980s, negative perceptions of European integration changed when the EU began to institute a series of reforms to help the lagging regions of Europe that had been adversely affected by its economic standardization and harmonization policies. The European Regional

121 ‘L’Europa, oggi, che cos’è? È l’aggregazione degli interessi che si raccogliono nel triangolo che va da Milano a Parigi, a Bonn; gli interessi industriali della Germania, quelli agricoli della Francia, con la penalizzazione devastante di tutto il grande sud dell’Europa.’
Development Funds were reformed in 1988, and sought to increase competitive potential of deprived regions, in particular regions in industrial decline and disadvantaged rural regions. The fact that Sardinia is one of the poorest regions in Europe (before the 2004 enlargement), meant that it qualified for ‘Objective One’ status in the Cohesion policy. Yet as O’Neill (2005: 120) has shown, Sardinian authorities were slow in recognising the salience of the Cohesion Policy ‘simply because other more readily accessible sources of funding existed.’ The regional government continued to look to funding from the central state. However, when the convergence criteria of the Maastricht Treaty forced Italy to reform its top-down regional policy and dissolve the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno, the European Commission increased its direct negotiations with the regions, which were given powers to design their own development policies. As the only new source of funding available, the EU Cohesion Policy finally attracted the full attention of the regional executive, becoming ‘a replacement paradigm for southern policy’ (ibid: 164). And for most of Sardinia’s political parties, the EU become known primarily as a cash cow, and any interest in European affairs was strictly to do with opportunities for funding and resources.

There were few parties who saw the non-economic ramifications of European integration, and those that did – mainly the nationalist parties – were relegated to the political sidelines. Being small ‘non-ideological’ parties, the Psd’Az and SN were damaged by the reform of the electoral law in 1993. However, they have both made attempts to push the issue of European political integration to the forefront of Sardinian politics, both of whom envisage a stronger role for the regions in determining European policy and its future direction. For instance, the Psd’Az adopted a position of articulating Sardinian autonomy within a wider Europe of the Peoples. The Psd’Az was a founding member of the European Free Alliance (EFA), and elected one member to the European Parliament in 1984-89 and 1989-94. Mario Melis MEP played a significant role in drawing up the laws establishing the Committee of the Regions, and was one of the most vocal advocates of a regionalised Europe. The second biggest nationalist party, Sardignia Natzione, is also highly involved at the European level, although it prefers working outside the ‘official’ institutions and parties of the EU. For instance, although the SN has observer status in EFA, it believes that the organisation’s approach to questions of autonomy are too moderate to its liking. The third largest (and newest) nationalist party, Indipendentzia Republica de Sardigna, is also involved in European activities but outside the ‘mainstream’ networks, such as the demonstrations and the meetings of the European Social Forum. Like the SN, it subscribes to the doctrine of independence in Europe.

Evidence of Sardinian parties’ more constructive attitude to European political integration lies in a document published by the Regional Council of Sardinia (2004), entitled Sardegna Autonoma. Representatives of the main parties contributed articles describing how Sardinia could

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122 To be eligible for this status, the GDP per capita of the region must be under 75% of the European average.
benefit from the regional institutions created in Europe, what the European constitution means for Sardinia, and what is meant by a Europe of the Regions. This document is a good example of cross-party agreement on Sardinia’s territorial strategy in Europe. However, collaboration between parties has also created problems: it has dampened the tendency towards contestation and stifled debate of the real issues at hand. Every party in Sardinia now claims to be unswervingly pro-European, but behind this façade it is apparent that Sardinian party approaches to European integration remain reactive and uncritical, at least when policies and directives do not directly impact Sardinian (economic) interests. In a sense, ‘Europe’ has become unproblematic in Sardinian politics. To illustrate, no party in Sardinia put forward proposals for the draft European Constitution, preferring instead to leave these matters in the hands of the ‘national’ parties. Very little research is actually done by parties into European developments, and they do not take positions on specific laws or projects. At the same time, few parties have opposed the idea of a Europe of the Regions, and all parties want more ‘representation’ in European institutions, though the details of this are vague. So while it is something of a challenge to untangle the sheer variety of the parties’ diverse interpretations of autonomy, it is even more difficult to differentiate party platforms on Europe. This presents a serious problem for party competition. Although it is clear that Sardinian parties act together on the question of Europe when confronted with the Italian state, we must question why Sardinia’s parties have not taken more distinct positions on Europe within the Sardinian party system itself, especially as their constitutional goals vary so much.

One explanation for the parties general disinterest in (non-economic) developments in Brussels is that there are major obstacles to the ‘europeanisation’ of the political parties in Sardinia. Although parties in Sardinia dutifully mount campaigns during European elections, European issues themselves are not of great magnitude for the parties, and for party competition in general. This may be explained by that fact that there is little chance that any of the parties in Sardinia will actually be elected to Strasbourg. Sardinia shares an electoral constituency for the European elections with Sicily. There are 6 million inhabitants in Sicily, and only 1.6 million in Sardinia – meaning that Sicily almost always elects one of its own candidates, despite the two islands voting differently (the former centre-right, the latter centre-left). Sardinia has not had a representative in Europe since 1994. A large barrier to Sardinian political engagement with Europe is thus its lack of direct representation in the European Parliament. Yet the unbalanced distribution of the electoral colleges has been called into question, uniting all parties in Sardinia to lobby the Italian government to change the electoral law so that Sardinia will get its own representation by 2009.

6.6 Constitutional Autonomy in Europe

In the late 1980s there was a growing perception amongst autonomist parties in Sardinia that Europe could provide an alternative constitutional framework for pursuing self-determination that would release the island’s full potential and enable it to wean itself off its dependency on the state, both financially and politically. As a result of their frustration with the Italian government’s failure to protect Sardinia’s economic interests in Europe, statewide parties in Sardinia joined nationalist parties in supporting the creation of a Europe of the Peoples. Yet as in the cases of Scotland and Bavaria, the imagery of a Europe of the Regions masked a variety of constitutional goals, including regionalism, federalism and independence. This marks a significant change in the territorial strategy of Sardinian parties, which had previously focused on their relations with Rome. But how well thought-out are Sardinian parties’ constitutional goals in Europe? Is a regionalised, federal or confederal Europe really believed to be an answer to Sardinia’s woes especially given the lack of interest that most parties show in European affairs and developments? Moreover, given that Sardinia’s interests in European integration are primarily economic, how do parties believe that constitutional change in Europe will improve the daily lives of Sardinian people? In this section we shall discuss party strategies to obtain more recognition, political representation and participation in European decision-making, before exploring in the next section how this ties in with their fall-back demands for more access to, and more resources from, the centre – be it Brussels or Rome.

6.6.1 Independence

Sardegnia Natzione (SN—Sardinian Nation) and Indipendentzia Repubrica de Sardigna (IRS—Independent Republic of Sardinia) are the only independence-seeking parties in Sardinia. They differ from the Partito Sardo d’Azione in that, despite its flirtation with independence in 1979 and 2001, the latter has historically pursued a stronger form of autonomy for the island within a federal structure and a recognition of its claim to nationhood. Support for independence, as admitted by some party members, was merely a bluff tactic designed to appeal to a wider section of voters. In truth, the Psd’Az deems that sovereign statehood is incompatible with the processes of European integration – something that the SNP has failed (or consciously avoided) to appreciate. This has infuriated the other nationalist parties, who believe that the national project would be strengthened if all three parties united in demanding independence, but who refuse to accommodate the Psd’Az’s more moderate constitutional goals. Let us now explore the Psd’Az main constitutional dilemma before examining the rival projects for independence put forward by SN and its offshoot, the IRS.

124 The nationalist parties on the right, Unione dei Sardi (UDS), Fortza Paris and Sardistas also eschew complete separation from the Italian state, vouching instead for increased autonomy and cultural and linguistic rights for the Sardinian population. However, as the parties are so insignificant in Sardinian politics, often failing to field candidates in elections and obtaining less than 1% of the vote, their goals will not be explored in depth here.
Since the late 1970s, the Partito Sardo d’Azione has struggled with the dilemma of whether or not to support complete independence for Sardinia, or to try to seek accommodation of Sardinia’s nationhood through more devolved powers in a federal Italian state. The confusion as to the constitutional goals of the party is reflected in the way that party members use the terminology of nationhood: for one party member, Sardinian ‘sovereignty’ actually means that the Italian state has control over finance, foreign affairs and justice, whilst Sardinia is responsible for all other competences. The term ‘independence’ is often used in the same sense. For instance, the Gallura Thesis declares the party’s primary objective to be ‘the affirmation of the sovereignty of the Sardinian people on the territory [...] and to lead Sardinia to independence’ (Psd’Az, 2002). But independence actually means putting an end to Sardinia’s dependence on Rome through ‘economic emancipation.’ It thus means autonomy from the Italian state, not breaking from it altogether. This fits with the party’s strong federalist orientation. As Mario Melis, former President of the Region and MEP for the Psd’Az, stated: ‘Our independentism is functional, established on an essential base that we cannot renounce, of federalism’. Yet the party has changed its constitutional position again in response to developments in Europe. The party’s new interpretation of ‘independence’ means joining a Europe of the Peoples, and acting as a constituent unit of a ‘federal or confederal European or Mediterranean structure’ (Psd’Az 1998: 1) – a concept that is explored in section 6.6.2.

In contrast, Sardignia Nazione argues that the only way for Sardinia to break free from its position as a colony of the Italian state is to achieve independence alongside other nations and small states in a European construct. It believes that the Psd’Az’s goal of creating a federal Italy within a federal Europe cannot guarantee Sardinian self-determination, and is the main competitor to the Psd’Az in winning the nationalist vote. However, the party’s goal of independence in Europe does not mean that it is content with current European structures and the philosophy underlying the single market: ‘the real battlefield is not Italy, but Europe, and in this arena, if we do not wish to be the first victims of liberalism, there is need to combat the signs of liberalism’. Sardignia Nazione wants to rid the European Union of its perceived neoliberal bias and the influence of multinational companies in its quest for Sardinian independence. It also criticises the EU for failing to recognise the rights of the peoples and the nations of Europe. The party therefore combines an anti-EU rhetoric (which can be likened to the Scottish Socialists) with the goal of independence with a ‘seat at the top table’ (in similarly to the SNP). However, the SN has failed to provide any proposals of how to reform the EU, apart from ‘removing’ the influence of big business in European governance. Party spokespeople have admitted to caring little about whether the ideal European structure for

125 Melis is quoted on the IRS website at: www.repubricadesardigna.net.
Sardinian independence is of a federal or confederal nature. If we infer a preference from the aims of the party, it appears to be the latter: Sardinia must be able to exercise its powers as a sovereign state with a seat at the Council of Ministers, alongside other island-states such as Malta and Cyprus. The party argues that because states are the main decision-makers in Europe, statehood is the hope for Sardinia to gain a foothold in European deliberations and to effectively promote its interests. The island cannot achieve its full potential in a Europe of the Regions.

In order to achieve the goal of independence, the SN stipulates that a referendum must be held in Sardinia on its continued membership of the Italian state. According to its 1996 electoral programme, ‘nobody asked the Sardinian people whether or not they want to remain in the Italian state and if they agree with being represented internationally by the government in Rome’ (SN 1996: point 10). The party suggests that, in a referendum, the Sardinian population should be given three options: (1) for Sardinia to continue being a region of Italy; (2) for Sardinia to become part of a federated state within Italy; (3) for Sardinian to become an independent state in a federal or confederal European structure with other European nations. However, regarding the latter option, the SN fails to provide a coherent programme for Sardinia post-independence, such as creating central financial institutions, restructuring taxation, establishing foreign and diplomatic relations, or creating a Sardinian armed forces. Furthermore, it fails to consider how an independent Sardinia’s macroeconomic, security and foreign policy would be pursued in an integrating Europe.

*Indipendentzia Repubrica de Sardigna* is the newest nationalist party in Sardinia. It was created by ex-*Sardignia Natzione* official and regional council candidate, Gavino Sale, following the break-up of the alliance between the SN and the Psd’Az in 2001. The party’s main objective is ‘carrying the Sardinian Nation and its People towards independence and consequently to its construction as an independent Republic’ (IRS 2004: charter 5). The party wishes to create a ‘camera delle autonomie’ in Sardinia, with both territorial and functional provisions in order to ‘democratise the participation of local society and the community’ (IRS 2004). Once independent, Sardinia will be able to seize control of the country’s resources, create a national media base, improve the environment, protect Sardinia’s traditional agro-pastoral economy, valorise Sardinia’s unique culture through language policies and protecting historic sites, and build links with other countries in the Mediterranean. It is unclear, however, how the IRS substantially differs in its policies and constitutional aims from the SN. It is likely that the creation of the IRS resulted from internal (personal) disagreements within the SN, rather than an acknowledged need to put forward a alternative programme for increasing Sardinia’s autonomy that differed from that of the SN.

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127 Bustino Compostu, in Interview [3.9] said: ‘In the end, it’s only a question of words, because whether one builds a confederation or a federation it is important that it is a contract among equals’. ‘Alla fine poi e’ una questione soltanto di parole, perché che si tratti di confederazione o che si tratti di federazione l’importante e’ che sia un contratto alla pari.’

128 ‘Lo scopo principale del nostro movimento… è portare la Nazione Sarda ed il suo Popolo alla conquista dell’Indipendenza Nazionale e conseguentemente alla sua costituzione in Repubblica indipendente.’
Underlining the similarities between the two parties, the IRS has taken its cue from the SN (and before it, the Psd’Az) to include the European dimension into its demands for independence. The party’s goal is for ‘Sardinia in Europe as an independent Republic with its own representatives and its own social and economic rights, like many small nations that are entering the EU with dignity and decision-making powers’ (IRS 2004). The only difference from the SN’s constitutional goals appears to be the addition of the word ‘republic’. Aside from that, there are very few substantive references to how an independent Sardinia will function in Europe. There is no specification of whether the party prefers a confederal or federal Europe, whether it welcomes recent developments such as enlargement or the creation of a European constitution, and whether it agrees or disagrees with any of the EU’s policies. The IRS’s understanding of how independence in Europe might work is not much clearer that the constitutional preferences of the SN. There are few references to the interdependence amongst regions and states in Europe, and no discussion of how an independent Sardinia’s economy will function in European and global markets.

Given the relatively similar policies and goals of the main nationalist parties in Sardinia, (with the exception, of course, over the terminology of independence), there have been efforts to create a Sardinian ‘pole’ to compete with the centre-left and centre-right poles. This was based on a realisation that they were splintering the nationalist vote between them, to the benefit of non-nationalist parties. Furthermore, the nationalists felt increasingly marginalised within the bipolar political system, which forced them to join one or other of the statewide coalitions (as the Psd’Az had done in 1996, by joining Prodi’s Olive coalition), or to compete against them (with little hope of success given their larger electoral support). Thus in 2001, Sardignia Natzione joined forces with the Psd’Az in a one-off electoral alliance. In the ‘Indipendenzia’ list, the parties compromised on a number of issues. They endorsed the idea of creating a Europe of the Peoples, but agreed that this should be only as a stepping stone to the independence of Sardinia within a European federal or confederal construct (Indipendentzia 2001). They also reinforced their commitment to working within the Conference of Nations without States and the European Free Alliance to lobby the draft European constitution to include recognition of ‘the right to independence by stateless nations’ (Indipendentzia 2001: 1). In the run-up to the election, Giacomo Sanno, Secretary of the Psd’Az said that ‘The Independence List represents the real novelty in the elections. It is an historic moment that united two spirits, one that is young and another that is old, that have found unity. They gather the desire of the nationalist force through being together in a course that wishes to

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129 ‘Sardegna in Europa come Repubblica indipendente con i suoi rappresentanti e i suoi diritti, sociali ed economici, come tante nazioni di piccole dimensioni che stanno entrando con dignità e diritto di decisione nell’Unione Europea.’

130 ‘il diritto all’indipendenza dell’azione senza stato’.
carry the nation to independence. Autonomy, as it has developed so far, no longer has any sense’.131 This optimistic language soon changed in the aftermath of the election. The List obtained only 3.4% of the vote, in contrast to previous elections when the Psd’Az won 6.1% in 1995 and 4.46% in 1999. Antonio Delitalia, Vice-Secretary of the Psd’Az, admitted that it had been ‘an error not joining the Olive coalition’ (La Nuova Sardegna, 17 May 2001). Since this disastrous result, the Psd’Az did indeed join the Union alliance, and then as part of this, the Sardinian Project.

Meanwhile, Sardignia Natzone has given up on developing coalitions in Sardinia and has turned its eye to building up relationships with like-minded nationalist parties in other ‘stateless nations’ in Europe. Here, the SN has sought to create links with parties that are sympathetic to the SN’s strong anti-globalisation rhetoric and its aim to win independence nothing less. These have not always involved wise choices. For instance, Sardignia Natzone has been involved in an alliance with Herri Batsuna – a radical Europhobic party with a terrorist wing fighting for the national independence of the Basque Country. Herri Batsuna agreed to ‘represent’ the SN in the European Parliament in 1999-2004 when Sardinia did not have a representative. This relationship indicates a certain naivity on the part of the SN, which does not endorse violence in its struggle for self-determination, and which sees the EU as an imperfectly formed but potentially beneficial structure for Sardinian territorial claims. The SN has also been busy in developing bilateral contacts with other nationalist parties the Mediterranean, and its relations with Corsica Natzone are extremely close – such that, when the SN added the word ‘Indipendenzia’ to its party name in 2001, so did its Corsican sibling. In contrast, the IRS, in taking a more strongly socialist stance than its parent-party, prizes relations with other more ideological and less ‘nationalist’ parties in Europe. To this end, the IRS has made alliances with the Scottish Socialist Party, has became involved in the European Social Forum, and attended the demonstrations in Florence in 2002. But to keep up its independence-seeking credentials, the IRS has also been involved in developing bilateral contacts with other nationalist parties, for instance meeting with different delegations from the Catalan ERC, Herri Batsuna, Corsica Natzone and the Scottish Socialists at a conference organised in Corsica in 2004. Like the SN since the defeat of the Indipendenzia List, the IRS eschews membership of the EFA, which is perceived as a coalition of autonomist rather than independence-seeking parties.

6.6.2 Federalism

Federalism has become the catchword in Sardinian politics in recent years. Long put forward by the Psd’Az as a solution to Italy’s highly fragmented regional cultures, and as a method of putting a halt

131 ‘Indipendentzia rappresenta la vera novità delle elezioni. È il momento storico che unisce due anime, una più giovane e un’altra più antica, che hanno trovato l’unità. Raccoglie le volontà delle forze nationalitarie di stare insieme in un percorso che vuole portare l’isola all’indipendenza. L’autonomia, così com’è cresciuta non ha più senso’ (L’Unione Sarda, 22 April 2001).
to Sardinia’s exploitation by central authorities, this concept has recently been endorsed – to greater and lesser degrees – by all of the statewide parties in Sardinia. Furthermore, with the deepening of European integration, parties in Sardinia have also promoted the creation of a European federal structure. However, this constitutional goal covers a multitude of meanings, and the motivations and commitment of parties to federalism vary greatly. In this section we will explore the constitutional aims of the Partito Sardo d’Azione and the Partito Rifondazione Comunista della Sardegna (RC Sardegna), who have developed the strongest commitment to the reform of the Italian state and the EU along federal lines. A European federal structure, for both parties, should be decentralised and based on the recognition of minority nations and peoples. It should also operate on the principles of social solidarity. We will also explore here proposals of the Sardinian Project and the UDC, which argue in favour of a ‘European regionalist’ interpretation of federalism. Finally, consideration is given to the demands of the Sardinian Reformers – the local Liberal party.

Whilst the original objective of the founding members of the Psd’Az was to achieve federalism in Italy, with little reference to the European context, this goal has changed over the years and its current form entails a mix of Sardinian autonomy within a supranational federal setting (Psd’Az 1998: 1). The Psd’Az is strongly pro-European, and through its experience in the European Parliament and the European Free Alliance, it has welcomed the regionalisation debates in Europe. One author has argued that the Psd’Az was a ‘precursor’ of the idea of a Europe of the Peoples and the Ethnies (Vallauri 1994: 1999). This refers to the writings of Antonio Simon Mosso in the 1960s, who argued that Sardinia should be assured a place within a European federation that was not based on the states but rather the ‘ethnicities’ of Europe (Contu 1992: 30). Currently, the Sardinian party’s preferred goal is to see the creation of a ‘European Federation of the Peoples’, in which Sardinia is a full independent member (Psd’Az 2003).

So what does a Europe of the Peoples mean for the party? ‘The European Union must be a federation of peoples... The principle of subsidiarity will bind the Sardinian people and, in reciprocity, the contractors of the federative pact’.132 The party argues for the recognition of stateless nations and free ‘peoples’ in a European federation, whereby ‘Sardinia will be able to constitute, with other regions, a subject of Europe that has its own institutional importance in the ambit of the EU organisation’.133 This is similar to demands from regional parties elsewhere for a Europe of the Regions. Yet unlike the Scottish Labour Party, the Psd’Az wants to construct a federal Italy as part of a federalised Europe, in which Sardinia can exercise maximum autonomy. Although the party uses phrases such as ‘independence’ and ‘sovereignty’, it does not actually

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132 Nell’Unione Europea che deve essere una federazione di Popoli... Il principio di sussidiarietà, dovrà vincolare il Popolo Sardo ed, in reciprocità, i contraenti del patto federativo’ (Psd’Az 2003).
133 La Sardegna potrà costituire con altre regioni europee soggetti aventi rilievo istituzionale nell'ambito dell'ordinamento dell'Unione Europea’ (Psd’Az 2000).
propose separating from the Italian state. The project of the Psd’Az is in fact more subtle: to create an Italian federal state in which the centre has competences over currency, justice and defence and the regions being responsible for everything else, and sooner or later these powers will be transferred to the European level in a federalising structure, so the Italian state is rendered obsolete. Sardinia would be freed of its ties to the Italian state without formally separating from it.

In order to achieve this goal, the party has put forward a set of proposals for reforming Europe along regional lines during the debates on the Future of Europe. A European constitution, argues the party, should not be left in hands of the governments but should also include the direct participation of the ‘peoples’ of Europe (Psd’Az 2003). To aid this process, the Committee of the Regions should be transformed into a Chamber of the Regions. Furthermore, a treaty with the EU must contain a definition of the special relationship with Sardinia, and provide for the direct representation of Sardinia within EU institutions. However, Europe is not the only proposed context in which to exercise Sardinian self-determination. The Psd'Az argues that Sardinia should be given the right to instigate direct relations with the national community of states with which the EU has a treaty of association, in particular, with the countries in the Mediterranean, North Africa, and the Middle East. The party has stated that it would welcome a federal or confederal European or Mediterranean structure in which its autonomy was guaranteed. Here, Sardinia could also assume a key role in acting as a ‘bridge’ between Europe and Northern Africa (ibid).

The Psd’Az strategy on using Europe to advance Sardinian claims to autonomy has had a pronounced effect on the positions of other parties, by heightening the salience of the European dimension in their territorial programmes. For instance, some branches of state-wide parties in Sardinia have adopted the nationalist party’s goals of creating a federal Europe of the Peoples in which Sardinia should have its rightful place. The RC Sardegna supports Sardinian autonomy within a federal Europe based on the rights of the peoples, and politically structured according to this formula. This goal amounts to ‘social federalism in a Europe of rights and peoples’ (RC Sardegna 2002: 6). The party has become very pro-European, which contrasts with the Left’s general scepticism of Europe until the late 1980s, so much so that the party symbol includes the words ‘Sinistra Europa’ along with the title of the party and the sickle and hammer iconography. Furthermore, the party is committed to full political decentralisation of powers, and believes that Sardinia, with its unique culture, language and identity, should be protected in a Europe of the Peoples. In its main political programme of 1991 (revised in 2005), it is stated that ‘The Sardinian PRC aims to construct the political and economic conditions for a democratic coalition, that is

134 ‘federalismo sociale, dell’Europa dei diritti e dei popoli’.
reformist and federalist, with the capacity to represent the identity and autonomy of Sardinia’.

This statement could have been taken from a Ps’Az programme. The RC has also made a number of proposals for re-writing the Statuto, which include the full legal guarantee of Article 13 (relations with the Italian state and EU), the re-structuring of autonomous institutions to guarantee increased popular participation; and a social-environmental project of development for the island.

Their motivations for re-writing the Sardinian statute in this way are linked to the reform of Italian state and European structures, and the effects of supranationalism and decentralisation, which have changed the state’s role and given more powers to the regions. ‘The process of European economic and political integration, the laws on administrative decentralisation, the re-writing of Title V of the Constitution, requires the construction of a new Region… that is no longer a bureaucratic entity of supplying services but a legislative entity that shapes programmes’. The statement points to an important element in the party’s programme: to increase the powers of the municipalities and provinces in regional affairs, in an plan that resembles the subsidiarity objectives of the SPD and Greens in Bavaria. The RC thus seeks to distinguish itself from other nationalist and pro-federalist parties by demanding a strengthened role for the communes, by devolving much of the administrative and bureaucratic structure of the regional apparatus downwards (RC Sardegna 2005: 1-2). In a rebuff to the former ruling Christian Democrats, the Sardinian RC believes that powers should be brought closer to the people, and not left in the hands of the corrupt regional political class. This is a part of their plan for ‘social self-determination’ and popular participation, a strategy that seeks to galvanise the nationalist as well as the communist vote.

The Psd’Az and RC are not the only parties to occupy the ‘federal’ ground in Sardinian politics. They have both met competition from Christian Democrats, the Sardinian Project and the Liberals. To begin with the latter, the Riformatori Sardi (Sardinian Reformers) are enthusiastic supporters of creating a federal Italy within a federal Europe, and have called for the opening up of the island to more European influences. For instance, the party instigated a campaign to increase the learning and use of English in Sardinia in 2004, which was intended ‘to break the physical and cultural barriers that separates Sardinia from the rest of the world’.

The party believes that Sardinia should no longer look inward as the autonomist movement has so long done, but look outward to Europe. This would be aided by constructing a federal European structure in which Sardinia would play an active part. The Riformatori Sardi elaborate their goals of federalism in the following way: ‘Federalism for us means constructing, through constitutional reform, a region that

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135 ‘Il PRC della Sardegna punta a costruire le condizioni politiche e programmatiche per una coalizione democratica, riformatrice, federalista, capace di rappresentare l’identità e l’autonomia della Sardegna’ (RC Sardegna 2005: 1)
136 ‘Il processo di integrazione economica e politica dell’Europa, le leggi sul decentramento amministrativo, la riscrittura del titolo V della Costituzione richiedono la costruzione di una nuova Regione… che non sia più un ente burocratico di erogazione di servizi, ma solo sede legislativa e di indirizzi programmatici’ (RC Sardegna 2002).
137 ‘far crollare le barriere fisiche e culturali che separano la Sardegna dal resto del mondo’ (Link, No. 12 2004: 11),

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gives expression to the Sardinian people inside the Republic and the EU, that exercises, along with the communes, the greatest possible powers of the state, in a framework of solidarity guaranteed by the constitution.'\(^{138}\) The Riformatori are comfortable paying homage to Sardinian identity, somewhat similar to the Scottish LibDems. However, their electoral support remains weak, and the main battle for the federalist vote is being fought out elsewhere.

The Christian Democrats, like the Psd’Az, have a strong European dimension to their claims for federalism. The intellectual, archaeologist and member of the Christian Democrats, Giovanni Lilliu, began talking about a Europe of the Regions in Sardinia in 1975. He spent the next decade trying to convince the DC of its merits. In a speech to the party congress in 1975, Lilliu argued that: ‘The peoples of Europe… call for participation in the construction of Europe, for re-establishing Europe along new lines according to another model, and with a structure of relations different from the Eurocentric and ethnocentric type […] a Europe of the Regions or Peoples… that takes account of place and regional factors, especially those territories with autonomy’ (Lilliu 1975: 131, 133).\(^{139}\) Lilliu’s persistent efforts to Europeanise, as well as territorialise, the party eventually bore the fruits of success. The principal successor of the Democrazia Cristiana\(^{140}\), the Union of Christian Democrats (UDC), is a fervent supporter of a Europe of the Regions. The party’s MEP during 1989-94, Felice Contu, argued strongly in favour of the reorganisation of Europe along federal lines.

The UDC has an unequivocal position on territorial and European questions: ‘We are in favour of a Europe of the Regions. We are autonomists in Sardinia, however we are part of the national party of the UDC.’\(^{141}\) The UDC in Sardinia believes that Europe should not be controlled by the states, as states are considered to be too big, too egoistic and too concerned with protecting their own interests. Contu, who is Vice-Chair of party, is convinced that a Europe of the States will never produce a proper European ‘Union’ as they are too arrogant to give up their powers to a European federal construct. A Europe of the Regions should be formed along federal lines, in similarity to the USA, to create a balance among the small states and large states, and small states and large regions. But at the same time, the UDC do not labour under false hopes as to the difficulties of actualising this construct: ‘A Europe of the States slowly transforming itself into a

\(^{138}\) ‘Federalismo vuol dire per noi costruire, con la Costituente, una Regione che sia espressione, dentro la Repubblica e nell’Unione Europea del popolo dei sardi e che eserciti, con gli enti locali, il massimo possibile dei poteri dello Stato, nel quadro dei valori costituzionali della solidarietà’. Paper published by the Riformatori Sardi, entitled ‘Speciale Costituente. Che cosè è a cosa serve?’, found at www.riformatori.it/news on 18 May 2005.

\(^{139}\) ‘I popoli dell’Europa… chiedono di partecipare alla costruzione dell’Europa, a rifondare l’Europa in una nuova versione secondo un altro modello e in una misura di relazioni diversa da quella eurocentrista ed etnocentrica d’una volta […] di una Europa delle Regioni o Popoli […] di tener conto del luogo e del fattore regionale, insomma dei territori a cui è intima l’autonomia’.

\(^{140}\) The DC’s two other heirs are Alleanza Populare Udeur and La Margherita, both of which – reflecting the long-standing division in the old party between progressives and conservatives – are centre-left political parties, involved in Prodi’s Union at the state level, and Soru’s Sardinian Project at the regional level.

\(^{141}\) ‘Noi siamo per un’Europa delle regioni. Noi siamo autonomisti in Sardegna, però facciamo parte del partito nazionale dell’UDC.’ Interview [3.16] with Felice Contu.
Europe of the Regions is a dream." But the party does believe that a steady increase in the powers of the regions if possible, especially when it comes to European affairs.

The UDC has diverse coalition partners at both the Italian and European levels, which has often produced tensions between parties. At the European level, the UDC is a member of the European People’s Party, and the Sardinian branch uses the common EPP programmes in European elections. However, there are a number of conflicting interests within the party, especially regarding substate interests. The EPP supports the creation of a European federation, but it is more lukewarm on the idea of a regionalised Europe. Some members, for instance Aznar’s Partido Popular in Spain is opposed to granting autonomy to regions and nations, whilst the Bavarian CSU is an avid supporter of a regionalised Europe, as we have seen. At the state-wide level, the UDC is part of the House of Liberty, which includes a mix of centre-right parties such as Alleanza Nazionale (heirs to the neo-fascist Movimento Sociale Italiano), the populist Forza Italia, and the separatist Lega Nord.

The UDC strongly criticised Bossi’s ‘devolution’ plans, which was endorsed by all of the centre-right parties, and is more pro-European than its statewide allies. Yet at the Sardinian level, the UDC finds common ground with other members of the centre-right pole. Felice Contu admitted that ‘perhaps (AN and FI) do not want a Europe of the Regions, but also they are autonomists. In Sardinia they are all autonomists.’ It appears that all of the regional branches are more in favour of Sardinian autonomy than their parent parties, converging around a common centre ground.

Contu’s declaration that all Sardinian parties are autonomist may be more potent than he thinks. It is arguable that the UDC’s proposals for a regional Europe bear a striking resemblance to those put forward by its electoral rival, the Progetto Sardegna. But whilst the UDC represents to many Sards a continuation of the clientelistic politics of the island, the PS has fashioned itself as representing the ‘new politics’ of Sardinia in its competition with the more established parties. The Project is suspicious of the constitutional claims of ‘traditional’ parties, and for this reason does not support demands for Europe of the Regions or Peoples, and certainly not independence in Europe. It does not want to be perceived as an autonomist movement. Instead, it has couched its constitutional goals in a quite long-winded and academic language, seeking to develop Sardinia as a ‘European Region within an Integrated System of Autonomy’ (Sardegna Insieme 2004: 101). According to Prof. Gianmario Demuro, this goal means increasing the relations between regions, making them more powerful and competitive, and pursuing cultural, educational and economic links between regions. Demuro makes it clear that this does not imply a Europe of the Regions, a concept that he believes is impossible to formalise because of the sheer diversity of regions of Europe. Despite the

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142 ‘l’Europa degli stati pian piano debba modificarsi in un’Europa delle regioni è un sogno, non è un disegno, è un sogno’. Interview [3.16] with Felice Contu.
143 ‘forse non vogliono un’Europa delle regioni, ma sono autonomisti anche loro. Sono tutti autonomisti in Sardegna.’
144 Consultant to the Sardinian Project and one of the authors of their 2004 political programme.
language, the idea of a ‘new’ non-party representing progressive autonomist politics with an alternative (though opaque) constitutional goal has won considerable electoral support, elevating the PS to office in 2004. But if we look more deeply, an ‘integrated system of autonomy’ is actually rather similar to the territorial projects of Scottish Labour and the CSU in Bavaria, which want regions to become political and economic actors in their own rights. The main difference here is that whilst the CSU and Scottish Labour look to increase their influence over decision-making in Europe, Sardinia is too weak to voice such demands. Indeed, according to the PS, Sardinia still has to work on turning itself into what it calls a ‘normal’ European region, whereby ‘the concept of normality today does not mean closedness, but of opening (the region up)’ and this means creating more trade links with other countries in the Mediterranean and in Europe and improving the foreign language abilities of Sards (as well as basic levels of literacy).\footnote{‘Il concetto di normalità oggi non si vive in termini di chiusura, ma di apertura.’ Interview \[3.2\] with G. Demuro.}

In order to create room for Italian regions to operate in a European system of integrated autonomy, it is necessary to reform the Italian constitution. The Sardinian Project approved the constitutional amendments under Prodi’s government in 2001, but it argues that it needs to go further so that regions are fully empowered to pursue their territorial objectives abroad, such as building trade links with other countries. Importantly, the Project believes that constitutional reform should allow Sardinia to exercise as full autonomy as possible in its relations with the Italian state, with other regions and states, and with the organs of the European Union. This does not mean endorsing the devolution proposals put forward by the centre-right government, which sets regions against each other in competition for investment, and creates a disequilibrium in common standards of welfare. Rather, the PS believes that constitutional reform should promote the integration of Sardinia into Italy and Europe in conditions of equal opportunity, especially in its transport links and infrastructure, as well as giving it access to the ‘corridors of communication’ on the European continent (Sardegna Insieme 2004: 101). And for that, it is necessary to have a regional constitution that reflects Sardinia’s insertion into the European and Mediterranean contexts.

A new Special Statute should ‘redefine the specialness of Sardinia, articulating and affirming a precise political and institutional form of the Sardinian community, mediated by the recognition of its identity, the language and culture, and helping to construct a new system that is based on solidarity and participation, with the European Union as well as with the Italian state. In this scenario, the Statute should guarantee the direct representation of the region in the organs and in the decision-making procedures at the Italian level and at the European level’.\footnote{‘ridefinire la specialita della Sardegna portera ad affermare una precisa soggettivita politica e istituzionale della comunità sarda, mediante il riconoscimento dell’identita, della lingua e della cultura, ed aiutera a costruire un nuovo sistema, solidale e partecipativo, sia con l’Unione Europea sia con lo Stato italiano. In questo scenario lo Statuto dovra garantire la diretta rappresentanza della Regione negli organi e nelle procedure di formazione delle decisioni che la riguardano, sia a livello italiano che a livello europeo’ (Sardegna Insieme 2004: 102).} Moreover, it
appears that for the Sardinian Project, the prerogatives of Sardinia in an ‘integrated system of autonomy’ may be more focussed on the Mediterranean and North Africa than on the heartland of continental Europe.¹⁴⁷ Sardinia cannot compete with Bavaria, argues Demuro, but it can compete with Algeria, Morocco, the Balearic Islands and other countries in the Mediterranean. Thus, it seems that the context for integrated autonomy is more Mediterranean-based, where Sardinia competes with countries that share a more or less similar economic status.

Sardinia’s pro-federalist parties make for unlikely bedfellows. Whilst the Partito Sardo d’Azione has been involved in minority nationalist party networks in Europe, the UDC’s state coalition partners include nationalists and neo-fascists as was noted above and the Riformatori have focused on the state and European levels in forming Liberal alliances. In particular, the Psd’Az was a founding member of EFA, and proudly cites the organisation’s proposals in party literature. It has also been active in building up bilateral links with nationalist parties in Italy and Europe, for instance the South Tyrol People’s Party, the Sicilian Action Party, Unione Valdotaine, Liga Veneta, and further afield in Corsica, the Basque Country and Catalonia. Meanwhile, the Sardinian RC has been able to create bilateral links with other communist parties in Europe, especially with those in Corsica and Greece, which share similar problems relating to insularity, under-development and the agriculture-dominated and tourism-dependent industries. RC Sardegna has also been involved in the European Social Forum, which it believes is a critical way of constructing an alternative Europe in which peoples such as the Sards may participate (Pes 2002: 6). Meanwhile, the Sardinian Liberals have eschewed alliances at the Sardinian level, and focussed their attentions instead on the state. One Sardinian Liberal, Mario Segni, founded the Italian Party of Liberal Democrats and was elected an MEP – but for another Italian constituency. Segni notes the irony of the matter, and has been involved in lobbying the Italian government to give Sardinia its own MEP.

Within the Sardinian Project coalition, members are deeply divided as to how much powers and influence to give the regions in their relations with Rome and Brussels. Some parties have come out strongly in favour of re-writing the regional statute to grant Sardinia more autonomy, such as RC, Italia dei Valori and Udeur in Sardegna. Indeed, the Sardinian branch of the Refounded Communists has sought to obtain more administrative autonomy from the national party in order to develop its own policy programme for Sardinia. These efforts have so far been unsuccessful as they were unable to obtain enough votes in successive congresses of the national party to achieve this objective.¹⁴⁸ Yet other PS members have been less enthusiastic about increasing Sardinian autonomy. As we saw earlier, the Partito dei Comunisti Italiani firmly believes in the primacy of

¹⁴⁷ Concetta Amato, Secretary to President of Sardinia Renato Soru, stated that Sardinia was focussing on creating alliance with other nations in Northern Africa, particularly Morocco, and was working with the Italian government on this ‘Mediterranean strategy’. Interview [3.17].
¹⁴⁸ Interview [3.5] with Roberto Cherchi.
the Italian state, and relegates Sardinia to regional status without need for further rights or recognition. Furthermore, the DS have been prone to downplaying their commitment to constitutional reform in the absence of external pressures. For instance, during the run up to the 1994 elections, the DS shelved any references to federalism – the so-called ‘symbol of the Sardinian progressives’. This was the year in which the Psd’Az stood outside Prodi’s Olive coalition. Not only does this indicate that the nationalist party has an influence on other political parties’ (constitutional) goals, especially when they form an alliance together, but also that such a commitment can be easily revoked once the pressures from the Sardisti are removed.

When the centre-left government introduced a constitutional law to devolve powers to the regions in 2001, this was also due to external pressures: to win the support of the more federalist or anti-centralist regions in northern Italy (Fabbrini and Brunazzi 2003). Since then, the DS has taken a position in opposition to ‘federalism’, especially as the term is popularly associated with the centre-right’s devolution proposals. The DS and La Margherita appear to be less than committed to Soru’s grand hopes for Sardinian autonomy, backtracking on constitutional issues when the pressure is off. This makes for a very inconsistent type of politics in Sardinia, where parties change positions on the territorial question at the drop of a hat, or in this case, in the absence of needing the support of an independence-supporting coalition partner. It remains to be seen whether Soru’s Sardinian Project can overcome these divisions between parties on Sardinia’s constitutional status in order to ‘change Sardinia – together’ (Sardegna Insieme 2004).

6.6.3 “Devolution”

On 25 June 2006, Italian voters overwhelmingly rejected the proposals put forward by the outgoing Berlusconi government to reform the constitution along federal lines. The devolution proposals were drafted by the Lega Nord (LN), a formerly separatist party that moderated its demands in the late 1990s to favour a decentralised, federal form of government. Umberto Bossi’s amendments were a key condition for maintaining LN support for the Berlusconi government. Two of the other parties in the coalition, Forza Italia and Alleanza Nazionale, are both right-wing parties of a centralist orientation. They had both vehemently criticised the restructuring of region-state relations in the constitutional reform of the centre-left government in 2001 as ‘false federalism’. Moreover, these parties support the maintenance of an intergovernmental Europe in which the primary actors are states, and in which there is little role for the regions. In Sardinia, the regional branches of these parties were largely immune from the quarrels and brokerage deals at the state level, as they had much less difficulty in supporting a new form of federalism for Italy. In response to the autonomist sentiment of the electorate, and its accommodation within the programmes of the centre-left and Christian Democrat parties, the regional branches of FI and AN have also shown sympathy for
federalism. In the past, these voices have been weak within the statewide parties. Yet since the House of Liberty’s conversion to the merits of ‘federalism’, the Sardinian FI have grabbed this opportunity to frame the devolution proposals within the context of the struggle for Sardinian autonomy, indeed arguing that the centre-right pole is the greatest protector of regional rights.

Let us for a moment consider the content of the devolution proposals. In 2005, Umberto Bossi submitted a constitutional law that called for the transfer of authority over health, education and local police from the state to the regions. Furthermore, he called for the transformation of the Senate into a regional chamber, and the reform of the Constitutional Court so that regional interests were represented. On the European front, Bossi called for regions to be constitutionally guaranteed direct involvement in the transformation of EU directed into national law. Yet there were also (largely disconnected) centralising aspects of the constitutional proposals that were proposed not by Bossi, but by the Alleanza Nazionale. The proposed amendments included strengthening the powers of the Premier so that she would be able to dissolve parliament, appoint and fire cabinet ministers and be able to call elections. These are currently powers exercised by the largely ceremonial President of the Republic. Proponents of the constitutional reform argued that devolution would increase the accountability of regions and entrench the principle of ‘subsidiarity’ in the constitution, whilst at the same time creating more stability in the Italian political system through increasing the powers of the executive. The law’s advocates sought to assuage voters that devolution would not lead to the break-up of the Italian state by arguing that it would instead strengthen national unity by introducing the concept of ‘national interests’ and endowing the state with powers to block regional laws considered to threaten national interests. There would be a clear delineation of competences between the state and the regions. Thus, for the House of Liberty, ‘[e]ffective federalisation or devolution of power, as the government minister responsible, Umberto Bossi, cares to call it, requires strong central government’ (Levy 2002: 2).

In Sardinia, these proposals were welcomed by Forza Italia Sarda (FI) and the Sardinian branch of Alleanza Nazionale. To take advantage of the centre-left parties’ dithering over the regional question, the centre-right parties argued strongly in favour of recognising Sardinia’s unique cultural identity within European institutions. The FI party even proclaims to want ‘maximum autonomy’ for Sardinia, showing itself to be far more federalist than the state party. The Sardinian FI published a programme during the referendum campaign entitled ‘Yes for the freedom of Sardinia’ (Forza Italia Sarda 2006) – thus making a stake in the traditional turf of the nationalist parties by using the word freedom, however loosely defined. In this programme, the FI underlines the importance of the constitutional reform proposed by the Berlusconi government for the provisions in new Sardinian Special Statute. It is a chance, argues Mauro Pili (former President of Sardinia), for Sardinians to seize the real autonomy that they should have been granted in the 1948
Italian constitution, which should have created a federal Italian state. The party commends the devolution proposals for ‘guaranteeing more autonomy and more powers for our land’. Indeed, the Sardinian FI makes the case that the proposals should be seen as a continuation of the struggle for autonomy in Sardinia, and devolution is in ‘the best autonomist traditions’. This strategy was designed to highlight the centre-left’s ambiguous position with regard to the autonomist question to contrast with their own strong stance, as well as compete on the nationalist ground in Sardinia. La Spisa, Vice-Chair of FI Sarda, goes on to argue that Sardinia’s interests lie primarily in obtaining more autonomy, indicating that for this reason it would be foolish to reject the plan on offer.

The European dimension of the devolution proposals is also praised, which ‘also allows our region to create a new autonomy with regard to financial resources and powers in relation to Europe’. Whilst FI at the state level has long supported an intergovernmental Europe in which states are the key actors, FI Sarda supports the construction of Europe based on ‘una forma federativa’. La Spisa posited that the FI in Sardinia is a party ‘that sees European integration as an important resource for all of the states and also all of the peoples of Europe,’ which is a statement that could have been lifted from any of the Partito Sardo’s manifestos. He argues that Sardinia should have more powers, especially in its relations with other countries in the Mediterranean. The reform of the constitution, by enshrining the notion of subsidiarity and giving regions more control over European directives, is the next step towards achieving this: ‘The reform of the Italian state, which has always been heading in the direction of the reinforcement of the regional powers, gives us something that we once called autonomism, now we call federal’.

Alleanza Nazionale in Sardegna has also significantly revised its aspirations for a centralised unitary Italian state, and have developed what Pintore calls ‘a kind of right-wing Sardism’. They have moved to a pro-federalist position, and supported the constitutional reforms proposed by Bossi. Their motivations for doing so appear to be primarily economic: they campaigned for a Yes vote in Sardinia on the basis that it would ‘contribute to the introduction of fiscal federalism’ (AN Sassari 2006). However, by no means does this imply support for self-determination or secession. The Sardinian AN, whilst advocating a form of federalism, also attended a demonstration in Milan in September 1996 calling for the preservation of the inviolability of the nation-state. In its campaign literature for the referendum, the AN in Sardinia emphasised the centralising aspects of the devolution proposals, arguing that it would reinforce

150 ‘consentire anche alla nostra Regione di conquistare una nuova autonomia sia in termini di risorse finanziarie sia di poteri verso l’Europa’.
151 Interview [3.10] with La Spisa.
152 ‘che guarda all’integrazione europea come una grande risorsa per tutti gli stati e anche per tutti i popoli europei.’
153 ‘La riforma dello Stato italiano, che sta sempre di più andando verso il rafforzamento dei poteri delle regioni, porta a uno stato che prima si chiamava autonomistico, adesso si chiama federale.’
154 ‘una sorte di sardismo alla destra sarda’ (Pintore 1996: 35).
national unity through strengthening the powers of the premier, clarifying ‘national interests’ in one of its clauses, and reserving exclusive powers of ‘strategic importance’ to the state. The AN clearly refuses to join the FI and some centre-left parties in crowding out the centre ground on the territorial question: instead it competes with other parties by emphasising its now unique (in Sardinian politics) commitment to state integration and centralisation.

Not only were the devolution proposals criticised by some 200 constitutional experts in Italy (Rossi and Pizzoli 2006), each of the parties that make up the Union coalition, and the nationalist Psd’Az; they were also lambasted by the UDC – one of Berlusconi’s coalition partners. The UDC places great emphasis on preserving the unity of the Italian state through its demands for federalism, and is hostile to the separatism of the LN. For different motivations, the Psd’Az argued that whilst it would welcome the type of devolution that took place in the UK 1997-9, Bossi’s plan bears no resemblance to this. In fact, it centralises the powers of the state in the hands of the Prime Minister and endows the state with the authority to override regional laws and interests (Psd’Az 2006). This would lead to a reduction in the powers of Italy’s special autonomous regions. They also opposed the neoliberal thrust of the proposals that pits regions against each other, arguing instead for a federalism based on solidarity amongst regions. Federalism should ‘unite states, not divide them’.155 Finally, they criticised the devolution proposals for not taking into consideration the European dimension, and argue that a federal Italy must place itself squarely in a federalising Europe.

In a rather different vein, the centre-left Union coalition criticised the devolution plans for giving too much powers to the regions. It argued that by allowing for a more competitive provision of healthcare, educational and law enforcement by the regions, this would undermine the principle of solidarity in funding the welfare system, and destroy national uniformity through the diversification of standards of public service delivery. The devolution of these powers would create inequality between the regions, and in particular, the underdeveloped southern regions would be heavily penalised. The Union also opposed the law for being too centralising; it would ‘damage national unity’ and give the Prime Minister ‘authoritarian-style’ powers (ANSA, 16 June 2006). The centre-left parties instead advocate a type of federalism based on solidarity, which involves the redistribution of resources between rich and poor areas, as we shall explore in Section 6.7.

6.6.4 Summary

In Sardinia, political parties have only very loosely tied the project of autonomy to constitutional developments taking place in Europe. There are a number of reasons for this: the focus of parties on renewing relations with the Italian state rather than bypassing it through pursuing territorial interests in Europe, the ‘unproblematic’ nature of party responses to Europe (and the self-defeatist mentality

155 Interview [3.1] with Antonio Moro.
of parties that Sardinia is too weak to have its own voice in Europe), the marginal position of nationalist parties and their demands for a Europe of the Peoples, the lack of linkage between Italian constitutional reform and the regionalisation on Europe, the lack of Sardinian representation in European institutions, and the desire to exercise Sardinian autonomy in the Mediterranean rather than to increase Sardinia’s voice in the distant centres of European decision-making.

One of the main challenges for Sardinian parties pursuing autonomy claims in Europe is the contestation over, and disillusionment, about what autonomy can actually offer. The cosmetic nature of the ‘autonomy’ measures granted to Sardinia in 1948 and the failure of successive ‘plans of rebirth’ meant that the language of autonomy became sullied and associated with Sardinia’s economic and political dependence on Rome. For the Sardinian electorate, obtaining more autonomy was less important than improving standards of living and the quality of life: so that substantive economic and cultural goals came to be viewed as more important than constitutional demands. Furthermore, there is an awareness amongst the electorate that the discourse of ‘autonomy’ is pursued for instrumental reasons by many statewide and local political parties, who have continuously changed position on how much autonomy Sardinia should have.

Yet there has been something of a sea-change in Sardinian territorial politics with the election of Soru’s Sardinian Project. This has viewed the reform of the Italian constitution in 2001 as an opportunity for strengthening Sardinia’s voice in Italy, and for wresting control of the island from Roman politicians and Northern businessmen. For instance, Soru has entered into conflict with the Italian state over a number of issues regarding Sardinia’s territorial interests, and his arguments are generally supported by most of the political parties in Sardinia. However, his interests lie primarily in reforming Sardinia’s relations with the Italian state to achieve more autonomy – or to be able to effectively exercise the autonomy that it already has – rather than to push for more rights and recognition of Sardinia in Europe. So, whilst First Minister of Scotland Jack McConnell and Bavarian Minister-President Edmund Stoiber hold dreams of becoming important actors in Europe, and to develop a strong voice for Scotland and Bavaria in European affairs, Soru’s most urgent task is to re-build Sardinia’s relations with the Italian state and to sever Sardinia’s dependence on external funding by encouraging economic growth. This means strengthening the capacity of Sardinia to act in Italy, Europe and the Mediterranean and endowing the island with financial powers to pursue its socioeconomic and foreign relations programme.

6.7 Territorial Capacity in Europe

Europe has created a new context in which to deal with Sardinia’s problems of underdevelopment and isolation. The deepening of European integration – and in particular the damaging effects of CAP reforms on Sardinia’s agricultural economy, and the lack of Sardinian representation in the
European Parliament and consultation on agricultural issues in Italian delegations to Brussels – is a burning issue in debates about Sardinian autonomy. Whereas previously, Sardinians parties stolidly opposed the negative economic effects of European integration, there have been two new developments in Sardinian attitudes towards European integration since the early 1990s: first, a sense that the Italian government was not effectively representing Sardinia’s economic interests in Europe; and second, the perception of the EU as an important source of funding. These economic arguments superseded parties perception of Europe as constituting a new context for exercising Sardinian constitutional autonomy. Yet it would be wrong to say that the two strategies – of increasing economic capacity and gaining constitutional autonomy – were not linked, and the debates on the reform of the Italian constitution brought these issues to light. Whilst the centre-left parties argue that ‘devolution’ would undermine solidarity amongst regions, the centre-right argue that it would boost competition and economic growth, whilst nationalist parties and the Sardinian Project are in favour of greater economic independence but based on regional cooperation.

6.7.1 Autonomy versus Access to the Centre

The governing Sardinian Project has argued for the need to break Sardinia’s dependence on state and European funding, and to increase the island’s economic potential in European and global markets. Despite acknowledging the potential problems created by Sardinia exiting Objective 1 in 2006, the regional government believes that this should be seen as an opportunity for Sardinia to wrest control of its own economic development rather than as a major loss for the island’s economy. For the PS, this means becoming a ‘normal region’ in Europe by being more competitive through increasing international trade, developing the right infrastructure, exploiting human capital and controlling the tourist economy. In other words, it believes that Sardinia must become self-sufficient through enhancing the supply-side of the economy. But this does not necessarily mean increasing Sardinia’s fiscal autonomy, or diverging in social and economic policy from the mainland. In opposition to the centre-right’s devolution proposals, the PS is in favour of a cooperative type of federalism, based on the maintenance of common standards in public services and welfare, and ‘social solidarity’ amongst regions and peoples. The PS seeks to more effectively utilise the regional competences that the Giunta already exercises to develop a renewed sense of confidence amongst the population and business communities. This requires harnessing the potential of Sardinia’s strong sense of identity and local traditions, to exploit the particular skills and knowledge derived from its unique culture, and opening Sardinia up to outside – that is, European – influences (Sardegna Insieme 2004: 10).

Despite the loss of European transfer payments resulting from the regions’ exit from Objective 1, the PS insists that Sardinia must enter a new phase of competitiveness (PS 2006). The
Project’s plans for economic self-sufficiency include exporting Sardinia’s products to international (not just Italian) markets, ‘saving the coasts’ (which was institutionalised in the Salvacosta regional law in 2006) to increase the potential of tourism and protect the environment, to cut down on regional government bureaucracy, and to bolster the Sardinian identity through plans for bilingualism and other cultural initiatives in order to ‘stimulate communications with the outside world’ (PS 2005). The PS also seeks to increase access to education, and build links between Sardinian and other European universities. This is intended to combat the fact that Sardinia has one of the lowest education attainment rates in Europe, which is a significant obstacle to development. These proposals have won the support of a large section of the population, as well as other parties. The PS proposes, like the Scottish Labour Party, to focus on the supply-side of the economy to increase growth, rather than demanding more legislative powers or regional competences. But unlike Labour, which has sought to diverge in policy from Westminster over key policy areas such as education and healthcare, the PS seeks to maintain common statewide standards in the provision of public services. It opposed the centre-right’s proposals to decentralise more powers to the regions on the grounds that it would undermine the collective provision of welfare. Instead of seeking to free the regions to pursue divergent policies from the state, the PS seeks to integrate Sardinia into the Italian economy in conditions of equal opportunity, whilst using the powers it has to respond to local concerns, such as encouraging business growth and improving infrastructure.

On a different level, the Sardinian government has been looking to exercise a new ‘informal’ type of political autonomy through its involvement in European networks, especially with Corsica and the Balearic Islands, through the IMEROC scheme. Regional President Renato Soru is also keen to develop international trade links and agreements, and signed an agreement with the Italian government and the Algerian government for creating a gas pipeline between Algeria and Sardinia (with funds provided from Europe). Finally, an important part of the Project’s plan is to increase the Region’s powers over Sardinian territory and resources with regard to the nuclear power stations and NATO bases on the island. Soru quarrelled with the Italian government about the American military installations on the island, where bombing and other nuclear and chemical tests are carried out to the destruction of the tourist and fishing industries. Soru rejected the funds offered by the Italian government to cover moneys lost by the fishing industry, and demanded an end to America’s continued military presence and bombing exercises. These demands were successful, and the Italian government agreed to move out the American military bases from the Santa Stefano area. Another recent episode involved President Soru demanding that former Finance Minister Giulio Tremonti, of Berlusconi’s government, hand back some of the money that Sardinia overpaid in Italian taxes, amounting to some 4.5 million euros. (La Repubblica, 28 October 2005). After Soru refused to go through the usual institutional channels such as the State-Regions Conference to make his claim, the
two parties were able to reach a compromise and Rome finally agreed to give back some of the money. In short, it appears that the Sardinian Project wish to wrest control of Sardinia from Italy first and foremost, and deal with autonomy in Europe second.

It becomes clear that the Sardinian Project does not seek autonomy outside of the Italian state, or even more room to diverge in socioeconomic policy. Instead, it proposes a re-structuring of relations between Sardinia and the Italian state and the European Union. This means a renewal of political autonomy, somewhat similar to the situation of Scotland following devolution, but with the difference that the autonomous institutions in Sardinia already exist. Together, the centre-left parties in Sardinia seek to create a system of cooperative federalism in Italy to guarantee enhanced regional rights and cooperation. But despite these plans for the modernisation of Sardinia and its identity and the overhaul of the Italian constitution to guarantee greater self-determination, there are very few references to the European context. The regional government feels it needs to ‘put its house in order’, and lobby for more control over Sardinian territorial interests and influence within the Italian state, before taking its complaints and demands to Europe.

This island’s authorities have strongly argued for more consultation in Italian delegations to Europe where their interests are concerned, especially regarding the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Agriculture is a ‘primary’ competence according to the Sardinian Special Statute, however, but the Regional Council and Giunta have no control over negotiations with Brussels because these issues are handled by Italian permanent representatives. The Sardinian government has also been arguing for Italy’s adoption of the European Charter on Regional and Minority Languages, which may go some way to guaranteeing the preservation of the Sard language – something the Italian Parliament seems to be only creating obstacles to. Yet as well as seeking to strengthen its influence over intra-state mechanisms for coordinating European policy, the PS has demanded direct links with Brussels regarding the implementation of EU directives. As a result of these demands for direct links with Europe, the interests of Sardinia’s government have stood in conflict with those of Rome, leading to a new kind of ‘political contestativa’. The Sardinian Project does not trust the Italian state to represent its territorial interests in Brussels: rather it wants more institutional influence within them, as well as the ability to bypass them. This is because Rome continuously fails to represent the interests of Sardinia in Europe (especially when negotiating the CAP and the island’s exit from Objective 1) and some PS members believe that it never will. DS member Linetta Serri calls for a new ‘protagonism’ of the regions, whereby ‘we would like to reinforce our presence in Rome and our presence in Brussels, understanding that the
future of the island goes beyond the capacity to implement economic programmes. Rather, a region has an objective if it has a programme, a project, if it has strong ideas.\textsuperscript{156}

The Partito Sardo d’Azione agrees with the Sardinian Project that previous regional governments had no clear projects or innovative ideas about how to use European integration to lift the Sard economy out of its malaise. The party acknowledges that European economic integration has presented major challenges for Sardinia: the island, like other isolated regions, is hampered by the free movement of goods, capital and peoples because of its lack of transport and communications links (Psd’Az 2004: 6). But the party blames Sardinia’s failure to respond positively to these developments less on European institutions and directives than on the actions of the regional elite. Whilst the earlier state-run plans of re-birth served to increase Sardinia’s economic problems, EU cohesion policies in the post-1992 period were badly implemented and money was wasted due to the corruption of the regional political class. Thus regional authorities failed to take full advantage of these new opportunities in Europe. But more than that, the Psd’Az argues that the main problem was that ‘the Sards do not have any idea of what to be and what they want in Europe’ (Psd’Az 2004: 6).\textsuperscript{157} There was a lack of vision of what Europe could offer.

Despite the ineptitude and corruption of regional politicians, the party believes that Europe has been beneficial to the Sardinian economy. For example, ‘the question of territorial continuity was resolved thanks to Europe, and certainly not thanks to the Italian state’.\textsuperscript{158} The Psd’Az understands ‘territorial continuity’ as the reduction of obstacles to efficient communication, such as costs of transportation to and from the island-regions, to put them on a level playing field with other mainland regions. To combat this, the EU has financed airport infrastructure, such as in Alghero, which is now the island’s centre for low cost flights. But at the same time, the Psd’Az argue that Sardinians do not want ‘a Europe of assistance without a process of construction and growth’. There is a need for an economic development plan designed and implemented from the bottom-up. ‘Objective 1 cannot be the objective of Sardinia, Sardinia wants to be a developed region’.\textsuperscript{159} This objective bears a striking resemblance to the Sardinian Project’s socioeconomic programme. In order to tackle Sardinia’s problems of underdevelopment, the party proposes concentrating on three sectors: energy, credit and transport. On the first issue, Sardinian currently have to pay over 40% more than other Italians in their energy costs, due to the island’s insularity. The party calls for, in the short-term, the Italian state eliminating the disparity in energy costs, and in the long-term, the

\textsuperscript{156} ‘Noi vorremmo rafforzare la nostra presenza a Roma e la nostra presenza a Bruxelles, capire che il futuro dell’isola passa attraverso la capacità di progettazione. Ciò che una regione ha un futuro se ha un obiettivo, se ha un programma, se ha un progetto, se ha delle idee forti’. Interview [3.8] with Linetta Serri.

\textsuperscript{157} ‘i Sardi non avevano coscienza di cosa fosse e cosa volesse dire davvero Europa’.

\textsuperscript{158} ‘la questione della continuità territoriale l’ha risolta grazie all’Europa, non certamente grazie allo Stato Italiano’.

\textsuperscript{159} ‘l’Europa degli aiuti senza un processo di costruzione e crescita’ and ‘L’Obiettivo 1 non può essere l’obiettivo della Sardegna, la Sardegna vuole essere una regione sviluppata’. Interview [3.1] with Antonio Moro.
development of alternative energy sources such as solar-energy. It also supports Renato Soru’s moves to ensure greater access to gas and oil through the construction of a pipeline between the island and Algeria. Second, Sardinia has no credit institutions – they are all subsidiaries of mainland Italian banks, which creates problems of access for Sardinian businessmen. In order to reduce the costs of credit and make greater savings, the party proposes establishing a number of state-run banks and credit cooperatives on the island. The party also calls for the creation of a Mediterranean zone of free exchange, and more intervention into the economy in favour of family-oriented policies in order to reduce emigration. Complementing these policies is the need to strengthen the Sardinian culture, through official bilingualism and the teaching of Sard history in schools to create a feeling of national community to tackle communal problems (Psd’Az 2004a,b).

In order to achieve these policy objectives, the Psd’Az takes a more radical constitutional position that the governing Sardinian Project. It calls for the reform of the Italian state along federal lines, so that Sardinia becomes a ‘federated nation’ with autonomous powers and representation in European and international institutions. It believes that efforts at constitutional reform by both the centre-left and centre-right fail on this demand. The party criticises the centre-left government’s constitutional reform in 2001 for creating too many concurrent powers between regions and the state, leading to conflicts of competence. And though agreeing that the devolution proposals simplify the complex demarcation of powers of the 2001 reform, Antonio Moro calls Bossi’s version a federalismo egoistico. He asserts that the Psd’Az want a solidaristic federalism based on cooperation between regions. The party also believes the proposals for fiscal federalism to be ‘too vague and indefinite’ (Psd’Az 2006). Bossi’s plans would benefit the northern regions to the detriment of the poor through its reform of the fiscal equalisation programme. Moreover, the Psd’Az was opposed because the constitutional reform did not recognise Sardinian nationhood. Yet in a longer-term perspective, the Psd’Az believes that internal debates about Italy’s fiscal structure will be transformed as the EU gradually accrues more powers from the Italian state in macroeconomic policy, defence and foreign affairs, whilst social policy is transferred downwards towards the regions and local governments, at which point the state will be an empty shell.

Going beyond the Psd’Az’s proposals, the SN has put forward the notion of ‘fiscal self-determination’ (autogoverno fiscale) for Sardinia to raise revenue and control the tax base. This means introducing protectionist measures to stop the ‘pillage’ of Sardinia’s natural resources by the Italian state and foreign companies. To that end, it proposes levying an exportation tax on all natural resources. But fiscal self-determination also has another dimension: creating a financial base in Sardinia for business communities and a zona franca ‘to create equal opportunities for Sardinian businessmen’ and guaranteeing certain ‘fiscal rights’ – though the details of these are extremely vague. There have been also proposals to reduce taxes for artisans and small businesses, and
creating an ‘entrance tax’ (tasso d’ingresso) for non-residents and non-Sards, moneys that will be invested in tourism, safeguarding the environment and the agro-pastoral economy (SN 1999). The party seeks to break Sardinia’s assistenzialismo and clientelismo, and stop the theft of the forests and countryside by the Italian parties and their business stooges (SN 1996). However, questions about the way in which such a fiscal system might accord with European directives, policies and constraints, such as the Growth and Stability Pact, are left untouched by the party.

In direct confrontation with the Psd’Az and SN, the IRS believes the nationalist parties sold themselves out by declaring to be independentist, but not actually wanting to break away from the Italian state. Instead, the IRS argues that the ‘autonomy’ they endorse has resulted in economic deprivation, the destruction of Sardinia’s forests and agricultural economy, the pillaging of its mineral resources, cultural stigmatisation and the ‘shame’ of being Sardinian, the prevention of the flourishing of the Sardinian language, increased insularity through Sardinia’s lack of transport connections to the mainland, pollution through dumping nuclear waste on the island and the political alienation of the Sardinian people from the regional clientelist class (IRS 2005). That is why Sardinia needs independence and nothing else. What are the party’s alternative policy proposals? The IRS proposes a ‘radical transformation of the welfare model’ that includes maximising inter-generational solidarity, strengthening the third sector, and defending rights to healthcare and education. It also proposes creating provisions for supporting the tourist economy, teaching Sardinian history in schools, winning emigrants back to the island and to halt their departure, and the institutionalisation of bilingualism. On the economic front, the IRS wants to make the Sardinian economy more competitive in international markets by exporting more products with a ‘Made in Sardinia’ logo, improving the agro-pastoral economy, investing in technological and scientific research and improving communications through more internet access. The IRS also objects to Sardinia having the largest concentration of NATO bases in Europe.

Clearly, both the Sardinian government and the nationalist parties have advanced similar socioeconomic projects for shaking off Sardinia’s dependence on Rome through the exploitation of commercial links and funding in Europe, though their constitutional goals differ. But will these programmes allow Sardinia to shape and control policy, respond to local concerns and become economically self-sufficient? Or does this actually mask a different type of dependence on Europe? Serri argues the former: ‘Sardinia has been navel-gazing: it must open itself to the world’. Sardinian politics has been dominated for too long by a sense of deference to, and dependence on, Rome: ‘our political culture is about who goes to Rome, asking favours, with hat in hand’. But there is also a fear that after exiting Objective 1 status, there will be a return to under-development. To avoid this, the Sardinian Project wants to tackle problems of transport, infrastructure and communications, improve human capital, and undertake international activities. Serri argues that Sardinia’s insularity,
which has been its main handicap, could in fact be a resource. Sardinia should exploit its central position with the Mediterranean, by acting an Ambassador towards the EU, in linking Europe with North Africa. This is also where many Sards believe their economic future lies – in trade and cultural agreements with Tunisia, Algeria and Libya.

But despite the efforts of the Sardinian Project (and the desires of the nationalist parties) to make a clean break with the past and outline a vision of a future, self-determining and prosperous Sardinia, there is still an entrenched political class in Sardinia that does not want to give up its power, is happy for Sardinia to continue being dependent on external funding, and is reluctant to push ahead with reforms. Their motivations are for Sardinia to stay the same in order that they can continue to receive money from Europe. In the 2004 regional elections, Forza Italia Sarda’s slogan was ‘We won’t let them change our Objective 1 status’, which could be read as meaning the party did not want Sardinia to improve economically, but was meant to signify that the party wanted a continuing flow of funds from Europe. In reality, the two have gone together.

For centre-right parties such as Forza Italia Sarda and Alleanza Nazionale in Sardegna, Europe just means a source of more money, and their rhetoric emphasises that because Sardinia is a poor, peripheral region, it is entitled to these funds. This is a clearly a rather self-defeatist position, identifying Sardinia as the ever poor, ever needy region that will take what it can get. But this is less the result of the lack of ‘social capital’ as Putnam (1993) argues, than of deliberate actions of regional and Italian political elites to maintain their position. But when Bossi found the key to a consensus within the Berlusconi government, all parties including the FI and AN became more ‘federalist’ and began demanding fiscal autonomy. Yet these proposals, which empowered the regions through guaranteeing their exclusive competences over health, education and local policing, also underlined the continuing power of the central state, which could determine the level of ‘public outputs’ to ensure uniformity in public services (Giarda 2005), and override regional laws. The centre-left and Psd’Az have accused the centre-right parties of seeking to privatise public services, remove the state’s responsibility for distributing welfare, and free it up to accrue other powers.

In opposition to the strategy of the governing Sardinian Project, Forza Italia Sarda has come out strongly in favour of fiscal federalism, and believes that this is the only way for Sardinia to become a stronger region in Europe. Fiscal autonomy, according to Vice-President of the Sardinian FI, Giorgio La Spisa, would make up for its geographical disadvantages by giving Sardinia the possibility of having more commercial and trade links with other parts of Europe, in particular with North Africa and the southern Mediterranean. As La Spisa says, ‘I believe that the Italian regions should have more powers in Italy and also in their relations abroad... The interests of Sardinia in Europe derive from the fact that our region is a key tourist destination, one can have the advantages of an easier access for tourists to our island, and there is also the possibility of intensifying social
and economic exchange, which allows a possibility for us to enter into international markets, or vice versa, for Sardinia to be seen as a country in which [international] businesses can come and invest'. But at the same time, such economic empowerment can only come with the help of external subsidies. La Spisa believes that Europe in particular holds a possibility of aiding reform of Sardinia’s agricultural and industrial base, and strengthening its financial services, through direct intervention to combat the structural problems of Sardinian enterprise. Like the Alleanza Nazionale, he highlights Sardinia’s reliance on EU funding: ‘on the basis of economic and social cohesion [the EU] has brought more resources through the structural funds to Sardinia… And we are also being helped to undertake important investments in hydraulic resources, transport and energy’.

Thus fiscal federalism for Forza Italia Sarda does not imply that Sardinia would have to become economically self-sufficient. Rather, the emphasis still remains on state and European funding, and how much this might increase in a fiscal federal system. As La Spisa continues, ‘maximum autonomy for us means the possibility of Sardinia obtaining much more resources than it currently gets’. The Alleanza Nazionale in Sardinia agrees with this interpretation. In their campaign literature for the referendum on constitutional reform, they framed ‘fiscal federalism’ as actually guaranteeing more resources for Sardinia from the state. Provincial Commissioner, Nanni Moro, argued that fiscal federalism would improve the workings of central institutions to ensure that equalisation funds for territories with ‘weak fiscal capacity’ would be increased, it would guarantee additional resources for territories with ‘objective conditions of disadvantage’ and as a result, Sardinia – due to its problems of insularity – would be eligible for lots more money (AN Sassari 2006). Fiscal federalism would thus serve to increase Sardinia’s dependence on state resources, rather than equipping it with the institutions and infrastructure to become more economically independent. To hit the point home, and to assuage the AN’s voting constituency (in mainly Southern Italy), Nanni pointed out that the devolution proposals would strengthen central government through increasing the powers of the Premier and through the articulation of a new ‘national interest’. This is what he means by ‘assigning the regions a real power’ (ibid).

In contrast, the UDC takes the position that European economic integration has damaged Sardinia’s economy, in particular the Common Agricultural Policy. As Felice Contu elaborates,
‘suppose that the Commission in Brussels issues a directive on agriculture that says that we can’t plant our vines because there is too much wine. But excuse me, in a region like mine one can’t cultivate wheat because there’s no water. I can’t do anything if I can’t cultivate traditional products such as the vines, olive groves and such like. This directive kills my agriculture’. This, he argues, is another reason why there cannot be uniformity across regions. Contradicting the party’s official commitment to a regionalised Europe, he argues that the different economic tendencies and traditions of regions in Europe make the creation of a Europe of the Regions impossible. Instead, he argues that there should be special attention given to the island-regions of Europe, that have their own particular interests and problems. For instance, Sardinia’s greatest handicap is one of physical isolation: transportation and communications with the rest of Europe are highly difficult and costly. The UDC argues that these difficulties of transportation also point to the fact that the European market is biased in favour of the Northern regions, and that territorial continuity will be difficult to achieve because ‘the real interests of Northern Europe do not coincide with the interests of the South’. To illustrate this, Contu refers to the Treaty of Barcelona, where member-states agreed to start importing goods from the countries of Northern Africa. The regions that will suffer from this increased competition will not be Germany, Sweden and the UK, but rather ‘we in Sardinia pay because we produce the same products as Tunisia, but with one difference: in Tunisia a worker costs only ten dollars a day, whilst it here it is fifty.’ He concludes that all of the poorer, Southern Mediterranean countries – including Sardinia – are economically discriminated against in the EU.

In order to tackle these problems of institutionalised unfairness in the market place, the UDC argues that the EU must be structurally overhauled in order to give the smaller regions more say over their own affairs, and over the direction of European integration. ‘Now we are waging a battle with Europe but we have not yet been able to win it because we think that the island-regions should have particular help from Europe, because they are islands. But until now, Europe has closed its eyes to us, and it has not had the desire to hear our problems’. However, as has been demonstrated elsewhere, this ‘particular help’ from Europe has and will not solve all of Sardinia’s problems. In addition to the continuing structural problems on the island, the ‘overwhelming presence of central institutions… did not provide an incentive for entrepreneurial spirit and consolidated inefficient networks of parasitism’ (Casula 2005a: 10). The EU took over where the

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163 ‘supponiamo che la Commissione di Bruxelles faccia una direttiva sull’agricoltura che dice che non si possono piantare più vigneti perché c’è troppo vino. Ma mi scusi, una regione come la mia dove io non posso coltivare mais, perché non ho l’acqua, non posso fare altro se non fare colture tradizionali, che sono i vigneti, gli uliveti e così via. Questa direttiva uccide la mia agricoltura.’

164 ‘gli interessi propri del nord Europa non coincidono con gli interessi del sud’. Interview [3.16] with Felice Contu.

165 ‘lo paghiamo noi della Sardegna perché noi produciamo gli stessi prodotti che produce la Tunisia, con questa differenza: che in Tunisia un operaio costa soltanto dieci dollari al giorno, da noi ne costa cinquanta.’

166 ‘Noi ora stiamo combattendo una battaglia con l’Europa ma non siamo ancora riusciti a vincerla perché pensiamo che le regioni che sono anche isole debbano avere un aiuto particolare dall’Europa, perché sono isole. Ma finora l’Europa da quest’orecchio non ha sentito, cioè non ha voluto ascoltare questa esigenza.’
Italian state left off, and now supports Sardinia’s traditional pastoral economy, which still dominates the island. Yet one could put this in a less positive light and argue that, in soliciting funds from the EU without having full control over regional development programmes or creating an ‘entrepreneurial spirit’, Sardinia has simply switched its economic dependency from Rome to Brussels. And the clientelism and corruption still persists, as European funds are siphoned off to the politicians or businessmen who were handed the responsibility of implementing local development programmes (O’Neill 2005). To make matters worse, there are also fears that, with the enlargement of the EU to poorer countries in the East and Sardinia’s subsequent exit from Objective One status in 2006, the island’s recently improving socioeconomic conditions will stagnate. It will simply not have the same level of money to invest in its economy, or the other advantages of Objective 1 status. Despite the Sardinian Project’s heroic bid to use this as an opportunity to focus on making Sardinia economically self-sufficient, senior government staff in the Ministry of the Economy have expressed concerns about the adverse effects of decreased European subsidies, and the ability of Sardinia – despite the rhetoric – to overcome its structural difficulties in the near future.167 For that reason, there is a renewed focus on the potential for receiving additional state funds, to cover those lost by exiting Objective 1 (PS 2006). But that also means that hopes for economic self-sufficiency remain just that, whilst the prospect of reviving Roman patronage looms large.

6.7.2 A Confluence of Autonomy and Policy goals?

European economic integration, unlike political integration, has brought Sardinian territorial interests to the forefront of political debate. More specifically, because the convergence criteria of the Maastricht Treaty forced the Italian state to reform its regional development policy, this allowed Italian regions to communicate directly with Brussels in implementing cohesion policies, which strengthened their position vis-à-vis the state. After decades of Sardinia’s political elite making the trade-off between autonomy for patronage and resources from Rome, the decentralisation of regional policy in the early 1990s, along with the regions’ growing influence in Italian politics, gave them control over the decision of whether to continue trading-off autonomy for access to, and resources from, the centre or to change their strategy. The fact that European structural funding became the only source of funding available to Italian regions after 1992 meant for many poor regions that their dependence simply switched from Rome to Brussels, so that the new question was trading-off autonomy and funding from Europe. In Sardinia, as one former President of the Regional Council stated, the improvements to Sardinia’s economy, society and quality of life have been ‘largely financed by the European Community, through the intervention programmes, through

finance from the regional funds, through the policies that the Community has elaborated and proposed for improving the living conditions of the “less favoured regions” (Serrenti 2003).\footnote{‘largamente finanziato dalla Comunità europea, con i piani di intervento, con i finanziamenti del Fondo regionale, con le politiche che la Comunità ha elaborato e proposto per migliorare il sistema di vita delle ‘regione meno favorite.’}

However, rather than having to trade off its autonomy for access to the centre in order to secure these resources, most Sardinian parties want to have their cake and eat it. They would prefer to see a continuation of funds to Sardinia from the EU, but they want to become more independent and competitive through building up trade links. Furthermore, parties want more influence within the Italian state, whilst at the same time having more direct representation and participation in European institutions. Yet this is not the case for everyone. We have seen that whilst the AN and Forza Italia Sarda advocate fiscal autonomy, which actually means strengthening the state’s fiscal redistribution apparatus, the nationalist parties want to put an end to this dependency by developing bottom-up plans of socioeconomic development that take advantage of Sardinia’s cultural resources and products to place Sardinia within international markets. The Sardinian Project, like the nationalists, also argues that Sardinia must ‘walk on its own two feet’ and become more competitive. For Linetta Serri, Sardinia must increase its capacity to be autonomous. But as was demonstrated, whilst acknowledging the need for more direct regional representation and autonomy in Europe, the PS prefers to focus on altering its relations with the state – by obtaining more influence in intra-state bodies as well as regional transfers to cover those lost in Europe. For all parties except the nationalists, then, autonomy should still come second to building up Sardinia’s economic capacity, which may require seeking more access to, and resources from, the centre.

6.8 Conclusions: Europe and Italian Decentralisation

Although there have been linkages between European integration and the ongoing process of decentralisation in Italy, the political debates in Sardinia were not as focussed on Europe as they were in the other two cases. The explanation for this may be that when Scottish devolution was taking place, the opportunities for Scotland in a Europe of the Regions seemed real and substantial. Also, the recent reform of German federalism occurred at a time when the Länder had already been involved in, but had become disillusioned with, the opportunities for regional autonomy in Europe. In Sardinia, there was little involvement in the first years of European ‘regionalisation’ during the late 1980s when Bavaria was an enthusiastic advocate of the project, or in the early 1990s when Scotland demanded direct participation. Sardinia watched from afar, and current debates on constitutional reform reflect their lack of involvement in the previous stages of regionalisation. Although there are demands for a right to direct participation in European institutions to be included in the revised Statuto, the real emphasis is on regional consultation over the implementation of
European directives and more importantly, the constitutionalised representation of Sardinia in Italian delegations to Brussels. Unlike in Scotland and Bavaria, there are few demands for Sardinia to exercise control over European policy-making in areas that threaten its economy. Sardinian responses to European integration have been more passive than in the other two cases.

Furthermore, Europe has not been an important element of political competition among Sardinian parties. This is with the exception of the nationalist parties who, despite their best efforts to highlight the possibilities of exercising Sardinian autonomy in Europe, are too small and electorally insignificant to shape the political agenda. The Psd’Az’s main contribution to the European dimension of party competition in Sardinia has been to encourage regional branches of statewide parties to adopt the slogan of a ‘Europe of the Peoples’ – but without forcing them to elaborate what this might signify for Sardinia in any meaningful way. It has, however, elicited a strong response from the new wave of nationalism in Sardinia, represented by SN and IRS, which is highly critical of the European project. But the competition between nationalist parties on the merits or evils of Europe has not led to an increased salience of Europe in party competition more generally. Rather it means that nationalist parties are fighting over the same (limited) turf for the same nationalist votes, so long as mainstream parties do not pick these issues up. Thus far they have been unsuccessful in forcing other parties to take stronger positions on Europe.

To be more specific, whilst political integration – which relates to issues of representation and self-determination in European structures – is not a point of party competition, economic integration has received disproportionate attention. For Linetta Serri, the weakness of the first aspect of integration in Sardinian party competition is inextricably linked to the heightened salience of the second. Because Europe has come to be seen as a source of funds by Sardinian parties, ‘this has created a deficit in political goals – for having more influence, a stronger voice and lobby (in Europe). The focus on money has meant that parties have lost their vision of other (political) opportunities in Europe’.

The narrow focus on funding even means that parties are inattentive to the formulation of common sectoral policies. The political questions relating to how Europe works and what direction it is heading receives little political or public attention. Instead, Sardinian parties’ main interest in, and understanding of, Europe is as a free source of money.

Having said that, there are signs of greater European involvement for Sardinia’s political parties. For instance, Sardinian independence-seeking parties have projected themselves in European fora and have become involved in transnational projects to strengthen the collective voice of the ‘stateless nations’ of Europe. The Partito Sardo d’Azione was a founding member of the European Free Alliance and the Sardigna Natzione is involved with the Conference for the Regions of Europe. All of the nationalist parties have developed links with like-minded parties elsewhere,

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169 Interview [3.8] with Linetta Serri.
especially in Corsica, the Basque Country and Catalonia. Some regional branches of statewide parties have also pursued a stronger European profile. For instance, the Sardinian *Rifondazione Comunista* has been involved with the Corsican Communists and the European Social Forum. However, by and large, regional branches of statewide parties tend to leave the responsibility of building up coalitions with European allies to the state-level parties, and do not seek out separate involvement. Their lack of participation in European networks may to some extent explain the low salience of European issues in their programmes. Another important contributing factor is Sardinian parties’ lack of direct access to European institutions. In addition to lacking a Member of Parliament, Sardinia’s only other means of access is through the Committee of the Regions. Here, it has only two members: the President of the Region, and the Representative of Local Municipalities. Meanwhile, the Sardinian government has failed to play an active role in some of the transregional lobbying organisations, such as the Regions with Legislative Powers, which one could argue has been driven by the interests of the stronger regional governments in calling for a greater role for regions in shaping European common policies and directives. In order to influence the European agenda, Sardinian elites have preferred to focus on using the channels within the Italian state, such as the Regions-State Committee, and have limited their demands for more consultation on, rather than control over, European policy-making.

The perception that Sardinia may use opportunities presented by European integration to advance its autonomy and climb out of its political and economic impasse has thus been interpreted in purely economic terms by the mainstream parties and ignores the larger context of regional political participation and lobbying in Europe. As we have seen, the Sardinian Project, which from the outset appears to be largely European-focussed, has suggested various modernisation plans to make the Sardinian economy more competitive in European and global markets. But it has also acknowledged that regional economic ‘self-sufficiency’ still requires a helping hand from the state. Furthermore, it makes few references to how Sardinia might integrate into Europe in a non-economic sense, or in other words, how Sardinia might seek to exercise political self-determination in a European context. Instead, for the ruling coalition, Sardinia needs to lobby within the Italian government to secure its competences and control over territorial interests before any move can be made to increase its voice in European affairs. Their European strategy is to lobby for more representation within Italian delegations to Europe on issues important to the territory, such as agriculture, fishing and tourism. Moreover, the Sardinian government has demanded greater consultation on issues such as foreign relations and defence, when these affect the competences of the region, for instance regarding the NATO and USA military bases and installations on the island, which do little for the area’s tourist economy or fishing industry.
In this sense, then, the Sardinian government, unlike those of Bavaria and Scotland, has not tried to create direct channels of communication with European institutions or to ‘bypass’ the state to better represent the territorial interests of the island at the European table. Nor have the demands for the renewal of Sardinian autonomy been strongly linked to the processes of regionalisation in Europe. Little was mentioned about European integration in the proposed draft of the Sardinian Special Statute, aside from having more Sardinian representation in Italian state delegations. Instead, the focus continues to be placed on a renewal of relations with the state.

Yet Sardinia’s lack of voice and influence in European affairs and the uninformed nature of Sardinian parties vis-à-vis European developments underlines the fact that the more peripheral parties are to European debates, the more enthusiastic they are about Europe solving their problems (at least where funding is concerned). By contrast, the more experienced parties, such as the CSU, have become disillusioned with the possibilities for a Europe of the Regions, and have instead focussed on strengthening the hard shell of the state to prevent Europe from encroaching on its competences and interests. Scottish Labour has meanwhile sought to increase its influence within intra-state policy coordinating structures. Sardinia complements the other cases in demonstrating how regional responses to European integration vary. It might be said that Sardinia is in the ‘early stages’ of involvement in European debates, and nearly all of its parties still consider European integration to be an unproblematic issue. To that end, it might follow the path taken by the more active and involved regions in Europe.

But what might cause Sardinia to diverge substantially from the territorial strategies being pursued by regional governments in Bavaria and Scotland are the strong calls from all parties to develop Sardinia’s relations with the countries of Northern Africa and the Middle East. Sardinian parties maintain that the island is uniquely placed to act as a bridge between Southern and Northern European cultures, and to compete in Mediterranean markets. The Sardinian government harbours hopes that the island will be able to forge a new role for itself in Italy, Europe and the world by bringing together the diverse political and economic contexts obtaining in the Mediterranean basin, and by taking advantage of its position as a cultural and economic ‘trading post’. This, it is hoped, may lead to the development of a Mediterranean of the Regions that operates alongside, or even in competition with, the North-Centre-focussed Europe of the Regions. And opportunities to act in the Mediterranean appear far more tangible to regional elites than trying to increase Sardinia’s voice in the distant centres of European decision-making or edging its way into economic spaces already monopolised by the wealthier regions of northern Europe.
7. Comparing Territorial Responses to Europe

7.1 Introduction
As an inductive and exploratory study, this thesis began by posing a research question that would allow me to examine variation in substate party responses to European integration across three cases over a 26-year period. Having provided a detailed analysis of the territorial strategies of substate parties in Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia in the last three chapters, we are now in a position to assess similarities and differences in these strategies, and to account for sources of variation. The discussion begins by returning to the hypotheses laid out in the introductory chapters, to gauge whether they have been verified or falsified in the case studies. The next section builds upon this analysis to examine the uneven effects of Europe on party strategies for autonomy and capacity, which highlights variation in strategies across party families.

These findings allow us to identify sources of variation in substate demands for autonomy and capacity in Europe, which have both spatial and temporal dimensions. Regarding the first, sources of spatial variation are identified as deriving from the constraints of state structures, access to European institutions, economic resources and local party competition. This will form the basis for developing a theory of territorial mobilisation in Europe. The focus will be on how the trade-off between autonomy and capacity – in relation to both the state and Europe as ‘centres’ of decision-making – has taken on different forms and meanings in each case. This is followed by an examination of how territorial strategies have changed over time in response to perceived opportunities in Europe. In the final section, a typology is constructed that plots the domestic constitutional goals of substate parties against their preferred European construct. This is replicated for three phases in the period under study: from 1979-87, 1988-95 and 1995-2005, which indicates the ‘movement’ of substate parties along the territorial continuum in response to Europe.

7.2 The Impact of Europe on Substate Territorial Politics
Although this research has sought to examine variation in substate party responses to European integration, this does not preclude us from drawing some general conclusions about the way in which Europe has the conduct of territorial politics in all three cases. In the following discussion we return to the main hypotheses laid out in Chapter 2 to consider whether European integration has led to the re-territorialisation of politics at the substate level by reinforcing territorial interests, providing a new context for autonomy claims, encouraging statewide parties to enter territorial debates and creating a new European discourse for minority nations and regions.
7.2.1 The reinforcement of territorial interests

The case findings show that European integration has reinforced territorial interests. As integration impinges on regional competences, such as those relating to the economy, social policy and the environment, this has created a number of challenges for substate actors. The creation of a single market opened up regions to greater economic competition and forced substate territories to adapt and modernise their industries or lose out. In order to make their demands heard, some substate parties demanded more participation in European decision-making, involved themselves in transregional lobbying and established regional offices in Brussels. However, many of these demands were led by a core group of ‘strong’ regions, whose interests were not necessarily representative of all regions in Europe, especially those poorer regions on the periphery. Indeed, parties interpreted, and responded quite differently to common issues at the transnational level.

Scottish and Sardinian parties were initially hostile to the supranational project, which was viewed as another distant, bureaucratic and elitist structure on a par with London and Rome. Parties in both regions feared the exacerbation of economic inequalities and their further peripheralisation from the new economic and political centres. For example, Sardinian farmers and shepherds were adversely affected by the requirements of the common agricultural policy (CAP), and many traditional pastoral areas in Sardinia were supplanted by modern technologies, causing resentment amongst the local population. In Scotland, there were fears that its fisheries, whisky, agricultural and traditional industries would be threatened by the common market. Many Sardinian and Scottish parties sought to fight the CAP and European fisheries policies in order to protect traditional ways of life and local economies. Scottish and Sardinian parties were also critical of the central government’s failure to represent their territorial interests in European institutions, demanding more influence in state delegations to the Council of Ministers. Yet these positions changed the following decade when the European structural funds were reformed. Jacques Delors’ vision of a social Europe won the hearts and minds of the Left, and some provisions were made for the protection of minority languages and cultures. However, the u-turn in party attitudes towards Europe was spurred by different motivations in each territory. Whilst in Scotland parties sympathetic to constitutional reform looked on Europe as providing an arena in which to continue the social-democratic project, Sardinian parties focussed on taking advantage of structural funds (Casula 2005). And whilst Scottish parties sought greater regional representation in European decision-making structures, Sardinian parties largely left political questions about Europe to be dealt with by state parties.

In contrast, due to the robust state of Bavaria’s economy, Bavarian parties were enthused about the possibilities of increasing trade with the single market. Bavarian parties were also more positive about the principle of European integration, whereby the future of Bavaria, as well as the development of federalism in Germany, was linked to the European project. However, the debates
surrounding the deepening of European integration from the late 1980s acquired a different tone. Länder governments began to view European integration as a threat to regional competences and united to lobby for the implementation of laws to protect their rights in the German federation. The CSU-led Bavarian government was at the forefront of such efforts, and linked the need to protect and maintain Länder autonomy to the possibility of creating a Europe of the Regions. But unlike in Scotland, where this concept was viewed as a method for achieving greater autonomy for regions, for the CSU it was designed to safeguard the already considerable autonomy of the Länder. The expansion of European competences over ever-wider areas posed a threat to Bavarian control over its own affairs. In response, the Bavarian government established a mini-Embassy in Brussels, was active in transregional lobbies and demanded the creation of the Committee of the Regions. As in Scotland and Sardinia, then, European integration forced Bavarian parties to take a stronger stance to protect, as well as advance, territorial interests, albeit for differing motives and in different forms.

7.2.2 A new context for autonomy claims

In each of the cases studied, the European level constituted a new focus of demands for autonomy and capacity during the initial period of deepening integration. These were defined in different ways by substate parties and included a Europe of the Regions, a Europe of the Peoples, a Europe of the Citizens, and a Federal Europe. More specifically, nationalist parties in all regions moderated their constitutional goals in the face of new possibilities for autonomy in Europe. However, the problem for nationalist parties adopting ‘lesser’ constitutional demands was that they were forced onto the same ground as statewide parties, and support for a Europe of the Regions reintroduced divisions within parties about how to achieve their constitutional goals, and what these goals should be. For the SNP, Europe highlighted the divide between ‘fundamentalists’ and ‘gradualists’, the former arguing for statehood nothing less, whilst gradualists supported regionalisation measures as a step towards independence. The Bayernpartei simply ignored the fact that support for a Europe of the Regions contradicted its end goal: being an independent member of a confederal Europe based on states, not a regional member of a (supranational) federal Europe. In Sardinia, both Sardignia Natzione and the IRS demanded independence in Europe, but gave little thought to whether that was in a federal or confederal European construct. At times they also argued for independence outside Europe until the structures of the EU were reformed. The Psd’Az was the only nationalist party to address the fact that in an integrating Europe, states might be forced to transfer macroeconomic, foreign and defence policy upwards and socioeconomic policy downwards, which could leave the state impotent. As a result, the party supported a federal Europe of the Peoples.

Regarding the strategies of regional branches of statewide parties, there was a convergence of party demands on certain policies. In Scotland and Sardinia, parties demanded stronger regional
representation in state delegations to Europe, more access to European decision-making, and greater control over territorial issues affected by EU directives. This did not necessarily or always amount to endorsing a separate regional presence in Europe. In many cases, support for regional autonomy was tempered by substate parties’ desire to maintain a common statewide front in Europe. At the same time, many parties in Sardinia and Scotland recognised their territory as constituting a nation and, for various motivations, argued for more recognition of this uniqueness in Europe. In Bavaria a very different dynamic was identified. Few parties agreed with the CSU’s edict that Bavaria was a ‘nation’ alongside Scotland and Catalonia. Indeed many were hostile to any form of ‘particularism’ and believed the Land should have no special recognition in Germany or Europe. After temporarily supporting the empowerment of regions in Europe, the SPD, Greens and FDP all moved to a position that prioritised the strengthening of the communes.

This analysis verifies the first hypothesis, which stated that there would be a convergence of territorial demands for autonomy, with independence-seeking parties moderating their claims, and regional branches of statewide parties adopting stronger demands for autonomy, but for a limited period only. Although independence-seeking parties in Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia did modify their demands to include a ‘Europe of the Regions’ to sit alongside long-term goals, in some cases this was only a temporary measure. The SNP quickly deserted its support for a regionalised Europe in 1994, almost immediately after it had adopted the slogan. The Bavarian Party also incorporated the concept into its literature, but this was secondary to its main goal of independence. The Psd’Az was the only party to move from a pro-independence position to a post-sovereignty, pro-Europe of the Regions position and stay there. Regarding the position of regional branches of statewide parties, whilst we saw that nearly all of the parties began espousing the language of a regionalised Europe – thereby taking over the centre ground on the territorial dimension – since the late 1990s many parties have reverted back to emphasising the intergovernmental aspects of Europe. In summary, although there was a convergence of autonomy demands around the imagery of a ‘Europe of the Regions’, as hypothesised at the start, this only lasted for a few years.

7.2.3 The territorialisation of statewide parties

One would imagine that, having fought for decades to put the territorial question at the heart of political discussions in the homeland, nationalist and regionalist parties would be the beneficiaries of the heightened salience of territorial issues and interests in the face of European challenges and opportunities. This has not been the case. Despite reducing the barriers to self-determination by supporting less disruptive forms of autonomy in Europe, minority nationalist parties are not performing better in their respective party systems. As was argued throughout this dissertation, the only way to account for this is to examine the party political context of the substate entity, where
non-nationalist parties have pursued strategies to enhance the autonomy and capacity of the territory, which have sometimes elicited more support than those of nationalist parties.

Regional branches of centralist or pro-federalist parties operating in substate political arenas have gone through a process of ‘territorialisation’. This has a number of dimensions. First, regional branches of statewide parties have taken on a stronger national identity and rhetoric. Substate parties of all political persuasions have pledged to constitute the party of the nation/region and have made various vows to fight for territorial interests, and here we think particularly of Scottish Labour, the CSU and the Sardinian Project. Use has also been made of local iconography and cultural traditions to drive their point through, evident in the strategies of the Scottish Conservative Party, the Sardinian Refounded Communists and the Bavarian Greens. Second, statewide parties have offered constitutional alternatives to independence to defuse support for nationalist parties. Even regional branches of parties that have centralising platforms on the state level, such as *Forza Italia Sarda*, *Alleanza Nazionale* and *Partito della Rifondazione Comunista della Sardegna* have adopted autonomist or federalist platforms. The same can be said for Scotland. The Scottish Labour Party, Liberal Democrats, Socialists, Greens and Conservatives all support devolution, and with the exception of Labour, parties have sought to increase Scotland’s devolved competences. One could even argue that Labour and the Conservatives have switched sides on the constitutional issue – when in 1997 the Tories were the only party in Scotland to oppose devolution, almost a decade later Labour is the only party to oppose extending the Scottish Parliament’s powers.

In the 1990s, demands for a ‘Europe of the Regions’ won high support across the political board. This idea was toted by social democrats (the Scottish Labour Party, the Sardinian Democrats of the Left, the Bavarian SPD), Christian democrats (the Sardinian Union of Christian Democrats, the Bavarian CSU) liberal democrats (the FDP in Bavaria, the Scottish Liberal Party) and green parties (Alliance ’90/The Greens in Bavaria). In particular, the concept gained support amongst regional government leaders, who had actively participated in European debates and institutions, and were in touch with the new concepts and rhetoric in Europe. Thus, branches of statewide parties with little or no previous claims to autonomy began to support a regionalised Europe, which defused support for nationalist parties and offered an alternative to secession for those addressing the need for territorial reform and recognition. Europe was presented to voters as constituting an alternative framework for developing the territorial project.

Finally, the fact that regional branches of statewide parties were competing on a different terrain and needed to tailor their policies to fit the local setting meant that there were increasing disparities between the regional and central party. Regional branches have adopted differentiated party programmes and policies, discourse and campaign strategies, and have sought greater organisational autonomy. The mutation of a regional branch of a statewide party into a more
independent, regional-focussed electoral machine has not always met with the blessing of the central party. The refusal to grant concessions to the regional branch has sometimes led to intra-party tensions, and the threat of splits, which happened to the Sardinian RC and the Bavarian SPD. As well as being a major source of competition between parties, the territorial dimension has fuelled conflicts within the parties themselves. The Scottish Labour Party is a case in point. It has consistently suffered internal divisions on the nationalist question (McEwan 2004). This has led to breakaway factions, such as the nationalist-socialist Scottish Labour Party in 1975, whilst at other times the party has been able to accommodate the nationalist sentiment of its members. In the early years of the 21st century, however, Scottish Labour has sought to rein in its ‘neo-nationalism’ and instead underline its unionist credentials to compete with the SNP’s goal of independence.

These findings verify the second hypothesis that was put forward at the beginning of this thesis: that as parties pursue stronger territorial claims, they will also seek more autonomy, policy divergence and an independent voice in pursuing their territorial strategies. The desire to achieve both programmatic and organisational autonomy from the centre party was evident in all three cases, affecting regional centre-left, centre-right, Liberal Democrat and Green parties. However, the territorialisation of parties has not prevented parties from pursuing strategies that emphasise their statewide links, nor should this be seen as undermining their territorialisation. Regional branches of statewide parties may choose to present a united voice on certain policies or issues, rather than taking a separate stance from the centre, if this is considered to benefit territorial interests. It is important to bear in mind that regional branches exhibit dual identities – as a regional and statewide party – and that these identities do not necessarily have to be incompatible.

7.2.4 A new European discourse
The third hypothesis put forward in Chapter 2 was that the rhetoric of substate parties will become more ‘Euro-friendly’ as parties gain greater participation in European affairs and networks, and if they believe that the EU is receptive to regional demands. Indeed, some scholars have argued that one effect of European integration on minority nationalist parties is their adoption of civic and inclusive criteria for territorial membership, and the need to emphasise their progressive pro-European credentials (Lynch 1996; De Winter and Hursan 1998; Keating 2003). It has become important for minority nationalists to ‘play’ the European ideological ‘game’, which has been shaped by political dialogue at the EU level. This was evident in the discourse of the SNP and Psd’Az, both members of the European Free Alliance. These parties advocate principles and themes common to those of the EU – such as support for free trade, diversity and multiculturalism – and a pro-European ideology is important for them to be perceived as credible. However, it is certainly not the case for all parties. We have examined how Indipendentzia Repubrica de Sardigna,
Sardignia Nazione and the Scottish Socialist Party (not strictly a minority nationalist party, but seeking independence) have used the language of anti-colonialism to frame their claims for independence, and have strongly objected to the perceived neoliberal policies of the EU. In a different vein, the Bayernpartei has shunned all attempts to ‘internationalise’ its language, indeed, its vision of the Bavarian Heimat is closed, homogenous and xenophobic. Finally, the CSU, which is not considered to form part of the ‘minority nationalist’ family, but who nevertheless has articulated a nationalist vision of society and maximum autonomy for the nation, has escaped pressures to advance a civic nationalist discourse. For the CSU, membership of the Bavarian Heimat is based on ethnic, cultural or ascriptive criteria, which excludes immigrants and foreigners.

These findings therefore falsify the hypothesis that substate parties have Europeanised their discourse, as some clearly continue to closed visions of the nation, whilst others oppose free trade. Yet the case findings did verify one part of this hypothesis on rhetoric, namely that core European concepts will be used in party rhetoric if they can be adapted to fit autonomy claims. This was demonstrated across all three cases. To take some examples, the term ‘subsidiarity’ was linked to increased autonomy in Europe for most Scottish and Sardinian parties; whilst in Bavaria it meant halting perceived centralising tendencies in Europe that threatened its autonomy. Almost all of the parties adopted the goal of a Europe of the Regions at different times, which was linked to federalism, devolution and independence. The adoption of these ‘European’ terms was often tactical, as was the adoption of a ‘pro-European’ attitude more generally – for some parties it was clearly motivated by the desire to receive resources, increase influence and to be accepted into European party families, rather than demonstrating long-term attitudinal change.

7.3 Uneven Effects of European integration: Comparing Party Responses

Even though the contours of European integration have not changed, the positions of parties have changed quite radically since 1979. In the case studies, we examined the main political traditions in each of the territories, how the dominant ideologies were able to accommodate the territorial dimension, and the manner in which parties constructed visions of the nation and tied their constitutional and socioeconomic goals to strategies in Europe. The next task is to bring these data together to examine (substate) party family responses to European integration. These will be grouped into the five categories identified in Chapter 2: left-wing parties (including Social Democrats, Socialist and Communist parties); right-wing parties (including Conservatives, Christian Democrats and populist parties), liberal (democratic) parties, green parties and minority nationalist/regionalist parties. The focus in on whether party families converge around certain themes and constitutional demands in Europe, and how they have used and interpreted them.
The Regional Left
Ever since Jacques Delors began speaking of a social dimension to European integration that would combat the ill-effects of EMU in heightening disequilibrium between regions and states in Europe, the Left has been more favourably predisposed towards Europe. Left-wing parties have argued for a common Unemployment Pact and other European social cohesion policies that raise common standards of living across Europe. At the same time, left-wing parties have also argued for a strong application of the principle of subsidiarity, in order to bring decisions closer to the people. In the European Parliament, the Party of European Socialists has called for the creation of a Federation of States and Peoples, based on decentralisation to regions, territories and organisations in civil society (PES 2001). The PES has taken a strongly pro-regional strand, and was instrumental in creating the Committee of the Regions and reforming the structural funds to help poorer regions.

In each of the cases studied, centre-left parties endorsed the concept of a Europe of the Regions or Peoples. But the motivations of each of the parties for pursuing a regionalised Europe were quite different. For the Scottish Labour Party, it was linked to the need for a devolved Parliament which could participate in European decision-making. Their proposals for greater Scottish representation in Europe were largely formulated to undermine support for the SNP, and to demonstrate how influential Scotland could be without having to take a separatist route. A devolved Scotland, it was argued, would be able to control the levers of socioeconomic change and become more competitive in European markets, whilst maintaining the material benefits of the Union. Scottish Labour thus endorsed a ‘third way’ between separatism and centralisation, as well as between capitalism and socialism. The Scottish Socialists took issue with this stance, arguing that third-way socioeconomic policies were a mask for the New Right, whilst third-way constitutional politics disguised continuing Scottish subordination to UK imperialism. They contended that the social-welfare ramifications of Europe and the economic benefits of the Union amounted to little, and instead argued for an independent Scottish Socialist republic free from UK and EU constraints.

The Bavarian SPD also supported a Europe of the Regions, but moved from interpreting this as a strong Bavaria in Europe to a stronger communal level. This was in response to the monopolisation of the concept of a Europe of the Regions by the CSU in the mid-1990s, at which point the SPD decided to argue that the regions within the regions should be empowered. This was a tactical move. As the party is electorally stronger in communal elections, more powerful communes might give the BayernSPD greater influence in Bavarian politics. Concurrently, the BayernSPD attributed a ‘Europe of the Regions’ to the CSU’s increasing centralisation at the Bavarian level and its support for competitive federalism. The SPD opposes this move, instead highlighting Bavaria’s (fiscal) responsibility to the rest of Germany, and the principle of social solidarity. In this area, the Bavarian SPD is less convinced of the merits of ‘third way’ politics that advocates a mixed
economy and ‘social investment’ (Giddens 1998). The party’s support for stronger regions, and then stronger communes, in Europe does not sit easily with the federal party’s support for a United States of Europe, which gives states precedence in European decision-making. Nor do its attempts to create a Bavarian identity sit comfortably with the federal party’s universalism. The confusion about what the party wants for Bavaria in Europe has not played out well with the electorate, which has consistently supported the CSU’s clearer goals for a strong Bavaria in a decentralised Europe.

Meanwhile, there have been a number of variations on the goal of a Europe of the Regions amongst Left parties. A Europe of the Peoples is the goal of many left-wing parties in Sardinia, including the Democrats of the Left (DS) and the Refounded Communist Party (RC). As in Scotland, the Italian Left were once anti-regionalist and cautious of European integration. However, this changed in the 1990s due to a combination of local, statewide and European pressures. Now, the RC is strongly in favour of granting self-determination to the peoples of Europe, which, like Scottish Labour, demonstrates a u-turn on granting (political) regional recognition. This does not entail, however, endowing the regions with powers to diverge in key areas of socioeconomic policy. The Sardinian centre-left parties all rejected the ‘devolution’ proposals that would allow for the competitive provision of healthcare and education, which was seen to undermine the universal provision of welfare. Yet for the governing Sardinian Project (PS), control over regional policy and economic self-sufficiency are deemed necessary to make Sardinia a more competitive region in Europe. Renato Soru, leader of the PS and a successful businessman, is more receptive to the advantages of third-way politics that stress an increasing role of the market whilst maintaining high standards in welfare provision, than are the traditional Left parties.

As we can see, there are some common underlying themes amongst the regional Left in Europe, however, these mask different motivations for pursuing a Europe of the Regions. Local party competition has a strong impact on regional party support for this concept. The Scottish Labour Party endorsed a Europe of the Regions to ‘save the Union’ in response to the SNP’s threat of independence in Europe, the Bavarian SPD supported a communal Europe to combat the CSU’s support for a competitive Europe of the Regions, and the Sardinian Left, splintered along ideological lines, have taken over the Psd’Az’s position by arguing for a cooperative Europe of the Peoples. These goals have caused varying levels of consternation amongst central parties. Scottish Labour’s support for a regionalised Europe has been sanctioned by the UK Labour Party, though this may be a strategy to avoid splits in the party. The Scottish Socialists have been disowned by the UK Socialists Worker’s Party, the latter appalled by their ‘petty nationalism’. The Bavarian SPD’s adoption of a more ‘Bavarian’ stance led to discussions about breaking from the federal party. In contrast, there is general acceptance of variation amongst regional parties in Sardinia, though the Sardinia RC’s position has antagonised the centre.
The Regional Right

The inclusion of Christian Democrats, Conservatives, former neo-fascist and populist parties in this category this partially accounts for greater variation on regional/European issues within the ranks of the regional Right. However, there are some common themes uniting these parties: support for the free market in Europe, support for subsidiarity (though with varying interpretations of what is the ‘lowest’ level of decision-making), and the primacy of states in an intergovernmental Europe. Most of the centre-right parties examined in the cases are members of the European People’s Party, though this has not amounted to full support of the EPP’s policies. In particular, the EPP’s support for a federal Europe is not supported by the British Conservatives, whilst its support for subsidiarity and empowering regions has been opposed by its more state-centralist members.

A Europe of the Regions is the goal of the Bavarian and Sardinian Christian Democrat parties. The CSU and Sardinain UDC support the creation of a federal Europe, and have argued that this political order should be based on the principle of subsidiarity. In the late 1980s, the CSU spearheaded the movement for a Europe of the Regions in Germany. However, by 1998 references to this concept had stopped appearing in party literature and the CSU has since argued for the creation of a ‘Europe of the Citizens’. Likewise, the UDC – though officially supporting a Europe of the Regions – acknowledges that this is but a pipe dream as long as the Council of Ministers remains the key arena of decision-making in Europe. But the way in which these parties accommodate territorial goals within their socioeconomic programmes is rather different. Whilst the CSU understands a Europe of the Regions to encourage diversity and competition amongst regions, the UDC is committed to the universal standards of welfare, and opposed the 2005 devolution proposals for fear it would initiate a ‘race to the bottom’. So whilst the Sardinian UDC believes that regions should be integrated within larger economic structures (the Italian state, the EU), the CSU believes they should be set free to pursue their own economic goals.

Support for a Europe of the States, traditionally the preserve of right-wing parties, appears to be waning. Although the Tories posit that Scotland is best represented in Europe through being part of a larger state, they are not immune to debates on increasing Scotland’s influence in Europe, and have argued for stronger links to Brussels. In Italy, the National Alliance and Forza Italia also moved to supporting competitive federalism in Italy, pressured to do so by their separatist-turned-devolution supporting coalition partners, the Northern League. But for the Sard branches, which are historically more predisposed towards regional autonomy, devolution actually involves fortifying regional transfers rather than forcing regions to be more fiscally self-sufficient. There are thus contradictions within the centre-right in deciding to what extent regions should be able to set their own policy agendas, diverge from one another and be fiscally independent. Furthermore, parties of
the regional Right have found it difficult to pursue autonomist strategies for the substate territories whilst espousing a state-centralist discourse. This question is never fully addressed by any of the parties analysed, with the exception of the CSU which, despite its association with the CDU, is nevertheless an independent Bavarian party. Despite this, it is clear that the regional Right, like other regional party families, have realised that to ignore territorial interests – even if they prove difficult to integrate into their ideological positions – is the road to electoral failure.

Regional Greens
The regional Green parties, in line with the European Green Party, have presented a consistent platform on decentralisation, creating a citizen-based Europe, international peace and justice and, of course, environmental issues. Differences lie in (1) their degrees of criticism of the European Union and (2) the role and recognition of minority nations and regions therein. Whereas on one hand, the Scottish Green Party acknowledge Scottish nationhood and wish to advance this through independence, the Bavarian Greens – whilst supporting self-determination for stateless nations in late 1970s and 1980s – do not recognise Bavaria as constituting a ‘nation’. Despite this, they have become increasingly involved in territorial debates, using cultural iconography that valorises the Bavarian Heimat to underline their Bavarian party identity. Their construction of the Bavarian Heimat contrasts with that of the CSU: it is based on diversity and multiculturalism, requiring Bavaria to ‘open up’ to Europe. Due to the loosely federal structure of the German Greens, which allows Land parties to diverge in policies and programmes, the Bavarian Greens are enabled to do this. Moreover, in line with their emphasis on diversity, the Bavarian Greens wish to decentralise more powers to the towns and communes, interpreting a Europe of the Regions to mean a Europe of the Communes. This contrasts sharply with the position of the Scottish Green Party, which has advocated Scottish independence as a long-term goal – outside the EU until it reformed. This position is anathema to the Bavarians, who see regional and state egotism as factors preventing the integration of Europe. An issue that both parties agree on is their endorsement of redistributive policies and high standards of welfare provision. Both parties are situated ideologically on the left-of-centre. But whilst the Scottish Greens want more control over the policy agenda to pursue a strong social justice programme and environmentally sustainable policies, the Bavarian Greens believe these matters are best decided at the state, or more so, European level.

Regional Liberals
While Liberal (Democratic) parties have shown themselves to be most consistent ‘party family’ in their support of European integration, there are inconsistencies in the liberal approach to the regional question. For instance, whilst the Scottish Liberal Democrats happily acknowledge
Scotland to be a nation and wish to see its individual identity recognised in a federal Europe, the Bavarian FDP officially opposes what it considers to be narrow nationalism of any kind. The Sardinian Riformatori lie somewhere in between, acknowledging Sardinia’s claim to nationhood, but with some sections of the party disapproving of any moves that could break-up Italy. So although all of the liberal parties advocate the application of subsidiarity within a federal Europe, as is the remit of the European Liberal Party, they interpret which ‘level’ powers should be devolved to differently (for instance, for the Scottish LibDems it is Scotland, for the Bavarian FDP it is the towns and communes). Moreover, the parties diverge in their socioeconomic platforms. Whilst the FDP endorses the CSU’s plans for competitive federalism, which would spur competition between regions, and policy divergence in key areas of the economy and social matters, the Scottish Liberal Democrats support a more cooperative type of federalism that guarantees minimum welfare standards. Furthermore, whilst it may be said that the FDP advocates a ‘decentralising’ federalism in Europe, the Scottish party believes in strengthening common European policies and decision-making apparatus. These contrasting positions are largely due to the parties’ ideological stances – whilst the FDP may be categorised as centre-right, the Scottish LibDems are left-of-centre.

Minority Nationalist

The minority nationalist ‘party family’ position on territorial and European questions covers an array of demands for self-determination, both inside and outside of EU structures. These include demands for a Federal Europe, a Europe of the Peoples, Independence in Europe and Independence outside Europe. To begin with, the goal of Independence in Europe has been put forward by the Scottish National Party and the Bavarian Party. For the SNP, independence would allow Scotland to wrest full control of its policy agenda, whilst Europe would provide economic and security safeguards for Scotland and reassure voters of ‘going it alone’. The SNP envisions Scotland having equal influence over decision-making in Europe as other small member states. Yet despite aiming for a confederal Europe with power concentrated at the member-state level, the SNP has been active in debates about the regionalisation of Europe. There is an inconsistency in party strategy between using opportunities for regional engagement in Europe to advance Scotland’s claim to autonomy, whilst aiming to achieve membership of a confederated Europe in which regions have little say. Moreover, the SNP fails to address how its plans for ‘fiscal freedom’ and economic independence might be affected by further integrationist measures, not to mention Scotland’s need to conform to EU competition policy, sectoral policy and the Stability and Growth Pact. These substantive issues are glossed over by the party, whose overriding concern is ‘independence’. It fails to address how its proposed left-of-centre socioeconomic programme might be subject to the same kinds of constraints that are faced by the devolved Parliament.
The Bayernpartei has also adopted independence in Europe as a long-term goal, though it is ready to make do with something less than independence for Bavaria – recognition of a unique identity and culture within the German system would be a start, but in the European sphere, the party has, and still does, support a Europe of the Regions. Unlike the SNP, however, the Bavarian Party is unreservedly critical of the current direction of the European project. It opposed the single market, the Euro, the CAP and in particular it feels Europe to be run by socialist-oriented governments. European integration is considered a threat to traditional Bavarian values, culture and traditional industries, which are damaged by EU competition policy. These sharply contrasting positions on independence in Europe may be explained by the fact that whilst the SNP views itself as a socially progressive, pro-European left-of-centre party, the BP’s self-understanding is that of a traditionalist Christian-conservative party that seeks in particular to conserve Bavaria’s values, norms and structures from outsiders or centralising pressures from above. This is exemplified by the two parties’ relations with other nationalist movements: whilst the SNP is an active member of the European Free Alliance, the BP shuns any association with this group, thus avoiding pressures to adopt a more pro-European position.

The Psd’Az, on the other hand, has moved from wanting a federal Italy within a federal Europe since the early 1920s when the party was first established, to supporting independence for Sardinia in Europe in the late 1970s, then moving back to a Europe of the Peoples position in the 1980s. The Psd’Az wants Sardinia to become a constituent federal unit of a European political structure based on the principles of cooperative federalism. Yet, at the same time, the party has been talking about exercising Sardinian autonomy in a Mediterranean federal political framework, which offers more economic possibilities – particularly through trade agreements with North African states. Due to its ambiguity on the question of independence, a number of smaller left-leaning nationalist parties have sprung up in Sardinia, who are highly critical of the European project. These include Sardignia Natzione and the Independent Republic of Sardinia (IRS). Although these parties officially support independence in Europe, reservations have been made about the democratic nature of EU structures, and the ideological direction of European integration. More specifically, for the group of socialist pro-independence parties (and here we may also include the Scottish Socialist Party, which straddles both party families), the EU itself apparently represents an imperialist, undemocratic set of institutions that operates behind closed doors in cahoots with multinational companies to impose unjust, neo-liberal policies on the citizens of Europe. Instead, something along the lines of a Socialist People’s Europe is the preferred end goal. These parties have become active in the European Social Forum and the European Anti-Capitalist Left (EACL).

The position of regional party families on European issues may be summarised as follows. Europe was seen by minority nationalists as an arena for a Europe of the Peoples or Regions or a
club that requires independence to join, for regional Christian Democratic parties it was seen as
protecting the local level through its provisions for subsidiarity, for the regional Left it was viewed
as an arena for advancing a social democratic project with some provisions for regions, and for the
regional Right as a project for strengthening the free market. Of those making the biggest change in
territorial strategies, the Left has moved from an anti-European and sometimes anti-autonomy
position to supporting a Europe of the Regions or Peoples, and have to varying extents embraced
territorial politics, identities, and interests. This is evident in the left-wing parties in Italy, the
Scottish Labour Party and BayernSPD. Of those making the least change in territorial strategies,
Liberals in all three cases have been supportive of a Federal Europe, though with the difference that
in Scotland and Sardinia Liberals have been supportive of the recognition of national identities,
whilst the Bavarian FDP is opposed to particularism. In Scotland and Bavaria, nationalists flirted
with the idea of a Europe of the regions for a short period, but reverted back to independence in a
confederated Europe. Similarly, the Pd’Az also moved from supporting independence to
federalism in a Europe of the Peoples (though it has remained there), leading to the break-away of
smaller pro-sovereignty parties – Sardinia Nation and IRS. These parties, like their Scottish
Socialist colleagues, both support independence and socialism, and wish to see their territory being
independent in a Socialist People’s Europe that acknowledges the rights of nations and peoples.

7.4 Territorial Strategies in Comparison: Explaining Sources of Variation

It is clear from the above discussion that political parties in the substate regions and nations of
Europe have developed a variety of responses to integration processes, ranging from demands for
more recognition of territorial distinctiveness, to protest against what is perceived as a threat to their
competences. Based on the previous findings, the next section attempts to distinguish and explain
the sources of variation in territorial responses to Europe. I will begin here by examining spatial
sources of variation, which are identified as access to European institutions and organisations, local
party competition, economic resources and constraints of state structures, before later examining
temporal sources of variation in the following section.

7.4.1 Access to European Institutions

Political parties operate within distinct opportunity structures determined by the incentives and
constraints of state territorial management. This means that parties have different levels of access to
European institutions and organisations within and across cases. Those who are in government at
the regional level will have experience in European institutions, as their party representatives are
directly involved in policy-making, and will be in a stronger position to affect the development of
issues and agendas at the European level than parties who are only represented in the European
Parliament, or in European political parties, or neither. Whilst Scotland and Bavaria have relatively strong representation in Europe (by regional standards) – including a large number of MEPs, past leadership of RegLeg, strong intergovernmental mechanisms for representing regional interests in state delegations, and for Bavaria, access to the Council of Ministers (albeit in representing the German state as a whole), Sardinia is unable to elect its own MEP. There appears to be an interesting effect of this. The more involved parties are in European institutions, and the more ‘institutional learning’ they undergo, the more likely they are to be disillusioned with the apparent possibilities presented by European integration. Political parties with first-hand involvement in European institutions and networks realise more quickly where the limitations and constraints of the regional agenda in Europe lie, and once disenchanted, they are more likely to retreat to the old channels of lobbying through the state. This is evident in the way that the Bavarian, and then Scottish parties have become increasingly sceptical about what they can achieve in Europe. They have either returned to fortifying the state from Europe, or pursuing a dual strategy of seeking more representation within state delegations, rather than relying only on trying to obtain direct access to European decision-making through ineffective bodies such as the CoR. Those parties who have not, or have been unable, to access European channels may be more naively enthusiastic about the opportunities in Europe, such as in Sardinia, where parties are almost uniformly pro-European.

7.4.2 Economic Resources

The economic status and resources of substate territories affect parties’ territorial strategies in Europe. For parties operating in poorer countries such as Sardinia and Scotland, European economic integration was largely seen to pose a threat to their economies, and Europe was regarded negatively until structural funds were reformed. Parties in wealthier territories, such as Bavaria, were more enthusiastic about the creation of the single market. Economic status and resources not only determined party responses to Europe, but also their autonomy goals. Each territorial party draws on different economic and cultural resources upon which to base their strategies. Parties operating in rich regions can mobilise the population around programmes that increase the region’s autonomy to act in European and global markets without fear of losing economic protection by the state. Indeed, parties operating in wealthy regions may want to reduce what amounts to their protection of other regions in the state through fiscal equalisation programmes, such as in Bavaria. For parties seeking independence in Europe in particular, it is important that they make their projects economically viable. This is a problem for substate parties operating in poorer regions, whereby the territory’s dependence on state resources may undermine demands for independence. The SNP only began its electoral rise in Scotland after it was able to mount an economic case for independence, based on oil revenues following the discovery of North Sea oil. The Psd’Az was
unable to mount such a strong economic case for autonomy in Sardinia. Despite this, the SN and IRS have argued that independence, in and of itself, will generate more wealth for Sardinia as it would put an end to clientelistic practices that saw regional elites siphoning off funds for their own personal gain, and halt the state’s exploitation of the island’s natural resources.

For these parties seeking independence, and others, the EU has provided a new centre of resources and funding for substate actors to access. All of the territories examined have in some way or another benefited from EU structural funding, though their ‘dependence’ on such funds has differed widely. The Commission was criticised for granting Bavaria Objective 2 structural funds to improve rural areas and infrastructure in 2001, given its status as one of the richest regions in Europe. The Highlands and Islands in Scotland received Objective 1 funding from 1994-98, which assisted the development of this poorer, depopulated part of the country, however since devolution all EU regional funding is incorporated into the block grant determined by the Treasury, and as such Scotland receives no additional funding. Sardinia, the region most dependent on the funds, exited Objective 1 in 2006, causing concern for parties across the spectrum. Centre-right parties in Sardinia sought to maintain structural funding for the island, if not from the EU then from the state. Their goals of wanting to increase transfer payments to Sardinia was criticised by the Left and the nationalists, who argued that it would dampen the need to develop policies maximising sustainable economic growth. The Sardinian Project is instead seeking wider markets to access, in particular creating trade links with countries in North Africa, rather than focusing solely on the Italian market.

Equally important to some substate parties may be protecting some traditional sectors of the economy from European competition, as well as from European quotas. Bavaria has sought to protect its farming and crafts communities, Scotland its coastal fishing communities, and Sardinia its shepherds and farming communities. There appears to be a tendency towards economic protectionism in each of the regions, based on safeguarding regional industries and promoting exports in the face of competition. As we saw, the SNP threatened to oppose the draft European Constitution in a statewide referendum if the EU did not devolve fishing competences, and the CSU criticised the European competition policy for undermining its ability to subsidise public services. The Sardinian Project has meanwhile sought to promote exports labelled ‘made in Sardinia’ rather than ‘made in Italy’ in wider European and Mediterranean markets. Substate parties have used protectionism as an instrument of nation-building – by developing indigenous industries, and by emphasising the importance of traditional industries to the culture of the nation.

7.4.3 Local Party Competition

Local party competition is a determining factor in the responses of political parties to European integration. This research has found that European integration has increased contestation between
political parties regarding the constitutional future of sub-state territories in Europe, whereby territorial autonomy may be only one of these strategies. Electorally and politically significant parties have been able to set the territorial agenda in the region, and other parties must respond to this. This has been the case for the CSU and the SNP, who both adopted strong European platforms, and elicited competition on the European dimension from other parties. Contrarily, if there is no strong nationalist party in the territory with clear constitutional demands, the territorial dimension of party competition will be determined elsewhere – by the parties in government, or parties supporting federalism. As a result the issue of autonomy may be submerged under other issues. This has been the case in Sardinia, where nationalism has been accommodated by statewide parties. This accommodation also weakened the Psd’Az’s ability to make European integration – an issue linked to the party’s autonomy goals – an important dimension of party competition.

In Sardinia, there was a combination of institutional and political constraints that spelled the failure of a strong European strategy. The lack of party involvement in European institutions, low salience of European issues, and greater attention to Sardinia’s role in the Mediterranean has meant that the idea of a Europe of the Peoples did not have a significant impact on party competition in Sardinia in the way that the SNP’s independence in Europe, and the CSU’s Europe of the Regions, had in Scotland and Bavaria. In the latter two cases, other parties had to re-position themselves in opposition to the SNP and CSU demands. So why did the Psd’Az not have the required effect? The Psd’Az was not big enough or electorally strong enough to make its demands for autonomy in Europe heard. It did not pose a threat to the integrity of the Italian state in the way the SNP’s goal of independence did within the UK. Demands for independence were weak, and there was greater emphasis on achieving socioeconomic progress within a federal Italy that recognised Sardinia’s special needs and interests. Solutions to Sardinia’s socioeconomic problems were not effectively addressed by nationalist parties, who instead focussed on constitutional change.

7.4.4 Constraints of State Structures

The development and pursuit of territorial strategies in Europe is affected by changes in state structures, and statewide political change. Parties in Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia operate within different state structures – of a devolved state, a federal state and a decentralising state – and they must respond to the constraints and opportunities this presents accordingly. In Italy, the main demands for constitutional reform were coming, not from Sardinia, but elsewhere: the Northern regions of Italy. This is in contrast to Scotland and Bavaria, where parties operating in both these territories led the debates and demands for devolution and the reform of federalism in the UK and Germany, respectively. This had adverse affects on Sardinia’s ability to control the constitutional agenda, and also the inclusion of Sardinia’s relations with the state and with Europe in the new
constitutional settlement of 2001 onwards. The reform of the Italian constitution to decentralise more powers to the regions had, in essence, been a strategy of the Left in Italy to pull the rug from beneath the Lega Nord’s feet. And whilst the Northern regions of Italy were in favour or devolution, Southern regions were unprepared and at times unsupportive of the powers being foisted upon them by the North and by the Left (many regional governments in the South were controlled by the Alleanza Nazionale) and thus the whole project of decentralisation was foreign to them.

Furthermore, the regions have different capacities to legislate and to influence state policy on Europe, all of which shaped different responses to European integration. The Bavarian government has access to Germany policy-making on Europe through the Bundesrat, where it is famous for its strong defence of territorial interests; the Scottish Executive contributes to the UK negotiating line in Europe through informal intergovernmental channels and the Joint Ministerial Committee, and the Sardinian Junta has been pressing for greater regional representation in Italian intra-state institutions, in order to influence Italy’s European policy. But whilst Germany and the UK have allowed Scotland and Bavaria considerable room to manoeuvre, in Italy it has been a slow process of giving the regions powers to defend their own interests. This to a large extent determined the effectiveness of political parties in Scotland and Bavaria in mounting strong political demands for autonomy in Europe. In contrast, Sardinian parties had few direct channels to European institutions, as well as little leverage in determining state responses to Europe.

7.5 Comparing Trade-Offs in Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia

Having examined sources of variation in substate responses to Europe, we are now in a position to explore more deeply the different types of trade-offs that parties have made in order to increase their power and influence in state and European decision-making processes. At the beginning of the thesis, a distinction was made between seeking autonomy from the state and seeking more access to the centre. Throughout the case study analyses, this trade-off has been unpacked to account for the different strategies pursued by parties in regional government to reinforce regional power at the centre. In Scotland the regional government focus was on trading off autonomy for influence at the centre, in Bavaria there was a need to obtain greater protection by the centre, whilst in Sardinia the main question was whether or not to sacrifice autonomy in order to obtain more resources from the centre. Let us examine each of these in more detail.

In Scotland, there was a tradition in the pre-devolution years of foregoing political autonomy in exchange for granting the Scottish Office more access to Whitehall. Since devolution, this trade-off has been slightly modified. The Labour-dominated Scottish Executive continues to underline the importance of intra-state representation, in order to influence policy formulation within the domestic arena, as well as for ideological reasons: to present a ‘common’ British front
with the Labour Party in Westminster. This has not, however, prevented, the Scottish Executive from striking out on its own in some areas. The Executive has been active in the practice of paradiplomacy and has sought to enhance Scotland’s position in European and global networks and markets. The Executive has also sought to build up its policy capacity without requiring more formal powers, such as fiscal autonomy. Regarding interest representation, Labour argues that Scottish interests are best represented through a strong UK state delegation. Scotland is said to exercise more influence within Europe policy-making as part of a large state, than it would as a small independent state. This position is supported by the LibDems and Tories. It is contested by the independence-seeking parties, which argue that Scotland should have a stronger, direct voice in European affairs. Scotland, as a ‘constitutional region’ in Europe, still has a minimal direct role in EU institutions that have real decision-making power, and its ability to influence the UK negotiating line has not greatly improved. The SNP argues that Scottish interests are not a primary concern of the UK Representation in Brussels. This is also a burning issue in Bavarian politics.

With strong constitutional powers and considerable political influence within the Bundesrat, the trade-off for the CSU-led Bavarian government is not between autonomy and influence at the centre, or resources from the centre (being a large contributor to the German equalisation programme) and but rather protection by the centre to secure its control over the economy. The CSU is faced with the choice of seeking to strengthen the German state (and to re-regionalise European competences) in order to protect Länder autonomy, or to increase that autonomy by arguing for a model of competitive, decentralised federalism. But unlike the Scottish Labour-dominated government, the CSU government does not want to present a ‘common front’ as it does not believe that Berlin fully represents Bavarian interests in Europe. The Bavarian CSU moved a position of seeking direct participation in Europe, to working through the state in order to effectively engage with Europe, by seeking to influence the German EU negotiating line through constitutionalised coordination structures for policy-making. But the CSU has not abandoned its European lobbying activities altogether, and it is still active in RegLeg, and in external activities that raise Bavaria’s international profile, such as fostering trade and cultural agreements with regions and states across the world. With regard to policy capacity, although the Bavarian government has been able to successfully implement its ‘social market’ programme in Bavaria, the CSU wants more control over fiscal policy in order to manage the economy, and to protect these competences from European encroachments. The CSU has been particularly concerned that the growing centralisation of powers within the German federal state may be replicated at the European level, and for that reason has encouraged regional diversity and ‘healthy competition’ between regions. This position is opposed by centre-left parties, who argue for the continuation of cooperative federalism in Germany that guarantees fiscal equalisation and social solidarity across
the Länder (and regions in Europe more generally). The trade-off for centre-left opposition parties can thus be viewed as having to choose between autonomy versus loyalty to the centre. In their eyes, Bavaria is constitutionally obligated to foster greater social solidarity across Germany in line with the Grundgesetz, which requires continuing its fiscal equalisation transfers.

Contrarily, the question for parties in Sardinia was whether or not the region needed more autonomy before it could become economically successful, or whether it needed more economic capacity before it could become autonomous. Neither autonomy nor capacity had been truly obtained in Sardinia, as the Statuto ultimately sealed Sardinia’s dependence on state funding, administered by state institutions with the cooperation of corrupt regional elites. For the centre-left regional government, as well as the nationalist parties, fiscal autonomy should mean breaking Sardinia’s dependency and becoming self-sufficient. But, as pointed out by right-wing parties, this would mean foregoing the generous funding from Europe and Rome. The main trade-off for Sardinian parties is thus best seen in the light of autonomy versus access to the centre to secure resources. Yet, since Sardinia’s exit from Objective 1, it appears that the trade-off may have lost its meaning. Most parties would prefer to see a continuation of funds to Sardinia from the EU, but they also want to have more influence within Italian and European structures.

In particular, there has been a renewed focus on increasing Sardinia’s access to intra-state policy-making structures during the debates on Italian federal reform. This is more important to the centre-left regional government than gaining more competences, as is evident in its rejection of Umberto Bossi’s devolution proposals on the grounds that regional policy diversity on welfare state matters would undermine social solidarity. The trade-off being made by the Sardinian Project regional government is somewhat similar to that chosen by the Scottish Labour Party, in seeking greater input into, and influence over intra-state policy-making structures rather than demanding more formal constitutional autonomy. So, whilst much of the rhetoric of centre-left parties is about becoming more independent from Rome and more competitive in European markets through building up trade links with countries abroad, Sardinian parties also realise the need to be able to influence policy at the centre. The Project, like the CSU, realizes that it is in the intra-state domestic arena where its greatest influence lies in shaping European policy.

We can now build a more general theory of regional trade-offs. Prior to decentralisation in many European states, regional elites were able to trade-off constitutional autonomy with opportunities to influence policy-making at the centre – as happened in both Scotland and Sardinia. With decentralisation of constitutional powers, the focus moves to certain policy goals for the territory, such as control over economic policy and regional planning. Increasing territorial capacity presents a number of dichotomies to substate actors that include, but are not restricted to, questions of policy divergence versus standardisation, fiscal equalisation versus fiscal autonomy and the
representation of territorial interests through state structures rather than forging direct links with extra-state actors. This does not mean, however, that constitutional goals of parties are relegated to rhetorical devices once legislative powers have been decentralised. For if policy goals are considered unattainable within current structures, this may require further constitutional reform.

Based on this analysis, we can identify three ‘capacity’ aims of seeking to trade-off autonomy with more access to the centre: to achieve (1) influence in state structures; (2) resources from the centre; and (3) protection by the centre. In the first scenario, territorial elites may trade-off formal autonomy and recognition of their constitutional rights for having more influence in the affairs of the state, and its delegations abroad. This strategy is likely to be pursued by substate actors in regions that lack strong constitutional powers to shape regional policy, or by actors who seek to become a strong player on the state (as well as regional) stage. In both cases, it stems from an acknowledgement that although states may no longer have a monopoly on policy-making in regionalised or federal states, they still have extensive control over a wide range of policy areas that directly or indirectly impact on regional competences, particularly through their control of macroeconomic and foreign policy. To that end, it is necessary for the region to develop and manipulate linkages and interdependencies with the state to in order to gain power and to have influence over these centres of policy-making. Obtaining representation in intra-state institutions and state delegations may be considered as more important than bypassing the state.

In the second scenario, regional actors may trade-off autonomy for access to the centre in order to obtain state resources and subsidies. This is an option chosen mainly by poorer regions, which may seek protectionism and additional funding from the centre to improve their economic performance. This type of trade-off most strongly suggests the regions’ continuing dependence on the state, despite their legislative autonomy. It may also come with strings attached, so that regions may have to concentrate on certain sectors of the economy to gain funding. This allows the state to exert a degree of control over the type of economic development being pursued in the region, which was most evident in the case of Sardinia and the top-down ‘plans of rebirth’. This type of trade-off also carries ideological baggage. Regions in receipt of state transfer payments may be accused of being ‘subsidy junkies’ unable to mobilize their resources and compete on markets effectively. These criticisms tend to ignore structural determinants of economic growth. Yet, seeking access to resources is not only the prerogative of economically underdeveloped regions: wealthy regions will also seek to obtain as much additional revenue as possible, though are less likely to cede their political autonomy and control over regional policy to do so. But as is most often the case, the economic aims of wealthy regions, which contribute more to state revenues than they receive in public expenditure, are to reduce their contributions to the centre and increase their control over socioeconomic policy. This strategy may thus include demands for fiscal autonomy, so that regions
have more control over taxation and expenditures. One could argue that this is the flip-side of the trade-off between autonomy and resources from the centre; instead it becomes autonomy to diverge in these policy areas versus integration with the state (based on social solidarity grounds), which appears to be the preference of centre-left parties at the regional level.

In the third scenario, regions may trade-off autonomy for protection by the centre from extra-state influences, resulting from globalisation and European integration. This may involve, on one hand, state protectionist policies designed to cushion local industries from the vagaries of international market, or it may entail the protection of the region from supranational political influences. The strategy of seeking state protection was evident in cases where regional elites felt that European integration was disempowering them, or more specifically, was undermining their ability to control regional policy. Regions with the most extensive competences will be most affected by the expansion of EU competences. Constitutionally strong regions are thus more likely to pursue this strategy than regions with weaker internal competences. Not being in a position to effectively lobby the European Commission to amend its policies, or to push for a strict demarcation of its competences by treaty so as to restrict its ability to influence policy areas at the regional area, regions must turn to the help of the state. Although this does not entail a reduction of regional autonomy in the constitutional sense, it does imply a degree of dependence on the state to act on behalf of the region. Relying on the state (or strengthening the state) to hold back European legislation also indicates a degree of political impotency of the region in the European sphere.

As we have seen, substate actors may make three types of trade-off between autonomy and access to the centre – to obtain influence within state networks, state subsidies and resources, and protection by the state from unwanted external pressures. However, the trade-off must be modified when we add the European dimension, to account for the effects of European integration on the ability of regions to pursue their socioeconomic programmes, in addition to their perception of the EU as a new ‘centre’ to access. Regional actors have pursued two main types of strategy in seeking to access centres of European decision-making: participation and seeking European funds. This accounts for the ‘influence at’ and ‘resources from’ trade-offs with the centre, and in both cases may be traded-off with autonomy from Europe (in the ‘leave us alone’ sense rather than ‘let us in’).

As for seeking ‘protection’ by the EU from external influences, there have been cases that regions have sought to protect unique ‘local’ products such as Champagne, Parmesan cheese and Scotch whisky from economic globalisation. Here, the EU has perhaps more limited powers to shield regional economies from globalising forces. Perhaps more interestingly, regions may seek protection by the EU from the state itself – in the case of seeking recourse for regions to the European Court of Justice. But generally, it appears that regions feel themselves to be better protected by the state than by the EU, as the state has a greater obligation, and desire, to protect the
region (for reasons of social cohesion, economic solidarity and legitimacy), than does the EU. However, these responses to, and trade-offs made in, Europe have not been static. Like the trade-offs that focussed on the state as a ‘centre’ to influence, strategies that conceive of the EU as a new centre of decision-making to access have also changed over time. For this reason, it is necessary to examine temporal sources of variation in strategies.

7.6 The Rise and Fall of a ‘Europe of the Regions’

The preceding argument indicates that substate party responses to Europe not only diverge across cases, but also across time. The next section analyses our cases from a comparative temporal perspective, and attempts to explain why the potency of a Europe of the Regions came and went during the 1990s. I will identify different stages in the evolution of party strategies to increase autonomy and expand territorial capacity across time, as well as pointing out sources of variation across territories that we have already discovered. These three main stages in the evolution of substate party goals in Europe are: from 1979-87, a period characterised by nationalist and left-wing animosity to the European project and a focus on the state as the ‘giver’ of autonomy and a centre to access; from 1988-95 when the idea of a regionalised Europe led to a convergence of party demands for autonomy, where parties sought autonomy from the state to act in Europe; and from 1996-2005, when the failure of the Europe of the Regions project cause parties to revert back to state-focused strategies, but this time seeking autonomy from Europe and protection by the state.

In the first period, from 1979 to 1987, parties became more involved in European issues owing to the introduction of direct elections to European Parliament. At this point, though, the constitutional goals of parties were not yet tied to project of European integration. Instead, territorial demands for both autonomy and capacity were channelled to the state, and, importantly, constitutional and policy strategies were tied. This is because parties believed they needed the institutions before setting the policy agenda, i.e. legislation decentralisation would allow regions to control policy goals over language, education and finance. This was clearly evident in Scotland and Sardinia. At the same time, regional elites were involved in striking bargains with the centre to achieve more influence over state and regional policy-making. Here, the focus was on trading off autonomy for more access to, and resources from the state. This state-centred focus was to change with the deepening of European integration and the rising popularity of a ‘Europe of the Regions’.

In the second period, from 1987-1995, the growing practice of decentralising government throughout Europe began to satisfy constitutional demands for regional autonomy. At the same time, it appeared that an alternative form of autonomy was available to political parties previously seeking independence, which amounted to a special place in a ‘Europe of the Regions’. The regionalisation debates in Europe also encouraged a response from other parties in substate political
systems – those federalist or pro-centralist parties with little or no previous claims to autonomy. The opportunities presented by Europe seemed to offer a third way between independence and centralism to regional branches of statewide parties. But although this period is characterised by a convergence of demands around the vague concept of a Europe of the Regions, much of the real action was taking place elsewhere. As many constitutional goals were already met, the focus was now on achieving increased policy capacity for substate territories. Parties viewed Europe not only as a new context for exercising autonomy (away from the state), but also a centre from which to secure resources, and an arena for advancing their socioeconomic programmes. Parties sought more autonomy to act in Europe outwith state constraints – for instance, through the Committee of the Regions, interregional organisations, and regional offices in Brussels. As well as seeking direct participation in European affairs that bypassed the state, regions also saw Brussels as a new centre of resources to access, in particular the structural funds. It could be argued, then, that Europe to an extent replaced the state in substate territorial strategies as an arena for exercising autonomy, as a centre to access, and also as a source of funds. But whilst in the earlier period, parties were forced to make a trade-off between autonomy and access to the centre, it appeared that Europe promised both autonomy for regions, as well as increased capacity. The overriding philosophy at this point was ‘let us in’. But this reasoning, and the strategies that accompanied it, was unsustainable.

During the last period, from 1996 to 2005, parties began to question whether their territorial strategies could be met in Europe, particularly due to the continuing weakness of the CoR and their failure to obtain guarantees for regional recognition in the European constitution. Furthermore, although the themes around which the territorial strategies of the parties converged – notably the idea of a Europe of the Regions – were easy to incorporate into the rhetoric of both nationalist and regional branches of statewide parties, they were difficult to integrate into parties’ long-term goals (seeking separation or state unity), leading to inconsistencies in strategies. The apparent ‘closing’ of opportunities for regions to act in Europe, and the fall-out from the Europe of the Regions concept in the late 1990s, put an end to cross-party consensus on pursuing regional autonomy in Europe, with many nationalist parties reverting back to previous positions. As opportunities appeared to dwindle away, some parties began to fall back on state channels, whilst others began taking more Eurosceptical positions, such as the SNP, CSU and the new wave of Sardinian nationalist parties. The ‘closing’ of opportunities for regional action in Europe caused parties to revert back to previous state-centred positions: seeking more access to, resources from, or protection by the state in order to ward off disagreeable European influences. Europe was seen as an increasing threat to their autonomy or regional competences, and through their desire to strengthen the state, and equally the position of the territory within it, parties such as the CSU adopted the philosophy of ‘leave us
alone’. This underlines the fact that substate party support for European integration is tactical, whilst territorial strategies are motivated by the perception of policy benefits to be obtained.

7.7 Identifying Movement Across the Territorial Spectrum

Having identified variation in substate territorial strategies across both spatial and temporal dimensions, the next step is to chart this change in strategies. The aim is to construct a typology that plots the autonomy strategies of substate parties in relation to domestic constitutional change against their attitudes towards European integration. On the first dimension (Y), the ideal types of domestic constitutional categories that were defined at the beginning of this thesis shall be re-introduced: independence, federalism (which is separated into ‘decentralising’ and ‘centralising’ federalism), devolution and unionism (also broadened to include the integration of the territory within the state). Substate parties’ desired European construct are identified on the second dimension (X). This comprises four categories: a supranational (federal) Europe, a regionalised Europe (‘Europe of the Regions’), an intergovernmental Europe based on states, and the final option of opposing European integration (which includes dismantling the EU or opting out of its structures). This typology is replicated for three phases in the period under study: from 1979-87 (Figure 7.1), 1988-95 (Figure 7.2), and 1996-2005 (Figure 7.3), which indicates the ‘movement’ of substate parties along the territorial continuum in response to European integration.

Figure 7.1 Substate Party Domestic and European Constitutional Demands 1979-87

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Autonomy Strategies</th>
<th>Desired European Construct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>independence</td>
<td>Psd’Az</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>federalism (decentralised)</td>
<td>SLD, DC CSU, Bav Greens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>federalism (centralised)</td>
<td>FDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>devolution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unionism/state integration</td>
<td>Scottish Cons MSI*, SLP*, PCI/PSI*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During this period, nationalist parties in Scotland and Bavaria both adopted anti-EU positions, seeking independence outside Europe. The Psd’Az is the exception: in 1979 it was both pro-independence and pro-European. The FDP supported state federalism within an overarching federal
European structure, whilst the Scottish LibDems, the UDC and the CSU supported a more decentralised type of European federalism, which would recognise regional identities and allow for divergence amongst regions. The Bavarian Greens were the first supporters of a ‘Europe of the Regions’ in 1979, based on the grounds of stateless nations’ rights to recognition. Finally, both centre-left and centre-right parties in Scotland and Sardinia were unsympathetic to demands for either regionalisation or federalism during this time. Where they differ is that whilst the Left (the PCI, PSI and SLP*) were sceptical of European integration, the Right (the Scottish Conservatives and Movimento Sociale Italiano—predecessor of the AN) were pro-European integration, primarily viewing integration in an economic sense, of creating a common market.

The most striking issue in the period 1988-95 was the clustering of demands for a Europe of the Regions, which was put forward by Christian Democrat, left-wing, Green and Liberal parties. Thus, the Left adopted a pro-autonomy and pro-European position simultaneously. At the same time, support for a Europe of the Regions was most strongly associated with devolution by the Labour Party in Scotland, and with decentralising federalism by the CSU and the UDC and Psd’Az in Sardinia. But whilst the Psd’Az fully embraced the idea of a federal Europe of the Peoples, other nationalist parties, namely the SNP and BP, only briefly flirted with the idea of a regionalised Europe. Instead, their positions were more strongly characterised by their repositioning as more pro-European parties and their adoption of the policy of independence in Europe. The Bavarian Greens at this point began to drop their commitment to a Europe of the Regions, in response to the CSU’s monopolisation of the term, and reverted back to demands for a decentralised federal Europe that did not have a specifically ‘regionalist’ dimension. Meanwhile, the regional Right remained committed to state integration of the territory, or unionism, within a state-dominated Europe.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Autonomy Strategies</th>
<th>independence</th>
<th>SNP*, BP*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>federalism (decentralised)</td>
<td>CSU, (U)DC Psd’Az FDP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>federalism (centralised)</td>
<td>Bav Greens SPD, PCI—DS/RC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>devolution</td>
<td>SLP, SLD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unionism/ state integration</td>
<td></td>
<td>FI/AN, Scottish Cons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>supranational Europe</td>
<td>regionalised Europe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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In this final period, party families splintered unevenly across a range of dimensions. The Scottish Conservatives moved to a pro-devolution position. The Italian Left abandoned its commitment to unitarism, and split into groups supporting either a centralised federal Italy within a regionalised or intergovernmental Europe. In particular, both the Sardinian Project and the DS favoured cooperative federalism in Italy based on grounds of social solidarity. Meanwhile, the RC’s desired European construct was more similar to that of the Psd’Az: it sought a regionalised Europe (a ‘Europe of the Peoples’) that recognised the Sard identity. But as for the structure of the Italian state within a regionalised Europe, the RC sided with other centre-left parties in Italy in arguing for a form of cooperative federalism, whilst the Psd’Az – like the CSU – favoured greater policy divergence for regions in Europe. Meanwhile, the Italian Right advanced proposals for ‘devolution’, but which actually meant continuing regional structural dependence on state finances for the Sardinian branches. The AN, whilst officially endorsing ‘devolution’ remains sceptical of decentralising more powers to the regions, and has elsewhere reconfirmed its commitment to national unity and state integration; the FI, however, does endorse a competitive federalism that allows for regional divergence. Bavarian opposition parties meanwhile dropped the concept of a Europe of the Regions and reverted to supporting a supranational Europe, which was part of their strategy of opposing Bavarian centralisation, and their new emphasis on communal decentralisation. The parties do differ, however, in the sense that whilst the FDP support a competitive, decentralised Europe, the Greens favour a cooperative, decentralised Europe and the SDP want a cooperative,
centralised Europe. The CSU also dropped the idea of a Europe of the Regions, and instead concentrated on winning a clear demarcation of competences between Europe, the states and the Länder in a decentralised competitive Europe. To protect its competences, though, the CSU argued for a strengthening of the states in Europe, rather than strengthening of the regions in Europe (thus it moved to supporting an intergovernmental Europe, though this also means strengthening the regions within the state). One can also identify a clustering of old and new socialist, green and nationalist independence-seeking parties against Europe during the last period, which is mainly due to their frustration with the limitations for regional action in Europe.

These figures indicate a number of important developments in territorial responses to Europe. First, it traces the decline and fall of the concept of a Europe of the Regions in substate party circles. It also shows the negative response of minority nationalist parties to this development, many of whom have adopted pro-independence and Eurosceptical positions, whilst the CSU (as a Christian Democrat, but also a pro-autonomist party) also became jaded with the possibilities of direct regional representation and control over decision-making in Europe, and reverted back to lobbying within the state for more Land powers and more protection from European encroachments. It is evident that the regional Left during the last period has lost its cohesiveness as a party family, with regional socialist and social-democratic parties taking up a range of positions from independence outside Europe, to more fiscal autonomy in a federal or regional Europe, to a Europe of the Communes. Likewise, the regional Right adopted a variety of positions, endorsing federalism, devolution and fiscal autonomy. The Liberal Democrats have been quite consistent in demands for a federal Europe, though there are differences between parties on the type of federalism sought, and the rights and recognition the regions should have. Finally, whilst the Greens in Bavaria moved from support to a Europe of the Regions that recognised the rights of minority nations to opposing regional centralisation, the Scottish Greens contrarily support the long-term goal of independence for Scotland, to be exercised outside Europe until EU structures are reformed.

7.8 Conclusion

The discussion has demonstrated that territorial mobilisation within and across European states differs considerably. Parties have changed their positions on Europe, and their demands for autonomy within or outwith this construct, on a number of occasions. The potentially cyclical character of party attitudes to autonomy and Europe makes it difficult to pin down lasting effects of integration on either. Indeed, as we saw, only one of the specific hypotheses set out at the beginning of the thesis was confirmed unconditionally: that regional branches of statewide parties have undergone a process of territorialisation in response to the reconfiguration of state and European structures. In contrast, the second hypothesis, that integration encouraged substate parties to
‘internationalise’ their appeal and discourse to accord with European norms and values, only held for some of the parties – though this may change in time. Finally, the third hypothesis, which stipulated that European integration would lead to a ‘convergence’ of territorial autonomy demands, causing nationalists to moderate goals of independence and statewide parties to seek more autonomy, was verified for only a few years in the mid-1990s. Far from undermining this research, however, it points to the necessity of treating parties, not as actors with fixed positions on territorial, European or even ideological issues, but as strategic players in Europe that have made different choices about how to respond to aspects of European integration at different times.

European integration, a constant across the cases, has been construed differently by parties. Whilst some parties, such as the SNP, Labour and LibDems in Scotland, viewed Europe as a means to advancing autonomy, others, such as the CSU in Bavaria, saw European integration as a threat to autonomy and sought to halt the encroachment of European directives on regional competences. For parties in Sardinia, with the exception of the Psd’Az, the EU was perceived as such a distant entity that autonomy was sought closer to home in a Mediterranean setting. Europe has also been constructed by parties to support quite divergent territorial strategies. In Bavaria, the concept of a Europe of the Regions was associated with the dominant region-building project of the CSU, which sought to roll back European competences on regional matters; in Scotland it was viewed as strengthening the newly won autonomy of the devolved parliament by the Labour Party, which was a strategy designed to combat the SNP’s interpretation of Europe as an external framework for Scottish independence; whilst in Sardinia the idea of a Europe of the Peoples, put forward by the electorally weak Psd’Az, won only superficial support from statewide parties, who preferred to view Europe as a source of funds rather than a political opportunity.

Unlike some approaches that assume that regional participation in the EU has led to a real shift of decision-making to the advantage of regions, this analysis has sought to emphasise the variation in the intensity and effects of territorial mobilisation to explain why some parties have become involved in European debates and others have not, why some parties have adopted pro-European positions and others anti-European, and why some parties seek more participation in European decision-making, whilst others prefer utilising state channels. Autonomy and capacity demands have been understood as claims to exert authority within a variety of different spheres, not an end-point of a Europe of the Regions or even a Europe with the Regions. Europe continues to represent a ‘shifting political mosaic’ and attempts to pin down integration processes using a single over-arching theory cannot claim to be anything but partial and incomplete.
8. Conclusion

This research project began by asking the question ‘to what extent have European integration processes influenced the territorial strategies of political parties in Scotland, Bavaria and Sardinia since the 1980s?’ Since first designing this research question, much has happened in the world of European regional politics. Of note, there were failed attempts by regionalist actors to secure increased rights and recognition in the draft European Constitution 2004-5. This led to a heightened sense of animosity amongst minority nations and regions towards the European project. Then there was the failure of the Constitution itself in May 2005, which appeared to signal the end of the need to discuss any ‘deepening’ of European political integration, be it state-led or otherwise. In light of such developments, it was necessary to refine my analytical framework, and to extend the time period in order to incorporate substate party responses to the Constitution. Of course, it is important to remain wary that developments in the regional sphere of European politics may change just as quickly again. As this research has shown, it would be unwise to draw an inflexible picture of regional responses to Europe. This is the foremost reason why the preceding discussions have sought to emphasise change and inconsistency in the territorial strategies of substate parties.

Gerardo L. Munck once stated that ‘hypothesis testing is best seen as an iterative process that interacts with the development of theory, rather than as a process in which theory is more nearly treated as static’ (Munck 2004: 107). This thesis is no exception. Whereas at one point it appeared that European integration was encouraging a convergence of territorial party demands toward a Europe of the Regions – as hypothesised in Chapter 2 of this thesis – it soon became clear that this hypothesis was dependent on perceived opportunities for the advancement of regional demands in Europe. Failure to endow the Committee of the Regions with more powers, the lack of reform of European institutions in a more regional-friendly direction, and the refusal to include regional demands in the Constitution, brought such convergence to a (temporary?) end. The task was then to gauge what happens when opportunities to advance regional projects appear to ‘close’. It was argued that this leads to a further repositioning of parties on the territorial and European dimensions, but with substate parties reverting back to their former positions, thus taking clearer sides on the pro-autonomy and anti-autonomy debates. For both ‘sides’, there has been a renewed focus on the state, either as a centre to access (in order to influence European policy-making) or as a territorial aim in itself. This has occurred when nationalist parties have seen the limitations of the regional project in Europe, and have returned to seeking direct access to Europe with a seat on the Council, even if their discourse has meanwhile indicated more subtle interpretations of sovereignty. Furthermore, with regards to attitudes towards European integration, whilst in the late 1980s and
early 1990s many substate parties moved from an anti- to a pro-European position, from the late 1990s the fall-out in regional autonomy demands in Europe was accompanied by increasing Euroscepticism. This raises the question of how ‘Europeanised’ substate parties were in the first place.

To quote Munck again, ‘theory reformulation that occurs after looking at the data is critical because it allows social scientists to learn from their research’ (Munck 2004: 119). The repositioning of parties in response to the ‘closing’ of opportunities for regional action in Europe appears to have led to a renewed ‘rescue’ of the state, as Milward (1992) argued. It certainly seems to be the case that more extreme nationalist parties have fallen back into their old rhetoric and demands for independence, whilst some parties such as Plaid Cymru in Wales have even adopted more extreme positions – replacing demands for a Europe of Self-Governing Regions with those for Independence in Europe in 2004 (though almost immediately qualifying this as a post-sovereign position). However, it is not clear at this stage whether or not regional branches of statewide parties will revert back to previously anti-autonomy stances, or if in fact this is a feasible position for them to take given. This is not only because of changes in European structures of ‘governance’, but also because the decentralisation of state structures is unlikely to be undone. If traditionally unionist or federalist parties remain where they are at the time of writing on the issues of European integration and domestic constitutional change – in general, advocating devolution or federalism in a Europe of the Regions or federal Europe – it would mean that the ‘moderate’ ground of autonomy goals has been monopolised by regional branches of statewide parties. This may have the effect of pushing nationalist parties into more extreme positions, unless they seek to compete, from a weaker position, on the more moderate ground held by non-nationalists. It would furthermore signify a major shift of political parties towards a pro-autonomy position, consigning any scepticism of centralist parties towards regional autonomy to the annals of history.

This hypothesis is seductive, but not without problems. The main difficulty lies with the internal organisation of parties themselves: there are few parties who can claim to have complete support for any of their European or territorial strategies at a given time. Whilst nationalist and regionalist parties are divided on how to achieve these aims, evident in divides between fundamentalists and gradualists, regional branches of statewide parties are also torn on the issue of how to contain nationalist parties (and whether they need to become more ‘territorialised’ to do so). There are signs of division within all of the statewide parties, both left and right of the ideological spectrum, on how to deal with these issues. Whilst some parties have incorporated a more ‘nationalist’ stance in policies and propaganda, other parties are more subtle and ambiguous in their support for a strong territorial identity, interests and autonomy. Other still have adopted more ‘unionist’ profiles to complement their strong territorial identities, in order to compete more effectively with nationalist parties on the constitutional question. What one can be sure of is that
these issues will continue to play themselves out for the foreseeable future, as they have done for over a century and more. But what is not so certain is whether we will ever see another convergence toward territorial goals in Europe as we did in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the idea of a Europe of the Regions, however loosely interpreted, received almost blanket support amongst all parties in each of the cases under analysis, albeit for a brief time.

One pivotal question raised by these research findings is why substate (and indeed state-level) political parties seem to have lost their way on Europe. With the rapid repositioning of parties on the European dimension, from anti- to pro-European support, and sometimes back again, this indicates that parties have perhaps not fully understood European integration, or put another way, they have often accepted one aspect of European integration – such as the political or economic dimension – whilst rejecting other aspects – such as the cultural dimension, or vice versa – without ever putting the whole package together. As was have seen in the cases, the difficulties parties face in integrating these different aspects of European integration into their platforms led to a series of inconsistencies in strategies. For example, the CSU’s support for ‘unity in diversity’ in Europe was undermined by its opposition to foreign immigration, whilst the SNP’s support for economic integration was questioned after it threatened to oppose the draft Constitution if Scotland was not excused from common sectoral policies and given full control of its fishing policy.

Due to the mixed expectations, misunderstandings, and differing interpretations of what European integration involves, Euroscepticism has become a widespread phenomenon across the party spectrum. As Sitter (2002: 5) comments on party responses to Europe, ‘the European question has been addressed by and affected almost every European party. It has been incorporated into party platforms, deliberately ignored or circumvented by the use of referendums, it has divided several parties, and has even contributed directly to the collapse of a handful of governments’. Because, of this, Sitter argues, Euroscepticism has become an important feature across the political spectrum. For substate parties, it has quite specific features: Euroscepticism has been largely driven by their inability to achieve territorial goals in Europe. Substate parties have sought to use Europe to pursue regional demands and, when these demands have looked set to fail, parties have turned against the European project. For example, the German Länder have complained that EU competition law has threatened their ability to support local industries, the Sardinian government is worried about its ability to compete in an enlarged Europe without the advantage of Objective 1 funding, and Bavaria suspects the EU is trying to impose its own political values through its openness to immigration. These are individual grievances. However, there are also general regional grievances across Europe, which began with the disappointment with the limited powers of the Committee of the Regions, piqued with the entry of small nation-states such as Malta and the Baltic States to the top EU tables whilst bigger, richer regions such as Catalonia and Bavaria had to be represented through their
states. This was compounded by the failure of regional efforts to secure a greater role for the regions written into the draft European Constitution. Jordi Pujol, former Catalan Prime Minister, who has been one of the most enthusiastic supporters of European integration, acknowledged the perceived EU rebuff to regional demands and grievances when he stated in 2003 that ‘the EU is no longer encouraging regionalism’ (The Economist, 13 November 2003). Parties have responded bitterly to Europe’s perceived disregard of regions, demonstrating that parties are able to ‘play’ the European ideological game without actually becoming socialised into the ideological package.

Yet this attitude of grievance begs the question: did the regions and minority nations of Europe really believe that states would relinquish their powers to create a regional ‘third’ level of decision-making in Europe? The Commission could not overtly encourage regionalist ambitions for fear of antagonising member states. So why have states allowed, or even encouraged regions to pursue greater policy capacity and autonomy in Europe? Whilst one aspect is certainly the desire to dampen aspirations for secession or stronger forms of constitutional autonomy such as federalism, there are other motivations at play. Although not directed at the European dimension, Keating argues that the state has a number of motives for pursuing regionalism, which can be used as an instrument of ‘economic intervention, to improve administrative efficiency and reduce overload at the centre, to coordinate their own activities and those of other agencies’ (Keating 1988: 22). This makes sense in the state arena, where the centre is still, to a greater or lesser extent, calling the shots. But what are their motivations for advocating regional autonomy in Europe, especially when this, along with the deepening of European integration in general, is undermining the state’s own traditional roles and competences?

Although this line of questioning is clearly an avenue for further research, one might speculate that, being more aware of the limitations of the European project, the state foresaw that when the regions became disenchanted, they would have no option but to return to its succour. This indicates that perhaps many of these European ‘opportunities’ were unsustainable in the first place. At one stage, the idea of a Europe of the Regions caused a flurry of excitement across the minority nations and regions of Europe. Finally, it seemed that Europe would take the lid off the state, and allow the regions to make their own way in the world as independent actors in the European project. The regions, however, found they were unable to realise their ambitions as the states themselves were also the gatekeepers to the European centre. This realisation forced regions back into the folds of the state, and to depend on its channels once more to achieve their desired aims for autonomy and greater policy capacity in Europe. It was the states themselves which made the Committee of the Regions a weak body, refused to grant the regions concessions in the draft European Constitution, and continued to concentrate power in the Council of Ministers. It appeared, then, that
a Europe of the Regions never posed a threat to a Europe of the States, as the states were ultimately orchestrating the scope and direction of the European construct and the role for regions within this.

The states’ main achievement in the short term was to dampen secessionist claims by offering a vague hope to territorially mobilised parties for a special place in Europe. Taking the lid off the state may have, however, unwittingly opened a Pandora’s Box, releasing a multitude of unresolved issues and tensions. The pressures of a European-wide movement for a regionalised Europe has encouraged regional branches of statewide parties to adopt more nationalist mantles, strengthened substate party systems and demands for increased regional access to, and influence within, intra-state policy-making structures, and reinforced territorial interests and policy demands at the substate level. These unintended consequences will undoubtedly have major ramifications for state territorial management and shape the terms of the European regional debate for years to come.
Appendix 1: Index of Interviews

(1) For the Scottish Case

[Interview 1.2] Nicola Sturgeon MSP, Deputy Leader, SNP, 6/1/2004
[Interview 1.6] Roseanna Cunningham MSP, fmr Deputy Leader SNP, 14/1/2004.
[Interview 1.9] Henry McLeish, fmr First Minister of Scotland (Labour), 5/12/2004.

(2) For the Bavarian Case

[Interview 2.1] Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenburger MdL, Chair FDP Bayern, 13/1/2005.
[Interview 2.3] Eberhard Sinner, Bav. Minister of European and Federal Affairs, 14/1/2005.

(3) For the Sardinian Case

[Interview 3.1] Antonio Moro, Sec. of Federation, Psd’Az, 18/5/2005
[Interview 3.6] Giannmassimo Mura, Consiglio Regionale, 20/5/2005
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Scottish Green Party – see SGP

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