Department of Political and Social Sciences

The Accommodation of Nationalism

Regional Nationalist Parties and Territorial Restructuring in

Great Britain, Spain and Belgium

Simon Toubeau

Florence
June 2010

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE
Department of Political and Social Sciences

The Accommodation of Nationalism

Regional Nationalist Parties and Territorial Restructuring in Great Britain, Spain and Belgium

Simon Toubeau

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

Examining Board:

Prof. Michael Keating, University of Aberdeen and EUI (Supervisor)
Prof. Peter Mair, EUI
Prof. Kris Deschouwer, Vrije Universiteit Brussel
Prof. Charlie Jeffery, University of Edinburgh

Table of Contents

Part II: Case Studies

Figures

List of Abbreviations

Name in Original Language	Acronym	English Name
Great Britain		
Alternative Economic Strategy	AES	
British Election Study	BES	
Conservative Party	-	
Labour Party	-	
National Executive Committee	NEC	
Plaid Cymru	PC	
Scottish Election Study	SES	
Scottish Home Rule Association	SHRA	
Scottish National Convention		
Scottish National League	SNL	
Scottish National Party	SNP	
Trades Union Congress	TUC	
Welsh Election Study	WES	
Spain		
Alianza Popular	AP	Popular Alliance
Bloque Nacionalista de Galicia	BNG	Nationalist Bloc of Galicia
Centro Democratico y Social	CDS	Democratic and Social Centre
Coalicion Electoral Esquerra de Catalunya	CEEC	Left Electoral Coalition for Catalonia
Confederacion Espanola de Derechas Autonomas	CEDA	Spanish Confederation of the Autonomous Right
Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo	CNT	National Confederation of Labour
Convergencia Democratica de Catalunya	CDC	Democratic Convergence of Catalonia
Convergencia i Unió	CiU	Convergence and Union
Comisiones Obreras	CC.OO	Worker's Commissions
Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya	ERC	Republican Left of Catalonia
Herri Batasuna	HB	Unity of Basque People
Euskadiko Eskerra	EE	Basque Country Left
Euskadiko Ta Alkatasuna	ETA	Basque Land and Freedom
Eusko Alkatasuna	EA	Basque Solidarity
Izquierda Unida	IU	United Left
Ley Concierto Economico	LEC	Law on Economic Conecert
Ley Organica de Armonización del Processo Autonomico	LOAPA	Organic Law for the Harmonization of the Autonomic Process
Ley Organica por el Desarollo de la Educacion	LODE	Organic Law on Schooling Development

4

Ley Orgánica de Financiación de las Communidades Autonomas	LOFCA	Organic Law on the Financing of Autonomous Communities
Ley Organica de Transferencias	LET	Organic Law on Transfers
Ley Reguladora de las Bases del Regimen Local	LRBRL	Regulationon the Bases of Local Government
Ley de los Territorios Historico	LTH	Law on Historic Territories
Pacte Democratic per Catalunya	PDPC	Democratic Pact for Catalonia
Partido Communista Espanol	PCE	Spanish Communist Party
Partido Obrero Socialista Espanol	PSOE	Spanish Socialist Worker's Party
Partido Nacionalista Vasco	PNV	Basque Nationalist Party
Partido Popular	PP	Popular Party
Partido Social Liberal Andaluz	PSLA	Andalusian Social Liberal Party
Partido Socialista Andaluz	PSA	Andalusian Socialist Party
Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya	PSC	Party of Catalan Socialists
Partit Socialist Unificat de Catalunya	PSUC	United Socialist Party of Catalonia
Union del Centre		Union of the Centre
Unio del Centro Democratico	UCD	Union of the Democratic Centre
Union Nacional de Trabajadores	UGT	National Union of Workers

Belgium

Algemeen Christelijk Wekersverbond/Ligue Nationale des Travailleurs Chretiens	ACW-LNTC	National League of Christian Workers
Christelijke Volkspartij	CVP	Christian Peoples' Party
Fédération Générale du Travail de Belgique	FGTB	General Federation of Belgian Labour
Front Démocratique des Francophones	FDF	Democratic Francophone Fron
Ligue Nationale de Travailleurs	LNT	National League of Christian Workers
Mouvement Populaire Wallon	MPW	Popular Walloon Mouvement
Parti de la Liberté et du Progres	PLP	Party of Liberty and Freedom
Party des Reformes de des Liberte de Wallonia	PRWL	Party of the Reforms and Liberty of Wallonia
Parti Socialiste Belge	PSB	Belgian Socialist Party
Parti Social Chretien	PSC	Christian Social party
Parti Socialiste	PS	Socialist pary
Partij voor de Vrijheid en vooruitgang	PVV	Party for Freedom
Rassemblement Wallon	RW	Walloon Rally
Socialistiche Partij	SP	Socialist Party
Vlaams Aktiekomitee voor Brussel	VAK	Flemish Action Committee for Brussels
Vlaams Blok	VB	Flemish Bloc
Vlaams National Verbond	VNV	Flemish National League
Vlaamse Volskbeweging	VVB	Flemish People's Movement
Volksunie	VU	Union of People

Acknowledgments

This thesis could not have been undertaken without significant guidance and help from scholars, administrative staff, politicians, friends and family. First of all, I thank my supervisor, Prof. Michael Keating, for having provided the freedom necessary for me to explore the topic of this thesis from a variety of different angles, and for pushing me to consider the importance of elections, institutions, ideology, and especially, history. His guidance has made the present investigation much richer and has imparted a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approach to social scientific inquiry that I will ensure to maintain in all my future research endeavours.

At the EUI, I received excellent academic training in the substance and tools political science. The seminars organised by Michael Keating, Peter Mair, Sven Steinmo and Stefano Bartolini are among the best I have attended, and they have definitively shaped my approach to comparative politics and to the social scientific method.

The administrative staff in the SPS department continuously provided administrative support in the funding and organisation of missions, the preparation of seminars and the payment of occasional research assistant work. I thank in particular Liz Webb for her tireless efforts in helping me to submit this thesis to the examiners. In the academic service, I enjoyed the cheerful attitude and support of Ken Hulley and Francoise Thauvin, concerning all matters related to grant allocation. I wish to thank the Belgian Ministry of Scientific Policy and the EUI for providing the grant for undertaking this research.

In Great Britain, I received the assistance of Peter Ruskin in getting around Whitehall and Parliament and benefited from the hospitality of Rachel Lex in Edinburgh. In Spain, Pere Almeda introduced me to Catalan and Socialist politicians and, along with his wife Viki, offered hospitality and encouragement in Barcelona; I also thank Aitor Erce for his generous hospitality in Madrid. In Belgium, I thank Prof. Kris Deschouwer for having allowed me to take up a short-term visiting period at the VUB PWS in the summers of 2007 and 2008; the department provided a highly congenial environment in which to conduct my research on Belgium. Jo Buelens compiled and provided a comprehensive electoral database. Willy Decourty introduced me to a range of Belgian politicians from all ideological worlds and linguistic groups.

Writing a dissertation is a solitary adventure that is always relieved by the company of friends. At the EUI, I enjoyed the good friendship of Axel Andersson, Igor Guardiancich, Alex Wilson, Ali Ahmad, Rory Brown, Thieu Besselink, Riham Shendy, Joan Rius-Riu, Pierre Monforte, Javier Alcalde, Alice Mattoni, Frank Foley, Silvia d'Ascoli and Vera Simon. Elsewhere, I salute my companeros, Tony McKee, Finn Nesbitt, Vedran Horvat, Sid Lall, Andrew Bennett as well as my distinguished old prof, Neil Goldthorpe.

Finally, I wish to thank my mother, Eileen Rodgers and my sister, Cécile Toubeau for all their love, good humour and support. I also thank Shaima Elnour for her love, encouragement and patience during the completion of this thesis. A final note of remembrance must be given to my aunt, Maggy Rodgers and my grandmother, Lena Rodgers who both passed away in 2007. In my family, my grandmother was most apt at urging me to make haste and get on with it, by repeatedly asking me when was I finally going to become ordained.

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the relationship between the claims advanced by regional nationalist parties for the re-organisation of state structures based on the recognition of their distinct national groups and the process of territorial restructuring in Great Britain, Spain and Belgium. The objectives are to examine the conditions under which regional nationalist parties have influenced the reform of state structures and to assess the factors that condition the relation between their electoral and policy success.

The thrust of the argument advanced is that the influence of regional nationalist parties on the reform of state structures can be understood as the result of processes that take place during the agenda-setting and the decision-making phases. To provoke institutional change, regional nationalist parties must firstly set the political agenda by exerting pressures on mainstream parties in the electoral, parliamentary and governmental arenas. Secondly, institutional change is likely to occur, if nationality claims are accommodated by mainstream parties that are ideologically open to political decentralisation and the recognition of regional nationalism and if the question of territorial autonomy has a broader resonance for political competition between mainstream parties. Finally, institutional change is likely to occur, if the government undertaking reforms is cohesive and there is no ideological opposition by any partisan veto players to those reforms.

These arguments are examined through a comparative-historical analysis of political decentralisation in Great Britain, Spain and Belgium, over a time period spanning the late 1960s to the late 1990s. Each case study is disaggregated into time periods that represent moments in the process of territorial restructuring, bounded by significant changes in the assertiveness of regional nationalist parties and the occurrence of territorial reform. Within each period, the process tying the claims of regional nationalist parties to institutional change is examined. Theses different observations are used as evidence for undertaking a comparison of the accommodation of nationalism across space and time.

The thesis finds that regional nationalist parties exert a strong influence on the creation of decentralised state structures when they can set the political agenda. It is also necessary for nationality claims to be accommodated by mainstream parties that are open to the accommodation of nationalism and for them to feature as a salient issue of party competition, and for constitutional reforms to be undertaken by a cohesive centre-left government. The ideological opposition of a partisan veto player in government to institutional change is sufficient for bringing about the failure of reform. The second finding is that the configuration of factors producing reforms tends to diversify with the development of restructuring. During the empowerment of regional governments, regional nationalist parties can set the political agenda and their claims may feature as an issue of party competition, but the reforms must be undertaken by centre-left governments. The subsequent deepening of territorial autonomy is stimulated by regional nationalist demands but undertaken by governments of different ideological persuasions whose mainstream parties may compete on the territorial dimension.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The ways in which a political regime manages the 'nationalities question'- a situation engendered by the lack of fit between national groups and political borders- are vital for its stability and legitimacy, for it obliges governing elites to address the claims of national groups, while ensuring the territorial cohesion of state and the continued support of other social and territorial constituents. Contemporary developments in the politics of Great Britain, Spain and Belgium, constituted a powerful reminder of the prevalence and unrelenting potency of nationalist political mobilisation, making it abundantly clear that the type of discord generated by national and territorial differences bear pervasive and consequential implications for the territorial structures of states.

The formation of a minority government in Scotland by the SNP in May 2007 was a landmark in British political history, as it revealed the adaptation of the Scottish electorate to the devolution settlement and constituted the first occasion in which the SNP entered office. It also generated an atmosphere of incipient crisis, as the predominant mainstream political force in Scotland, the Labour party, intervened in the electoral campaign warning against the costs of separatism. Against this, the SNP vouched to make good on its commitment to call for a referendum on the question of independence, an initiative that was however shrouded with questionable constitutional legitimacy. In June 2006, the Catalan Autonomous Community (AC) obtained a new statute of autonomy after lengthy and testy negotiations with the central government, an initiative that was spearheaded by the Catalan government composed of ERC, the Catalan separatist party. The vindication of Catalanist claims stood in stark contrast with the ill-fated 'Plan Ibarrexte', the proposal issued by the Basque nationalist party PNV, for the establishment of a regime of 'free-association' between the Basque Country and the Spanish state. In March 2008, Belgium ended the longest governmental crisis of its political history. The political claims of the winning party, the Flemish Christian democratic CD&V, forming an cartel with the Flemish nationalist party NVA, for the coherent decentralisation of policy-making and fiscal resources, and for a re-drawing of electoral boundaries met against the obdurate position of its francophone counterparts which refused to take part in a government whose agenda would be dominated by the initiation of a wholesale constitutional reform

History provides scholars with a mirror and map for making sense of the present. Thirty years earlier, the SNP had just recorded its best performance and had managed to exert a sufficient degree of electoral pressure on the Labour party to compel its leadership to change its policy and to draft legislation for devolving power to Scotland and Wales. Ideological rifts within the party however proved to deep to overcome and the issue which had generated crises, deadlock and instability was eventually defeated in a referendum. In Spain, the democratic transition awakened the tensions between centre and periphery that had been both fomented and repressed during the Franquist era. Conscious that the successful management of the nationality claims voiced by the nationalist parties of the Basque country and Catalonia was a key ingredient to a successful democratic consolidation, political elites devised an ingenious territorial formula that inserted the recognition and autonomy awarded to 'nationalities' within a generalised quasi-federal system. The disputes between linguistic communities in Belgium had erupted a decade earlier, but the task of implementing a system of territorial autonomy repeatedly stumbled on the thorny issue of Brussels, generating a protracted and rancorous negotiation, that was only temporarily resolved by the constructive participation of the Flemish and Francophone regional nationalist parties.

Across Western Europe, the territorial cleavage has found expression in the existence and political activity of regional nationalist parties, whose principal political claim is the re-organisation of state structures based on the recognition and empowerment of distinct national groups. Emerging from different historical contexts and processes of political development, these parties have risen to electoral prominence in Great Britain, Spain and Belgium, and have introduced the question of political decentralisation and constitutional reform on the political agenda. Their presence in the electoral arena has enabled them to sway the substance of public debate, to change the attitudes of mainstream parties and to heighten the salience of the territorial issue-dimension; while their presence in the parliamentary and governmental arenas has enabled them to instigate, and at times shape, the reform of a country's territorial structures. Governing elites in these countries have had to confront the difficult task of crafting institutional compromises that are capable of meeting the objectives of regional nationalist parties and preserving the legitimacy of state rule over areas and social groups that express a strong desire for greater self-government, and even in some instances, for independence. They must at the same time however, ensure that these compromises do not imperil the territorial integrity of the state or compromise the effective functioning of the national

political system, and attend to the preferences of other constituent groups that may hold strong reservations about or be openly hostile to the concessions awarded to assertive nationalist groups. The overarching aim of political elites is thus to 'manage' the tensions generated by the 'nationalities question', by accommodating nationalist demands and by continuously brokering compromises that transform the open confrontation between nationalist communities and the state into a form of everyday politics.

The importance for political elites for this compromise to take place within the parameters of the established political system has increased the appeal of territorial autonomy as an instrument for diffusing nationalist claims, and has ushered the gradual transformation of democratic political systems from unitary into regional and federal states. The logic underlying this formula is that by granting regional self-rule, the central government provides minority nationalities with the opportunity to protect and develop their distinct culture, identity and set of values, to participate in the making and implementation of their own laws, and to establish and maintain their political interests and priorities, and thus diminishes the incentives for regions to seek their own independent states. Territorial autonomy is a 'flexible' solution that offers a wide range of possibilities for the central government to relieve the tension resulting from social heterogeneity, because it allows for the continuous negotiation of the division of powers between tiers of authority-from a minimum degree of autonomy to the full trappings of statehood, short of independence (Lapidoth 1997). It represents the institutionalization of a mutual compromise between the claims of ethnic groups for self-determination and the need for the central government to preserve the unity of the state while respecting the diversity of its population. Yet, while governing elites have shared an appreciation of the logic underlying the use of territorial autonomy as an instrument for satisfying nationalist demands, they have nevertheless also exhibited a notable variety in the manner in which it has been deployed- in the timing, direction and in the pace at which reforms to state structures were carried out, in the level of legislative autonomy, administrative and fiscal capacity granted to regional governments and in the constitutional protection of their status and powers. Moreover, the responsiveness of mainstream parties to the claims of regional nationalist parties and the evolution of adjustments to the structures of the state has not been strictly correlated or commensurate with the electoral and parliamentary strength of regionalist nationalist parties. This notable disjuncture between the strength of the regional nationalist parties and the transformation of state structures is an enigma that has yet to find a satisfactory explanation.

This thesis aims to explore the consequences of regional nationalist parties on the reform of state structures. It sets out to answer the following questions:

i)   Under what conditions have regional nationalist parties exerted influence on the reform of state structures?

ii)   What factors explains the variation in their relationship between the electoral and policy success?

By examining the impact of regionalist parties and the evolution of state structures, this thesis seeks to uncover the different channels through which their demands are translated into issues placed on a government's political agenda, to discover the factors that have conditioned the willingness of mainstream parties to change policies and to initiate discrete changes to state structures that can simultaneously accommodate the aspirations of nationalist parties, ensure the integrity of the state and maintain the support of their constituents, and finally, to evaluate the success of the transformation of these initiatives into substantive constitutional outcomes.

The argument that this dissertation advances is that the influence of regional nationalist parties can be understood as the result of processes that take place during the agenda-setting and the decision-making phases, that 'filter' their claims into substantive changes to the structures of the state. In the electoral arena, regional nationalist parties can set the political agenda by exerting pressures on mainstream parties and compelling them to adjust their position on the territorial dimension. It is argued firstly that the threat that regional nationalist parties constitutes is determined by their electoral performance, the operation of the electoral system- which conditions their parliamentary strength- and the vulnerability of mainstream parties to the electoral losses they incur. Secondly, it is argued that the willingness and capacity of mainstream parties to respond to this threat by deploying an accommodating electoral is conditioned by their ideology, and in particular by whether they can plausibly adopt a policy in favour of territorial autonomy. In the parliamentary and governmental arena, regional nationalist parties can set the agenda by obliging mainstream governments to undertake institutional reforms and by participating in shaping the content of those reforms, in exchange for their support to their governing authority, either via parliamentary alliances or coalition governments. It is argued that the prime determinant of the capacity of regional nationalist parties to set the agenda in this sphere of action is their bargaining power- the determinants of which are the range of alternative feasible coalitions, their position in the party system and institutional constraints- as well as by the receptivity of mainstream parties to their demands

Whether this influence the political agenda is subsequently transformed into substantive outcomes will be determined in the second phase by the decision-making process regulating changes to the territorial distribution of authority. In defining the identity of the partisan actors whose agreement is necessary for a governmental proposal to be transformed intro law, decision rules conditions the likelihood that the proposals can replace the institutional status quo. The most relevant factors in this process are the number of partisan veto players and the ideological distance separating their positions. Given that mainstream parties dominate the party system and access to government, their position on the territorial dimension is a cardinal consideration in understanding the reform of state structures. Their ideology will reflect their attempt to reconcile multiple objectives- reacting to the pressures exerted by regional nationalist parties, maintaining the electoral support of established constituent groups, ensuring the internal cohesion of the party and the various ideological currents it comprises, and lastly, maintaining a consistency with the other components of their ideology.

The purpose of investigating the relationship between regional nationalist political mobilization and institutional adaptation rests on a basic normative concern for assessing the responsiveness of different types of democratic systems to the demands of national groups and the political parties that claim to represent them. While there exists an voluminous literature that examines the consequences of the institutional arrangements of political systems on the overall control of citizens over policy making (Huber and Powell 1994; Powell 1989) the present dissertation focuses specifically on the sensitivity of different types of political systems and political parties to demands of sub-state nations for recognition and empowerment. A second motivation underlying the present research is an interest in understanding the dynamics of institutional change. The current paradigm informing the ontology of 'normal science' in comparative politics, the new institutionalism, has been praised for drawing attention to how institutional arrangements set the constraints that define the incentives and strategies of political actors, distribute power between them, and shape the collective behaviour that structure political outcomes. However, when applied to micro-level interactions between actors driven by instrumental rationality, institutions have tended to be narrowly conceptualised as formal rules. In addition, historical interpretation of institutional change have relied on explanations that rely heavily on contingency and stability for explaining the birth and persistence of institutions. The aim of this dissertation is to investigate what the analysis of territorial restructuring can bring to our understanding of institutional change.

It should be borne in mind that this dissertation does not venture into the thorny and possibly unanswerable question of whether territorial autonomy actually functions effectively as an instrument for mitigating the intensity of the 'nationalities question', for defusing nationalist and territorial conflict and for preventing the break-up of states. Sceptics have pointed out that territorial autonomy increases the likelihood ethnic conflict and secessionism by furnishing ethnic identities with a sense of legitimacy, by locking into place historical differences between groups, by supplying ethnic groups with institutional support and material resources that facilitate engaging in conflict (Cornell 2002; Snyder 2002). This scepticism has found a more nuanced articulation by authors that show that decentralisation's capacity to dampen the flames of secessionism are contingent on the details of a particular setting, such as the presence of regionalist parties or of a core ethnic region that can organize rival claims to sovereignty (Brancati 2006; Hale 2004) These ominous judgments have however been contested by research that has found that ethno-political conflicts are not as intractable as widely believed, and that strategies of accommodation have in fact greatly contributed to a substantial decline in the intensity of these conflicts. There is moreover, no evidence that autonomy claims tend to escalate to outright secessionism (Gurr 1993, 1994). As Ted Gurr (2000: 52)concludes:

> "the logic calling for disputes over self-determination to be regulated by accommodation goes a long way to explain the transformation of conflicts from violent confrontation into prosaic politics."

The effects of territorial autonomy on reducing the intensity of ethnic sentiment and on the eventual preservation of state integrity thus remain largely indeterminate; but the implications of this question merit an entirely separate investigation.

The remainder of this dissertation is structured into three main parts. The first part sets the framework for analysis: chapter two offer an examination of the literature on the matter at hand, focusing on the sociological, party political and institutionalist approaches to territorial restructuring; chapter three elaborates the analytical framework and research design employed in the thesis, elaborating on the importance of the agenda-setting and decision-making processes, and justifying the selection of cases and the strategies of causal inference. The second part of the thesis is devoted to an empirical analysis: chapters four to six offer an in-depth case analysis of the three countries selected. The final part provides a comparative perspective: chapter sever teases out the main findings of the thesis through a systematic comparative analysis; the conclusion dwells on the implications and validity of these findings and suggests further avenues for research.

Part I/ The Framework for Analysis

CHAPTER TWO

Regional Nationalism and Territorial Restructuring

The capacity of accommodative measures, via the establishment of regional and federal institutions, to check the centrifugal pressures of a multinational society and to create a responsive yet stable polity have long lied at the heart of academic inquiry, which has traditionally exhibited a normative concern for unveiling how political institutions can manage social conflict (Knight 1992). But while there exists an extensive lineage of studies that provide ample justifications of federalism *per se*, as a mechanism for decentralising conflict, precluding regional resentment from degenerating into national conflict and creating a path to peaceful communal co-existence (Elazar 1994; Hechter 2000) the manner in which regional and federal institutions have emerged and evolved in response to nationalist political claims remains under-studied; there is a dearth of systematic comparative analyses that have examined how regional nationalist parties have prompted and influenced substantive changes in the territorial structures of the state.

The existing literature provides a set of insights that can inform the selection of variables that have conditioned the interaction between regional nationalist and mainstream political parties. Riker's work highlights the importance of bargains between rational political actors as critical variables relating societal pressures to the dynamics of federalism; studies on the institutionalisation of the territorial cleavage have isolated the role of 'ethnic entrepreneurs' in heightening the salience of national divisions; Sartori's criteria of 'relevance' distinguishes between the likely sites of their influence in a political system and work on the adaptation of mainstream parties to changes in electoral markets furnishes a catalogue of policy responses to the presence of nationalist competitors; enquiries into the influence of regional nationalist parties have identified political institutions and party competition as the primary determinants of the policy responses of mainstream parties, but have relied on simplistic accounts of party competition and have not explored how the empirical conditions underlying party competition have conditioned the variable responses of different parties within political systems. In the final section, this chapter argues that the analysis of the relationship between these different variables and actual political outcomes needs to be organised more systematically and suggests that a two-stage analytical framework, isolating the agenda-setting power of regional nationalist parties and the decision-making process regulating institutional change, can fulfil this task.

The Structures of Multinational Societies

Inspired by the sociological tradition of Marx, Durkheim and Parsons, there exists an influential current of thought that claims that the presence of national and territorial differences within the fabric and territorial boundaries of a country was a characteristic that would wither away under the ineluctable forces of political and socio-economic modernisation. Modernisation would invariably establish the functional socio-economic cleavage as the main fault-line stratifying society and would replace traditional patterns of authority with rational-legal forms of legitimacy. In parallel, there developed a normative current that cautioned that multinationalism generated intractable social and political struggles that undermined the stability of political institutions. This pessimistic outlook boasts an equally reputable pedigree- J.S Mill (2001) argued that the incompatibility of values between national groups would descend into cultural polarization, political disorder and authoritarian rule, and that one of the preconditions of liberal institutions was therefore a coincidence of the boundaries of government with those of nationality.

The vision of the functionalists and the admonition of the liberals found resonance in the research of a generation of political scientists in the post-war period that couched their theories in the powerful teleological and normative templates offered by modernisation theory. These scholars espoused structuralist approaches that lent primacy to macro-social categories, in particular social class, and to broad historical developments- electoral enfranchisement or the patterns of alliances between social groups- in their explanations of explicitly political 'variables', such as the configuration of a party system, that underpinned the different stages of a country's political development (La Palombara and Weiner 1966; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Sartori 1969). Modernisation theory made no allowances in its prophetic pronouncements for the persistence of territorial differences and national identities within a state. These parochial forms of identity were anomalous relic from the pre-modern past that held on to obscure traditional values and opposed all the progressive changes implied by the state and nation building efforts of political elites. They would be wiped out, either through the 'diffusion' of the dominant culture or through the political separation of national groups, leading to the creation of a homogenous society and polity (Deutsch 1953; Gellner 1983). When ethnic and nationalist cleavages did persist, they were viewed as inherently detrimental to the stability of a political system because they produced irreducible forms of political conflict. National ties constituted 'primordial attachments', essentialist forms of identity analogous to that of kinship, that were deeply rooted in human existence and provided the natural

boundaries of political communities (Geertz 1963). The popular conviction of the singular origin and evolution of a nation provided the 'emotional wellsprings' that made nationalist sentiment an essentially psychological experience that enabled individuals to commit to the nationalist cause, not for reason of interests but for the stirring of passions (Connor 1994). The upsurge of nationalist mobilisation constituted a clear source of political instability, because the claim to self-determination, a principle investing nations with popular sovereignty, was an immediate threat to the legitimacy of the existing boundaries and structures of the political system. The claims of national groups and the interests of rulers were perceived to be irreconcilable, since:

"as against a claim of a right to self-determination, the government proclaims the duty to stamp out secession… what is self-evident truth to those desiring independence is treason to those in custody of the government." (Connor 1967:44)

The modernisation paradigm was beset by a teleological bias that precluded an appreciation of the persistence of national diversity and consciousness, while works that warned of the subversive consequences of the nationalist cleavage largely ignored the fact that governments can 'manage' communal conflict by adjusting the capacity of national groups to exercise autonomy within the political system (Esman 1973). One of the most cited justifications for a federal system is that it provides the best government possible for a country with considerable ethnic and national differences, simultaneously allowing for the recognition of regional diversity and the maintenance of political integration, for the maintenance of 'self rule' and 'shared rule' (Elazar 1987). By providing institutional recognition to the distinctiveness of national groups and allowing regional electorates to control regional matters, federalism discourages the alienation that national groups may feel towards a distant central government that may lead them to question their allegiance to the political system. In an influential argument, W.S. Livingston (1956: 2-6) explained the federal political structures as the result of the congruence between patterns of societal diversity and political institutions: "federal government is a device by which the federal qualities of the society are articulated and protected….federalism is a function not of constitutions but of societies."[1] However, like his contemporaries, Livingston adopted a strongly structuralist approach, endorsing the notion that territorial structures would invariably adapt to reach a better 'fit with their underlying social bases' (Erk 2007). The empirical relationship between the presence of national and territorial diversity and the existence of a federal system is indeed striking. In his *Patterns of Democracy*, Arendt Lijphart

---

[1] The concept of federal society is one which denotes a country in which the most political salience aspects of human identification and conflict are related to specific territories.

(1999) asserts a positive correlation between sociological pluralism and the existence of federal structures conceived as the institutional expression of the territoriality of social cleavages. Yet, while a strong correspondence may exist, the structuralist approach to federal institutions suffers from the same deterministic bias displayed by the political development and modernisation paradigms. It provide little understanding of the causal mechanisms relating a multinational society to its federal structure, it fall short of explaining the ways in which a territorial cleavage provides impetus for the creation and evolution of a federal system and it fails to specify the roles political actors play in advancing or resisting the reform of territorial structures. As Lichbach (1997: 258) puts it:

> "structural causes are so powerful that everything becomes predictable: there are imperatives not possibilities, dictates and not contingencies. This perspective leads to historical fatalism, an iron-cage determinism, and the absence of voluntarism."

A more politically-oriented approach has been offered by William Riker (1964), who offered an explanation of historic federal bargains as an exchange between the rulers of constituent units, that gave up their autonomy in return for the promise of security against external threats, and the rulers of the federal unit, that accepted local autonomy in return for expanding their area of influence by peaceful means. The value of Riker's contribution was that it highlighted the critical significance of the rational cost-benefit calculations featuring during inter-governmental negotiations in determining the success and failures of federal bargains. However, it nevertheless displayed a number of limitations: it did not explicitly incorporate the significance of national diversity as a variable affecting the propensity to engage in a federal bargaining, it assumed that federations were created by pre-existing political units, overlooking situations in which they could emerge from the presence of societal pressures for creating separate autonomous units within the prevailing political system, and it did not explore the dynamics of federalism after a decision to create a federal state was made. Riker (1964: 136) did nevertheless point to the critical role of the party system as a variable relating the societal pressures stemming from territorial diversity to federal-state relations, suggesting that "the structure of the party system may be regarded as the main variable intervening between the background social conditions and the specific nature of the federal bargain." His two principal arguments regarding the importance of rational calculations underlying grand bargains and the intervening role of the party system have the merit of re-introducing political agency at the heart of federalism, highlighting the relevance of partisan actors and negotiations in driving institutional change in a federal direction.

The Institutionalisation of the Territorial Cleavage

The persistence of distinct national identities and the sudden electoral surge of regional nationalist parties on the political scenery of western industrialised societies during the 1960s and 1970s became an inconvenient incongruity for those scholars that had espoused the teleological outlook of modernisation theory. These parties employed national identity as the primary category for social identification and political mobilisation, and stood in opposition to the dominance of the political centre, demanding the re-organisation of territorial structures in recognition of the national distinctiveness of their constituents (Hooghe 1992).[2] The appearance of these parties suggested that the nation-building project was not as robust as imagined and that new forms of political activity had re-introduced the territorial cleavage to the centre stage of political conflict. Given the lack of adequate theoretical grounds for expecting nationalist conflict to emerge and in view of the tendency of political science "to display little sympathy for groups that are thought to have lost the historical game" (Urwin 1983b: 223), there were few explanations at hand that were capable of post-dicting the resurgence of regional nationalism. The framework devised by Stein Rokkan was thus outstanding in attempting to account for the persistence of territorial forms of political identity and mobilisation.

In a series of works, Rokkan demonstrated how the process of state formation and external boundary building was intimately linked to the subjugation of the periphery, through military, administrative and economic and political means. In the framework devised by Lipset and Rokkan (1967), the centre-periphery cleavage is an outcome of the National Revolution, a period when the central nation-builders came into conflict with peripheral cultures that resisted bureaucratic penetration and cultural standardisation. Early political conflicts were hence territorial in nature: pitting one group protecting its particularity, against the intrusion of another that aimed to bring conformity to its territory. The authors recognised however, that the process of territorial integration is nowhere complete due to the timing separating the different 'critical junctures' that shaped a country's political development.[3] In addition, Rokkan and Urwin (1982; 1983) later argue that even across the states that were marked by territorial distinctiveness, the

---

[2] Though variously labelled as ethno-nationalist (Connor 1994), ethno-regionalist (Newman 1994, 1996), this thesis will classify these parties as regional nationalist. Using the term *ethnos* and *nationem* in the same term is redundant if both refer to the presence of subjective identification with a particular group, while the group these parties claim to represent may not constitute either a distinct *ethnie*.

[3] For instance, a high distance from the city-trade belt of Western Europe, early territorial consolidation and the creation of national churches during the reformation, facilitated early nation-building and cultural standardisation and made it easier to overcome cultural-territorial cleavages before the age of mass mobilization, reducing the territorial cleavage's impact on the formation of party system.

territorial cleavage is not evenly salient: peripheral nationalism would emerge if there was a distinct culture in the periphery and few ties of communication between centre and periphery, if there was an imbalance in economic, political and cultural power between the centre and the periphery and if the centre attempted to impose a policy of state and nation-building that did not reflect existing power structures. The centre-periphery framework has the merit of demonstrating how the timing and interaction between complex macro-historical forces involved in the process of state formation and nation-building produced the variety of outcomes in the types and depth of divisions stratifying west European societies. Yet, Rokkan's framework is concerned primarily with the *potentiality* of territorial conflict and remains fundamentally static: it falls short of specifying the mechanisms through which the dissonance of power between the centre and the periphery becomes translated into a politically mobilized organisation with distinct claims.

It is reasonable to assume that the key elements of national identity- whether grounded in a distinct ethnicity, language, culture or common historical experience-provide strong conditions for the establishment of national consciousness. But it does not follow that this will automatically be translated into a political conflict- the national cleavage may cross-cut other cleavages and remain dormant, individuals from specific national groups may have multiple national identities, and national groups may expand or contract their social boundaries. National identities are fluid artefacts, whose intensification and politicisation are instigated by political entrepreneurs, individuals who "manipulates natural social cleavages, who makes certain of those cleavages politically salient, who exploit, use, and suppress conflict" (Rabushka and Shepsle 1972: 66). Regional nationalist parties have been characterised as 'ethnic entrepreneurs' that serve as 'systems of channelment' for the preferences of regional electorates, translating territorial divisions into distinct political movements and patterns of political opposition (De Winter and Tursan 1998). The significance of their emergence is attributable to the nature of their claims upon the state; regional nationalist parties constitute a challenge not simply to the content of government policies, but also to the existing territorial distribution of political authority, to the legitimacy of the constitutional principles underpinning the democratic regime, and in certain cases, to the very definition of the political community.[4] Yet, despite the resilience of the territorial cleavage, the longevity of certain regional nationalist

---

[4] Political parties play a role as agents of conflict and integration: although they represent different social groups, they serve as essential agencies for integrating their constituents into the political system. However, from the perspective of state builders, nationalist claims were less acceptable than socio-economic demands, due to their inherent challenge to the boundary control of the political elite (Bartolini 2004).

parties, and the far-reaching implications of their political claims, they have only recently attained a significant electoral prominence.

Existing scholarly efforts have concentrated on the breakthrough and electoral performance of regional nationalist parties, isolating as key variables the macro-historical trends transforming western electorates. The revival of regional nationalism has been characterised as a 'revolt against modernity' (Lipset 1985). The postulate of 'conflictual modernisation' is that in culturally plural societies, the differential rate and territorial scope of capitalist development will exacerbate status differentiation among communal groups, multiplying the coincidence of social cleavages, increasing the competition for resources between different groups, and increasing the 'carrying capacity' of ethnic identity relative to other social bases such as class (Nielsen 1985). Moreover, regional nationalist movements are associated with the broader sources of protest against the concentration of power that characterises the bureaucratic 'democratic Leviathan' that emerged in the aftermath of the Great Depression and the Second World War (Dahl 1966). The changing character of contemporary western society provided a fertile environment in which the nationalist political entrepreneurs could instigate political struggle and encourage discontent. The onset of the 'post-industrial' revolution- comprising the 'embourgeoisement' of society, the restructuring of the labour force towards the tertiary sector and the cognitive mobilisation of voters- provoked acute disruptions to stable political alignments, inducing the emergence of new social and political divisions.[5] Regional nationalist parties thus act as 'mobilizers and challengers' (Newman 1997; Rochon 1985), mobilising electorates on the basis of the territorial cleavage and challenging existing political parties by competing for their share of the electorate.

The affinities existing between regional nationalist parties and 'post-materialist' movements are evident in the social origins of their political leadership and bases of electoral support. The leaders of these parties have typically emanated from the well-educated, professional strata and their electoral support has derived form the formation of broad inter-class alliances within their region, with a skew towards the white-collar salaried classes. Although this does not hold for all regional nationalist parties, they generally obtain less support from less educated, traditional elements that continue to favour material interests (Esman 1977a). Micro-level analyses that focus on the motivations for supporting regional nationalist parties confirm that this may represent a

---

[5] This created patterns of de-alignment- a decline in partisan identification and an increase in electoral volatility, as well as patterns of realignment- the emergence of a new post-material cleavage, embodied in the ecological parties, and the revival of the territorial cleavage, incarnated in the rise of regional nationalist parties (inglehart 1977; Dalton et al. 1984)

sincere vote reflecting territorial variations in socio-economic and cultural factors (Gordin 2001; Hearl, Budge, and Pearson 1996; Urwin 1983a). Others authors have adopted rational choice approach, in which electoral support is driven by the protest of citizens dissatisfied with the prevailing system but that declines either when mainstream parties have co-opted the nationalist programme or have deployed public policies that attenuate the intensity with which parties press their demands (Hechter and Levi 1985; Rudolph and Thompson 1985). A number of works have also sought to isolate the ambiguous effect of the electoral system in conditioning the access of regional nationalist parties to the parliamentary arena: the discriminatory effects of a majoritarian electoral system will depend on whether they can concentrate their support, while the weaker threshold of a proportional representation (PR) system is offset by higher multi-partism at the district level and the extensive 'reach' of the party system that helps maintain voter loyalty to mainstream parties (Gordin 2001; Pereira, Villoders, and Nieto 2003). All these efforts have the value of highlighting the structural conditions underlying the resilience and politicisation of the territorial cleavage. But the main shortcoming of this body of research is that it continues to regard regional nationalist parties as the objects of study. Yet, what is interesting is precisely the far-reaching nature of their political claims, a significance captured in Derek Urwin's (1983a:55) statement that "expressions of regional distinctiveness are rather less interesting than the ramifications of their potential impact upon the state and the consequent implications for territorial structures".

Territory and Nation in Party Competition

The immediate 'consequent implication' of the breakthrough of regional nationalist parties is their insertion into the party system, the pattern of competitive interaction between political parties.[6] An examination of their influence on party competition has been undertaken principally through an analysis of their 'relevance', using Sartori's (1976:123) criteria of 'blackmail' and 'coalition' potential- the capacity to affect the tactics of competition and to determine the formation of governmental majorities. The first variable affecting the 'relevance' of regional nationalist parties is their size, measured in terms of their absolute electoral support and parliamentary strength, which is in turn due to the size of the region, the nationalist disposition of voters and the effective threshold of the electoral system. But relevance is also a systemic property that cannot be

---

[6] Party competition is a mechanism that lies at the heart of 'minimal-procedural' conceptions of democracy, in which rival teams engage in a competitive struggle for people's vote (Schumpeter 1954). Partisan actors share similar goals- winning electoral majorities and government office- but they are conscious rivals in attaining these objectives, the result being a process of continuous 'outbidding' between them for marginal electoral gains.

understood independently of the format and mechanics of the party system, i.e. the number and strength of interacting units and the direction adopted by the electoral 'outbidding'. Smith (1991) finds that smaller parties are likely to possess the greatest relevance in 'two-and-a-half' or in 'dominant multi-party' systems, where they can be 'pivotal' in providing support to the dominant party for the formation of majorities. Conversely, they are irrelevant in 'one-party-dominant' and 'two-party' systems, given the absence of alterations or coalition governments, while in 'undifferentiated' multi-party systems, the number of parties is too high for them to exercise any leverage.[7]

The ideology of regional nationalist parties is the second variable affecting their relevance for it determines the incidence of their insertion in a party system.[8] However, efforts at classifying regional nationalist parties according to their ideological profile have been complicated by the pluralism of aims that they display both on the territorial and left-right dimensions. As Derek Urwin (1983a:227) states, "there is little in the way of a common view of the structure of society. Few if any, could be said to have a 'weltanschaung'. Yet, this verdict is not particularly accurate if attention is directed towards the principle of self-determination, the key idea underpinning nationalist ideology that denotes the right of nations, *qua* social and political entities endowed with sovereign power, to determine their type of government and to exercise control over their national policies. This principle has often been equated with a crude claim to independent statehood (Connor 1967; 1973), overlooking the fact that certain stateless nations forgo the option of independence in favour of exercising territorial autonomy within the state and pursuing different degrees of self-government. If emphasis is instead placed on their 'controlling goals' for the reform of territorial structures (Dahl 1966), it can be appreciated that the members of this party family have a lot more in common than Urwin presupposed. When it comes to the left-right dimension however, the diversity of positions adopted by regional nationalist parties is difficult to refute. The complex relationship between class and territory and the stance that nationalist parties have adopted on socio-economic issues is influenced by the deep-rooted historical factors that shape the productive structures and class composition of regions, the choice of alliances and strategies during the 'critical juncture' of democratisation, as well as by the incentives

---

[7] The size of regional nationalist parties and the number of parties in the system are the numerical criteria at the basis of a power index that provide a single objective measure of the potential power of parties, calculated as the number of possible winning majorities in which the party is a necessary coalition partner (Shapley and Shubik 1954)

[8] In social and political theory, ideology is defined as a system of normative beliefs, a moral compass that provide political parties with a structured order and set of linkages between different concepts, values, goals that conjure images of utopian futures and guide and legitimate their political action (Freeden 1998).

and constraints of party competition (Erk 2005; Keating 1992; Van Houten 2003). Given the sociological profile of their leadership, regional nationalist movements have been typically characterised as *bourgeois* in orientation (Esman 1977b; Harvie 1994), but depending on the relative wealth of the region for which they speak and the social bases of their electoral support, regional nationalist parties can espouse social democratic or liberal economic policies, or even remain relatively 'detached' from such questions. Efforts at classifying the regional nationalist party family in terms of their ideology have therefore been less successful than for other party families. Commonalities can nevertheless be found in the internal rifts prompted by the strategic decisions of the party leadership. With respect to their cardinal political objective, regional nationalist parties are typically split between the gradualist and fundamentalist currents that hold different views on whether to accept the compromises offered by the mainstream parties as steps towards whatever final political utopia they may hold, and on whether to radicalise or moderate their claims, once these are either satisfied, defeated or lose their salience. Lastly, there is the matter of how to relate to mainstream parties and whether to adopt an isolationist strategy or a governing strategy (Aguilera de Prat 2002). The dilemma between office, policy and votes is particularly acute for regional nationalist parties, as whatever decision they reach is likely to be met by electoral punishment, either for not having seized the chance to participate constructively in national politics and advance the party's goal for autonomy or for having compromised on its objectives. Although regional nationalist parties have exercised coalition relevance on numerous occasions, these conflicting pressures are reflected in their ambiguous commitment to government coalitions and in their propensity to produce a high level of government instability (Brancati 2005).

Establishing the 'relevance' of regional nationalist parties offers an insight into the likely sites of their influence in a political system. However, the concept fails to supply any clues regarding the broader consequences for party competition and for the formation of governments. The voluminous literature on party system change suggests that in spite of the profound transformations affecting the social bases of mass politics, and their consequence for the volatility of electoral behaviour and for the fragmentation of party systems, mainstream parties 'adapt and control', adjusting to theses challenges to sustain their position as the dominant actors (Mair 1983; Mair 1993). A primary objective is therefore to identify how mainstream political parties have reacted to electoral flux and to the emergence of new political actors and issue-dimensions of party competition. Mair, Muller and Plasser. (2004) have sought to chart the range of possible responses,

distinguishing between the targets and methods of strategic responses: the adaptation of party programmes with a view of co-opting the policies of new parties; the co-optation of new parties in pre or post electoral coalitions; the reform of state institutions; the reform of party organisational structures. Yet, while this provides a comprehensive picture of available strategies, the set of circumstances that will determine which of these are selected remains unclear. This question has been partially addressed by work exploring mainstream responses to extreme-right and populist parties. Downs (2001) provides a preliminary explanation of the selection of different 'arrows in the quiver' of mainstream parties. The deployment of repression and containment strategies, through the imposition of legal restrictions or the formation of blocking coalitions, will depend on the radical ideology of the pariahs as well as the cohesion of the governing alliance between 'normal combatants' (cf. Capoccia 2005). The decision to engage the extremist threat, either by co-opting their policies or collaborating in different arenas, is then explained as a trade-off between electoral incentives and the constraint of democratic responsibility. In an interesting elaboration, Minkenberg (2001) ties the strategic responses of mainstream parties to the agenda-setting and policy effects of extreme right parties in the areas of immigration, asylum and citizenship laws, and finds that their greatest effect have been achieved in the electoral arena, where mainstream parties have shifted their position as a pre-emptive or reactive initiative designed to eliminate the electoral threat, whereas progress in the parliamentary and governmental arenas has been more limited.

This strand of literature offers a fruitful platform from which to explore the policy consequences of regional nationalist parties, but it remains incomplete in two crucial respects. The first issue to clarify is how the institutional arrangements of a political system that condition the concentration and dispersion of executive authority determine the type of 'relevance' and the arena from which regional nationalist parties set the political agenda. Secondly, the trade-off between incentives and constraints in different arenas must be further explored: it is important to get a sense of what magnitude of nationalist pressure and of broader changes in electoral markets, have influenced the dynamics of party competition and to understand how the origins and attitudes of mainstream parties will condition their willingness to accommodate nationality claims and undertake institutional reforms. Thus, in order to evaluate the 'potential impact' of regional nationalist parties on the structures of the state it is necessary to examine the variety of electoral, institutional and ideological factors that have conditioned the responses of mainstream parties in different spheres of political action.

The Influence of Regional Nationalist Parties

The political system exercises a primary influence. Drawing on the traditional distinction between majoritarian and consociational systems, Newman (1996) argues that the latter will be more accommodating towards regionalist challengers because they pose both an immediate electoral threat to individual parties, as well as a common systemic threat to the prevailing balance of power between mainstream parties. The desire for system-maintenance encourages elites to draw the regionalist challengers into the bargaining process and to pacify their claims through policy concessions. On the other hand, mainstream parties in majoritarian systems only perceive an individual electoral threat and will make direct appeals to the regional electorates on question of autonomy, rather than reward regionalist parties with an active role in government.

Although this thesis will broadly concur with Newman's (1996: 20) assessment that: "the rules of the political systems and its structure play in some cases the most decisive role in determining the success of regional movements", it is an endorsement that must be qualified. The first problem with Newman's argument concerns the logic to which he appeals; the author resorts to electoral survival and system-maintenance as the primary motivating forces, but there is little to support his claim that parties in majoritarian systems are less vulnerable. The electoral threat of regional nationalist parties could deprive a mainstream party from winning government, a more likely possibility in a winner-take-all system than in consociational system, where government coalitions are the norm. Moreover, as Newman (1996:16) himself acknowledges, in majoritarian systems, "the legitimacy of mainstream support is closely intertwined with the legitimacy of the state", articulating the notion that political parties in these systems, in particular those with a weak tradition of statehood such as Great Britain, play a greater role in sustaining the identity and sovereignty of the state (cf.Nettl 1968). A more intuitive and verifiable argument would appeal to the logic of party competition and government formation: mainstream parties accommodate regional nationalist demands in order to maintain a competitive position in electoral markets or to form a government with a secure parliamentary majority. The distinction that Newman makes is pertinent insofar as the first of these considerations would be more important in majoritarian systems, while the second would be relevant in consensus systems, but it would nevertheless require a more explicit articulation of the incentives and constraints faced by partisan actors. The second weakness in Newman's argument is that he presents a vague postulate correlating mainstream responses to a political system's placement on a majoritarian-consensus

spectrum, without distinguishing the respective effect of different types of institutions. A more nuanced explanation requires an analysis of how different institutions, such as the electoral system, the party system and executive-legislative relations condition the power relationship between regional nationalist and mainstream parties in different arenas and how the decision-rules regulating changes to the territorial distribution of authority condition the likelihood of institutional change. This effort would, moreover, enable the placement of systems that do not fall clearly into the established categories.

In an unpublished paper, Rogowski (1981) isolates the effects of the electoral threshold and the party system across different types of political system, positing the 'accessibility' of a regime as the key factor explaining a political system's 'vulnerability' to regional nationalism. He argues that the least vulnerable systems are uni-dimensional plurality system, where only local programmatic concessions are made by mainstream parties in order to undermine the nationalist newcomers; the intermediate category comprises PR systems in which policy concessions are made during coalition negotiations; and the most vulnerable are multi-dimensional plurality systems, where mainstream parties are likely to make local electoral concessions in their scramble for the median voter's support, as well as policy concessions in the process of coalition bargaining. The merit of Rogowski's approach lies in its capacity to provide a set of testable hypotheses that relate the institutional setting and the dimensionality of the party system to the type of mainstream response. However, by leaning on Downs'(1957) proximity theory of competition, his explanation is exposed to some of the theory's theoretical and empirical shortcomings. Attractive in their elegance through they may be, spatial models overlook the full range of responses and ignore the empirical conditions underlying the demand and supply side of electoral markets that will determine these responses (Bartolini 1999).The central flaw with Rogowski's explanation is that the responses of mainstream parties in the electoral arena are correlated, strictly and automatically, with the institutional parameters of the different political system in which they compete. It fails to consider the full range of different possible strategies that mainstream parties can deploy and to explain how these strategies vary across different types of parties, according to the nature of competitive interactions with regional nationalist parties, as well as with one another, and according to their distinct attitudes regarding the accommodation of nationalism. As a result, the analysis overlooks a good deal of the variation that occurs within political systems and neglects factors that explain the timing and substance of policy responses and are thus necessary for understanding the nature of political outcomes across countries.

When analysing the strategic choices of mainstream parties, the first issue is to consider is that party competition takes place simultaneously between all partisan actors. Thus, mainstream parties may select a strategy of accommodation not simply in response to the competitive pressures of regional nationalist parties, but in order to register gains against their mainstream rival (Adams, Merrill, and Grofman 2005; Meguid 2008). The second issue to consider is that mainstream parties dispose of a range of possible responses. Saliency theory suggest that parties do not compete on all issues but rather emphasise the issues on which they have a distinct advantage; mainstream must therefore first decide whether to acknowledge or dismiss nationalist claims and compete on the territorial dimension (Budge, Robertson, and Hearl 1987). If they do so, the directional theory of issue-voting suggests that parties will adopt an accommodating or adversarial strategy, adopt a broadly positive or negative stance on the issue of territorial autonomy (Rabinowitz and MacDonald 1989). If an accommodating stance is adopted, the proximity theory suggests that mainstream parties will the reposition themselves at the different points on a scale of alternatives that maximises their electoral support.

The choice of strategy will be determined by the two empirical conditions that affect the balance of incentives and constraints that mainstream parties face. The first is their asymmetric vulnerability to the pressures of regional nationalist parties: the availability of voters will have uneven consequences across the party system since each mainstream party is supported by a separate constituency that exhibits a different degree of partisanship and 'encapsulation' in social and political organisations and thus a different predisposition to defection towards new issues and parties (Bartolini and Mair 1990). A related determinant is the geographical distribution of electoral support: the establishment of the functional cleavage as the main dimension of competition belies the persistence of an uneven territorial distribution of support that may see mainstream parties draw a disproportionate share of votes in the regions in which regional nationalist parties compete (Agnew 1996). It is expected that the mainstream parties that are most vulnerable to the pressures of regional nationalist parties are more likely to adopt an accommodating stance. The second is the openness of their ideology to the accommodation of nationalism. The susceptibility of mainstream parties will be determined firstly by the operational goals of regional nationalist parties. Rudolph and Thompson (1985; 1989) posit an inverse relationship between the radical nature of regional nationalist parties' political objectives and the responsiveness of mainstream parties: movements concerned with expanding their region's share of government output

are more easily catered for than those championing independence. When it comes to responding to nationality claims for the re-organisation of territorial structures however, mainstream parties must reconcile these demands with the different beliefs rooted in their ideology. Ideology imposes two significant constraints on the willingness of mainstream parties to respond to nationality claims. The first is one of reputation: the strategy of mainstream parties must be consistent with an existing record and a historic tradition of policies. Political parties belonging to different party families will exhibit different traditions that reflect the specific historical circumstances in which they were founded, as well as the collection of common ideas that have shaped their identity (Przeworski and Sprague 1986). Certain parties are historically associated with a particular issue- for instance Socialist parties with the welfare state- and it is more plausible for them to adopt a policy in the direction of greater redistribution than a Liberal or Conservative party, which has little tradition of enthusiasm or support fort this policy. The second is one of coherence: ideologies are complex systems of inter-related values, goals and beliefs and the adjustment of a party's stance is not an isolated occurrence; a mainstream party must ensure that the adjustment of its position on the territorial dimension is compatible with its other values and objectives (Downs 1957: 64; Robertson 1976). Thus, it is expected that the mainstream parties whose ideologies are open to territorial autonomy will more readily accommodate the demands of regional nationalist parties.

It transpires from this body of work that institutional arrangements and the empirical conditions underling party competition are critical in conditioning the responses of mainstream parties. However, these set of variables must be organised in a more systematic fashion into an analytical framework that considers the set of electoral, institutional and ideological factors that affect the responses of mainstream parties in different spheres of political action. In addition, a proper investigation of the process of territorial restructuring must explore the dynamics of the decision-making process that condition whether the initiatives of mainstream parties are translated into substantial decisions to transfer political authority to the regional level. The aim of the next chapter is to elaborate a two-stage analytical framework that centres on the agenda-setting capacity of regional nationalist parties and on the decision-making process regulating institutional change. This two-part framework will allow for a better appreciation of the set of factors that determine the channels through which regional nationalist parties exert pressure on and elicit responses from mainstream parties and that condition the feasibility and substance of reforms to the structures of the state.

CHAPTER THREE

Agenda-Setting, Decision-Making and Institutional Change

The mobilisation of political parties and electorates around the territorial and nationalist poles of identity represents a particularly acute challenge for democratic political systems since it constitutes an opposition to the variety of structures and institutions that underpin their existence and functioning, such as the territorial unity of the state, the symbols of state identity, and the formal constitutional rules allocating political power. For mainstream political elites, regional nationalism raises a fundamental dilemma because it imposes the need to respond to the constitutional preferences expressed by certain constituents of stateless nations in order to compete successfully in electoral contests, while simultaneously limiting the extent to which some of these are recognised or realized, lest their fulfillment disrupt the very structures in which democracies operate, compromise the beliefs and ideologies that have defined and guided their own identities and political actions, alienate other social and territorial constituent groups with differing demands and thus compromise electoral support across the rest of the country. The politics of accommodation is a process of engagement that aims to mitigate the intensity of this dilemma by yielding compromises that regulate the manner and extent to which these diverging claims and aspirations find satisfaction.

The aim of this chapter is to provide a theoretical framework in which the politics of accommodation can be understood. In the first section, it offers a conceptualisation of accommodation, elaborates on the policy responses to regional nationalist demands, and then identifies the principal dimensions of territorial autonomy that lie at the heart of the contention and negotiation between regional nationalist and mainstream parties. In the second section, the chapter elaborates the theoretical framework used in this thesis, focusing on the importance of agenda-setting and decision-making in conditioning the influence of regional nationalist parties on the reform of territorial structures. The framework first provides a definition of agenda-setting; it then distinguishes between the indirect influence that nationalist parties can exercise from the electoral arena through their 'blackmail potential' by affecting the dynamics of party competition and the direct influence that they can exercise from the parliamentary and governmental arenas through their 'coalition potential' by the determining the formation and stability of governments. It establishes how the type of agenda-setting power will vary with the electoral conjuncture, formal and informal political institutions, and the attitudes of mainstream political parties towards the accommodation of

regional nationalism and the decentralisation of authority. It then elaborates on how the decision rules regulating changes to the territorial distribution of authority and the ideological distance between partisan actors condition the likelihood and substance of institutional change. The third section of this chapter justifies the research design and strategies of causal inference employed in this thesis. The thesis adopts a 'most similar system' design comparing Great Britain, Spain and Belgium, an area-studies approach that allows sufficient variation on the principal variables of interest to examine the mains conjectures advanced in this thesis. To overcome certain of the inferential limitations inherent to the 'small-N' comparative case-study approach, this section highlights the value of within-case observations, made possible with the use of pattern-matching and process-tracing methods.

Strategies of Accommodation

The notion of accommodation finds its origins in normative democratic theories concerned with the type of safeguards and mechanisms that can be deployed to overcome the potential marginalisation of the political views of minorities and denial of their political rights (Dahl 1989). This concern has been particularly pronounced of late, with the growing self-consciousness of stateless nations whose demands for the institutionalised recognition of the plurinationalism of a society has forced the question of the cohesion of a polity into the forefront of public debate. Beyond the manner in which these tensions are resolved in the philosophical realm, they translate into a more immediate practical problem, since policies of accommodation have fundamental implications for the long run cohesion of the polity. As Rokkan and Urwin (1983:166) put it:

> "the primary objectives of any state are to preserve the integrity of the territory and to ensure within these boundaries the legitimacy of its existence through obtaining popular support for and acquiescence to its political authority".

The dilemma between the objectives of legitimacy and stability is managed through the politics of accommodation, a concept that has gained currency in the stream of comparative politics dealing with the management of sociological pluralism. It finds its earliest articulation in the theory of consociationalism whose main proponent, Arend Lijphart (1969:103) referred to "the pragmatic settlement of divisive issues and conflicts, where only a minimal consensus existed". The requisite consensus was a shared attitude among the elites that the existing system should not be allowed to disintegrate, such that consociationalism was "not so much any particular institutional arrangement, as the deliberate joint efforts by elites to stabilise the political system" (Lijphart 1969:123). The aim of ensuring the stability of

the political system through mutually acceptable compromise thus lies at the heart of accommodation. In this thesis, accommodation is conceived more narrowly as the deployment of territorial autonomy for the management of tensions generated by the claims of regional nationalist political parties for greater self-government. Its purpose it to 'contain' regional nationalism by decreasing the intensity of the claims that parties advance (Hechter 2000). It is the reflection of democratic rulers' objectives of preventing the disorder that may be provoked by independentist or autonomist groups, while maintaining the legitimacy of their rule and the territorial integrity of the state. An important departure from the conception found in consociational theory is that the attitudes of the actors are not necessarily characterized by a joint effort at stabilizing the political system. In fact, because regional nationalist parties dispute the existing distribution of political authority, their claims are inevitably sources of instability for the prevailing constitutional order. Furthermore, the principal protagonists involved must realize their ambitions during the process of democratic contestation- offering programs that embody their contrasting visions of the institutions that offer a legitimate recognition of the plurality of national identities existing within the state. The process is conditioned by the set of formal rules that regulate party competition, but these rules are not crafted to induce self-restraining behaviour on the behalf of the elites of the respective groups. On the contrary, they are designed to guarantee that the process of competition is maximized by rendering it as fair as possible.[9] The only minimal consensus that exists is that the protagonists display a joint respect for the rules of the democratic game.

The politics of accommodation displays two characteristics: permanence and open-endedness. Contestation over the design and the content of territorial autonomy become an enduring feature of political life in multinational states. The tensions generated by territorial or nationalist conflict cannot be resolved once and for all; they can only be periodically managed, entailing a continuous process of engagement, negotiation and mutual adjustment on behalf of the main protagonists. Even if the intensity of nationalist fervour abates after an alteration in the autonomy of a regional government, it will reappear at a later date, as regional nationalist parties continue to make assertive claims for further autonomy, prompting mainstream parties to respond once again with further accommodation. Expressions of regional nationalism thus require continuous governmental management; as Tully (2001:5) argues "stable and just forms of recognition are an open-ended question and

---

[9] In consociational theory, in contrast, the process through which actors arrive at substantive policy decisions is structured by the variety of institutional devices- such as grand coalitions, mutual vetoes and proportionatlity that encourage moderation in the behaviour of elites and lead to negotiated and respected compromises, and that are ultimately conducive to systemic stability.

constitute the long-term activity of politics". The fact that there is no definitive answer regarding how best to manage territorial and nationalist tensions is also reflected in the open-ended trajectory that the process of accommodation adopts. Accommodation does not follow any overarching design that dictates the order of phases that must be followed or the content of the reforms that must be implemented. It evolves organically with the ebb and flow of regional nationalist mobilization and reflects the content of specific compromises at discrete moments in time. In this thesis, accommodation is thus defined as:

"the ongoing and open-ended response of mainstream political parties in a multinational state to the demands of regional nationalist political parties for the recognition of their distinctiveness and for the redistribution of political authority to the regional level."

Table 3.1. Policy Responses to Regional Natioanlist Demands

Approach	Measures	Policy
Rejectionist	Repressive	Repression of regional spokesmen, political expression of regional identity
	Control	Allocation of resources and positions to super-ordinate social segment
	Neutralising	Depoliticisation through keeping regional matters off the political agenda Delaying Response: appointing commissions, special inquiries, etc.
	Symbolic	Symbolic concessions- flags, cultural ceremonies, sports teams, etc.
Managerial	Output	Favourable language and education policies, pork-barrel projects, regional development funds
	Authority-Focused	grand coalitions, mutual vetoes, proportionality, segmental autonomy
	Territorial Autonomy	Administrative, legislative, fiscal decentralisation
	Community Restructuring	Separatism

Source: Rudolph and Thompson (1989)

The literature on the management of ethnic and territorial conflict has generated an extensive catalog of strategies available to political regimes to bring ethnic conflicts under control. Most of these draw inspiration from the 'consociational theme' (Daalder 1974), highlighting the variety of conflict regulatory *approaches*, such as depoliticisation, concession and compromise (Nordlinger 1972), as well as specific *practices* that foster cooperation between political elites, such as proportionality, mutual vetoes, grand coalitions, segmental autonomy (Lijphart 1969). The aim of such practices is not to put an end to communal rivalries but to diffuse power between elites sufficiently to enable contending groups to function competitively and to ensure that bargaining, rather than coercion, becomes the main instrument for regulating conflict. Consociational theory has the merit of emphasizing the

importance of compromise and concession as central elements to the bargaining relationship between rival elites, but its efforts remain too narrow as well as too broad: it overlooks the full variety of strategies that political elites have fashioned in response to regional nationalist demands, and fails to focus on the territorial autonomy, as a device for diffusing the specific claims of regional nationalism. While preserving the spirit of accommodation that consociationalism emphasizes, we must obtain a broader idea of the array of strategies available to political elites. Rudolph and Thompson (1989:228) suggest a useful framework, presented in Table 3.1, for grasping the range of policy responses.

The ontology of consociational theory is grounded in a conflict-oriented approach, in vision of society in which collective groups originating from deep social cleavages have naturally conflicting interests, where competition, disorder and breakdown are to be expected, and where the stability of the political system is maintained by the predisposition of political elites to compromise (Lipset 1985). This set of assumptions overlooks the possibility that political regimes may opt to maintain political stability through methods of control, using the state apparatus to forcibly assimilate minority groups, to institutionalize the dominance of a super-ordinate segment and to allocate material resources and political, administrative and judicial offices to its own members (Lustick 1979). For instance, in Spain the Franquist dictatorship aimed to create a single Hispanic culture by putting into place a programme of national homogenisation, brutally repressing all expressions of nationalist distinctiveness, imposing the use of Castilian and banning regional languages in schools and in the media.

Democratic regimes are however limited in the ways in which they regulate conflicts between national groups. The first source of constraint is an adherence to the principle of constitutionalism which imposes an obligation to observe the rule of law and to respect the equal rights of citizens; the forcible assimilation, cultural repression or systematic discrimination of groups is fundamentally contrary to the notion that government operates within certain parameters that delimit its capacity to infringe basic rights. Secondly, even if we adopt a procedural definition of democracy, the minimal level of freedom necessary for participation and opposition, the process of electoral competition regulating access to public authority ensures that through the "mechanism of anticipated reaction" governments are receptive to the preferences of their voters (Friedrich 1963). We can expect democratic regimes to adopt a more managerial approach to regulating ethnic and territorial conflicts. But the scope of options available remains wide, as De Winter and Tursan (1998:7) argue: "between the extreme intransigence on the part of ethnic groups and intolerance on the part of the state, a vast terrain of possibilities exists within which [ethnic]conflict can be solved."

At a minimum, governments can first deploy neutralizing tactics, by ignoring regional nationalist claims or dismissing them as irrelevant, by refusing to acknowledge the issue in public or by delaying any policy response by appointing a committee of experts to study the question. A first type of substantive concession a government can grant in response to regional nationalism is symbolic gestures, such as the recognition of flags, regional cultural celebrations and other expressions of local culture. These gestures enable governments to be seen to respond to demands without necessarily having to reform political institutions; it merely implies a willingness to recognize the distinct cultural character of particular national groups and to enable them to enjoy their cultural rights. Substantial policy responses can take several different forms. Governments can make 'output' concessions that can be handled by the prevailing decision-making process. These can be of a cultural type- recognizing the use of a regional language in the education system, in public administration and in the judicial system or of a material type- employing diversionary regional economic policies and regional development funds to help sustain certain regions. Governments can also opt to alter the existing institutional framework. This can be achieved through authority-focused concessions implying the admission of regional nationalist leaders in the central decision-making process, usually through consociational devices such as grand coalitions and representative bureaucracies. The purpose of such measures is to eschew majority rule, to broaden the scope of representation and participation to all political segments and to prevent the interests of minorities from being permanently excluded from the decision-making process. Lastly, the most draconian measure that elites can adopt is to restructure the political community and grant independence to a communal group. This measure is rare and usually occurs after violent conflicts, such as the secession of Ireland from the United Kingdom (1922).

A number of caveats must be borne in mind. Firstly, the managerial strategies 1 are rarely employed individually, as government will typically respond with a bundle of symbolic, output-oriented, authority-focused or territorial concessions whenever confronted with regional nationalist demands. Secondly, the list does not imply that policy invariably unfolds in the sequential and deterministic way in which it is presented in the table, with the initially deployment of symbolic concessions and 'output' measures, followed by authority-focused devices and territorial autonomy and so on. In fact, the analysis of accommodation in Great Britain, Spain and Belgium presented in second part of this thesis, reveals that there is no simple linear trajectory to its development and that there is no established rank-ordering of policy responses. The selection of strategy will be a function of historical traditions, past practices, specific nationalist claims and political circumstances.

Symbolic questions can often be highly contentious if they touch upon question such as the definition of national identity, the relationship between national identity and sovereignty, or if they recall sensitive historical events, stirring emotional outbursts that defy rational reasoning and disputation. Output concessions are purportedly easier to carry out since they do not directly imply any revision to the prevailing decision-making process, but if they have visible re-distributive implications in hard times, they may be equally as difficult to undertake as changes to the institutional order. Authority-focused concessions may be relatively easy to carry out if there is a tradition of consensus in the political system, but would be unfathomable in a system that displays strongly majoritarian institutions, while territorial autonomy may concern either administrative deconcentration, the transfer of powers in policy areas with low political salience or the transfer of substantial degree of fiscal autonomy with significant bearing for the national system of taxation and redistribution. There does not exist therefore any currency with which the different types of policy responses can be ranked, measured and compared, between political systems and over time. The acceptability of the demands of the regional nationalist parties and of the responses by mainstream parties will vary in function of the specific context- the historical experience, the political culture and institutional configuration of a political system and the moment in time in which demands are projected and accommodated. What must nevertheless be underlined is the ways in which the different policy responses do relate to each other.

Symbols lie at the centre of disputes concerning the just and legitimate forms of recognition of national groups. They can touch upon apparently trivial but deeply sentimental topics such as allowing a nation to field its own football team in international tournaments, to fly its own flag on public buildings or to celebrate the days of its national saints, heroes and glories of yore. But symbols can also allude to issues with greater normative implications because, as Keating (2001:102) states, "symbolism takes us to the very heart of political legitimacy and self-determination." Due to the customary association between statehood and nationhood in the international order of sovereign states, the recognition that a particular social group is a nation within a state implies that it constitutes a separate source of constituent power and enjoys a right to sovereignty, that is, a right to self-determination. The normative connotations inherent in the symbols underlying the term nation provide the ideational backdrop that nourishes the political utopias of regional nationalist parties. It allows them to claim self-government in the fields that reflect their cultural distinctiveness, such as education or language, but also to extend this claim to the right to control and redistribute resources within their own national group. Symbols also inform the regional

nationalist parties' vision of *political finalities* and the type of restructuring that would, in their view, produce a legitimate political order, such as the number of relevant entities that should serve as the component units in a regionalized or federal state, and the degree of autonomy and capacity conferred to them. Lastly, the symbolic right to self-determination entails that regional nationalist parties are putting forth claims to determine its relationship with the central government. This does not necessarily imply an ineluctable move towards separatism, given that some nationalist movements do conceive of region and nation-building within the confines of the existing state, but it does raise important questions regarding the constitutionality of the procedures deployed for the attainment of their objectives. The quest for territorial autonomy has been pursued with the greatest vehemence by regional nationalist parties and is the strategy of accommodation that is at the source of the territorial restructuring of states. A deeper examination of the concept is thus warranted.

Territorial Autonomy

      Territorial autonomy is an intermediary solution that will most likely satisfy both the claims of regional nationalist minorities for self-government and the desire of political elites to keep state boundaries intact. It results from the process of political decentralisation, the transfer of functions exercised by central governments to a subordinate elected body on a territorial basis. It represents the main avenue through which regional nationalist parties can realize their ambition, providing the elected political institutions, decision-making autonomy and resources necessary for participating in the regional decision-making process and for establishing their own political agenda. But the category encompasses a wide variety of arrangements with respect to the degree of authority that is conferred to regional governments. Keating (1992) has offered a useful framework for understanding the various dimensions of autonomy pointing to the constitutional status, functions, resources and capacities; this section adjusts it to the specific scenario of responses to the nationalist and territorial cleavage, by emphasizing the asymmetrical format of regional government.

The Constitutional Status of Regional Government

      The constitutional status of regional governments refers to the safeguards that they enjoy against the potential encroachment of their jurisdiction and the unilateral revision of their powers by the central government. In unitary states, the legal status and degree of autonomy of regional institutions is determined by central government legislation; it is an inherently top-down initiative that reflects the continued hierarchical predominance of the

central government, as it maintains control over the scope of regional governments' functions and continues to supervise the its legislative activities. In federal states on the other hand, the status of constituent units is guaranteed in a written constitution. Federations exhibit a polycentric sovereignty, in the words of Elazar (1997:239): "the federal model reflects a polity compounded of arenas within arenas held together by common framing institutions." The sharing of sovereignty and the constituent power of regional governments are incarnated in the federal principle that guarantees the division of power between levels of government, secures the conditions of parity between them and impedes the unilateral revision of the original set of powers and prerogatives. It is not unusual to find hybrid political systems displaying a mix of unitary and federal features, in particular those regionalized political systems encompassed in this thesis, in which the existence of regional governments is enshrined in the constitution, while their specific powers are established in legislation. A distinction may then be made between special laws with quasi-constitutional status that can amend the competences and resources of regions and that usually require qualified majorities, and ordinary legislation with no constitutional implications that demand simple majorities. This represents an abandonment of the federal principle to the extent that the competences of regional bodies could potentially be amended without their consent.

It is possible to make abstraction of whether the political system is categorized as unitary, regional and federal, and instead to focus on the difficulty of the amendment procedure associated with the legal device which regulates the legal status and powers of regional governments. Although their have been a number of attempts at establishing compound indicators that can capture the entire spectrum of amendment formulas in a single measure of constitutional 'rigidity' (Lutz 1994; Lorenz 2005), their adequacy has been put into question by the absence of clear correlations between many of their component measures, highlighting the fact that the sheer complexity of amendment procedures cannot possibly be reduced to a simple index (Rasch 2003). Instead, it is preferable to analyse the inertia of a legal device by examining the difficulty of surpassing the hurdles imposed during the process of amendment. The entrenchment of the constitution is a double-edged sword for both regional nationalist and mainstream parties. More demanding procedures tend to set in stone the existing powers of regional governments, making it difficult for the regional nationalist parties to expand regional authority and for the mainstream parties to claw them back, should they wish to recant on their commitment. Conversely, more flexible solutions enable regional nationalist powers to acquire more powers for regional governments, but leave them exposed to the whims of simple majorities.

The Asymmetrical Format of Regional Government

Asymmetrical regional government has conventionally been viewed as a suitable method for recognizing the national distinctiveness of stateless nations while maintaining the unity of the state. There naturally exist *de facto* asymmetries in the structure and outputs of regional governments, even in the presence of symmetrical constitutional structures, since there is no federal arrangement that is likely to be made up of equal states. This diversity can be the result of differences in the size and population of units, in their levels of economic development, in their social structures and traditions, in their capacities and resources, as well as in the differences in the practices of self-government, that is, in their choice to exercise the powers open to them (Duchacek 1970). Differences across component units are not therefore produced by their constitutionally-assigned degree of self-government but by environmental factors and political practices. *De jure* constitutional asymmetries imply on the other hand, the establishment of legal-formal differences between the units of a federation with respect to their constitutional status, autonomy and powers, and representation at the centre. These legal-constitutional differences originate in the deeply-rooted characteristics of the nations inhabiting a particular territory that arise when states become structurally differentiated. They reflect the normative principle that defends the importance of respecting and protecting national political communities, given their role in providing individuals with a sense of belonging and with a cultural toolbox that can provide meaning to social interactions (Kymlicka 1995). In multinational states therefore, it is likely that the regions with a distinct cultural grouping, a particularly high intensity of nationalist sentiment and a greater appetite for autonomy will have constitutionally-assigned advantages over other regions.

The presence of asymmetrical territorial autonomy in the states of Western Europe that have undergone significant territorial restructuring is not a surprising feature. As John McGarry (2005) points out, decentralizing unitary states will find it easier to create formal asymmetrical arrangements than existing federations, because they do not have state governments endowed with constitutional vetoes that are likely to regard asymmetry as conferring first and second class status to different territorial units. This does not entail however, that asymmetrical models do not conjure controversy. From the perspective of stateless nations, the justification for introducing *de jure* asymmetry, is that it allows the differential intensity of national identities and demands for self-government to find institutional expression (Requejo 1999). But asymmetry exists also in order to obtain a sense of political homeland and achieve a status that befits a national community; it serves a method for establishing symmetry between constituent nations.

For its opponents, the principal problem with asymmetry is that it threatens norms of democratic representation and accountability by disproportionately enhancing the influence of the asymmetric government in the central legislature, a perennial feature of devolution debates in Great Britain known as the West Lothian Question. Secondly, asymmetric regional government is blamed for increasing the level of inter-governmental friction because of the important differences in the policies pursued by a constituent government and those of the overall political system, and because of the privilege and discrimination that it may generate, in particular when it comes to the redistribution of state resources. Lastly, asymmetrical arrangements are said to have destabilizing effects on the political system by inducing a continuous ratchet effect, encouraging other political units to demand similar levels of autonomy to those enjoyed by the regional nationalities and by recognizing the plurinational character of a state. Lastly granting autonomy on the basis of negotiations with constituent nations, as the source of sovereignty or holders of original rights, asymmetry is also said to facilitate the identification between the state and the nation at the regional level and to encourage the 'secession potential' of a component unit (Keating 2001; Ventura 2004).

The Autonomy and Capacity of Regional Government

The powers attributed to regional governments lie at the heart of territorial autonomy because they furnish the substance of self-government, the instruments that enable national groups to establish distinct policy priorities, to realize different political programs and to implement divergent goals. The concept of autonomy refers to the right of a regional government to assert its own will and to make its own laws, a right that constitutes an essential criteria in federal theory (Riker 1975). The legislative autonomy of regional governments can either be exclusive to the regional government, concurrent or shared with the central government, corresponding to the classical dichotomy between dual and cooperative federalism. The presence of exclusive competences assumes that regional and central governments operate in separate and distinguishable spheres. There is also an underlying assumption that this neat separation implies a parallel decentralisation of administrative, judicial and fiscal responsibility (Baldi 2003). The cooperative model postulates an interdependence and coordination of legislative and executive activity between the two levels of government. Under concurrent competences the federal government issues framework laws in certain policy sectors, leaving regional governments to complement the legislation with specific details, but ensuring that federal law prevails in case of conflict. With shared competences, regional governments are empowered to execute federal legislation and

possess no independent legislative functions, only the power to amend administrative regulatory norms. A final important consideration when assessing the quality of territorial autonomy is the location of the residual authority, i.e. the assignment by the constitution of jurisdiction over areas that are not explicitly reserved for the state or devolved to the region. If they benefit from residuary power, regional governments can enjoy immediate power over future policy fields that may acquire political salience.

Administrative and financial resources endow regional governments with the capacity to make effective use of their legislative autonomy. Administrative decentralisation denotes the transfer of executive powers to central government field officials, for the purpose of adapting the implementation of central government policy to local circumstances, the paragon of which is the continental system of prefectoralism (Fesler 1965). Administrative capacity refers to the transfer of the infrastructure of the administrative apparatus towards regional governments, providing the authority to select staff and organize functional ministries, and furnishing the discretion to manage the workload that follows from legislative activity. The most important dimension underlying the capacity of regional governments is the financial resources at their disposal, since it enables them to fund the public services for which they are responsible. Financial resources can be acquired through different channels, depending on whether of regional control is located at the level of public expenditure or revenue-raising. The four principal means are: i) central government transfers that can be earmarked or not for specific policy sectors, ii) shared taxation over which the central government sets the base and rate, but over which regional governments can claim a specific share, iii) autonomous taxation over which regional governments can set the rate or iv) set the rate and base. The share over financial resources that accrue from control over revenue-raising serves as the most accurate measure of fiscal autonomy (Rodden 2004). However, it is important to underline that fiscal autonomy does not necessarily entail greater capacity. In the case of poorer regions with narrower tax bases, an increase in fiscal autonomy and a decrease in the size of central government transfers will hamper their ability to carry out their functions. Thus, the capacity of regions to realize their political goals does not necessarily depend on their independence from the centre.

Institutional Change and Territorial Restructuring

Changes in the principal strategies of accommodation and the dimensions underlying territorial autonomy constitute the 'dependent variable' of this thesis. The notion of change is inherent to the definition of accommodation adopted in this thesis, as a permanent and open-

ended process, but it also underlies the dynamic approach to federalism adopted by Carl Friedrich (1968), as an evolving patterns of changing relationships between federal centre and constituent unit. The gradual accretion of discrete institutional changes brings about the restructuring of territory, the transformation of unitary-centralized states into unitary-decentralised, regionalised and federal states. These states have been classified as 'holding together' (Stepan 1999) or 'post-modern' federations (Elazar 1997), but irrespective of how its institutional outcomes are categorized, what territorial restructuring entails is a continuous 're-bundling' of authority to the regional level, with the aim of ensuring a coincidence between national identity and politico-administrative boundaries (Ansell and Di Palma 2004).

Territorial restructuring is a highly uneven development that evolves in fits and starts, and that exhibits occasional reversals, but it is nevertheless possible to delineate the process temporally in order to undertake comparison across countries. This thesis will make a distinction between the moments of *creation* of regional government, and the subsequent *empowerment* and *deepening* of their autonomy and capacity. This delineation corresponds to existing theoretical models of the process of decentralization (cf. Rodrigues-Pose and Gill 2003) that outline how the dimensions of territorial autonomy will exhibit a variable salience over time: the issue of constitutional status will be settled during the moment of creation, while matters regarding asymmetry and the correspondence between legislative autonomy and fiscal capacity will be a continuous feature of subsequent phases in the bargaining between regional nationalist and mainstream parties. This strategy is preferable to measuring accommodation and/or territorial autonomy by producing single quantifiable indicators that can be traced across time and place (cf. Marks, Hooghe et al. 2008). Although this exercise is feasible and useful for measuring fiscal decentralization (Rodden 2004), it presents serious limitation when the task is to assess the evolution of a multi-dimensional concept, the respective components of which require different types of measurements (nominal, ordinal and continuous) that can not be assembled into a single compound indicator. Valid indicators employed in the measurement of institutional change and territorial restructuring must therefore be tied to the dynamic nature of the concept and must focus on categorical changes across the different strategies of accommodation (Adcock and Collier 2001). Such a temporal delineation is also justified when the subject of investigation is a macro-process that covers an extensive temporal space and which therefore features significant feedback effects that influence the political context. A careful sequencing of the historical process can take into account changes in the institutional context and in the preferences of actors, introducing temporality as a distinct element in the explanation (Buthe 2002).

Agenda-Setting Power and Decision-Making Threshold

The aim of this thesis is to draw on the increasing intensity and frequency of regional nationalist political mobilisation in contemporary west European party systems, and through a systematic comparative analysis, to provide an explanation of the influence of regional nationalism on the process of territorial restructuring. The thesis adopts a state-centric perspective that privileges the critical role exercised by parties and elections, formal and informal institutions, political ideologies, decision-making processes. It advances the idea that the confrontation between regional nationalist parties with the central government is not simply limited to the disintegrative tendencies unleashed by the type of constitutional and normative issues that are raised, it is also related to the notion that the form of state that regional nationalist challenge will condition its likely responses and the eventual satisfaction of their goals. To understand the factors affecting changes in the distribution of political authority within a state, we must direct our analytical lenses not simply to the challenge itself, but to the properties of the object of the challenge. As Rokkan and Urwin (1983:4) put it,

"the centre-simply because it is the centre- still occupies a crucial political position in determining not only the generation of regionalist aspirations, but also their content *and the likely prospects of success.*" (emphasis added)

The main thrust of the argument is that this influence hinges on the agenda-setting power of regional nationalist parties and on the decision-making threshold for ratifying institutional change. It is argued that the sphere of political activity from which regional nationalist parties can advance their claims onto the political agenda will depend on the type of political system in which they operate: whereas in a majoritarian system, their influence is likely to be situated in the electoral arena, in a consensus system, their influence is likely to be situated in the electoral as well as the parliamentary and governmental arenas. Secondly, the thesis argues that the influence of regional nationalist parties in the electoral arena can take two forms: they can compel mainstream parties to adjust their position on the territorial dimension in an effort to stave off electoral pressures or in order to compete against their mainstream rival. The capacity of a mainstream party to adjust its position will be determined by the 'plausibility' of the change of policy on the issue of territorial autonomy: given the openness of their ideology to political decentralisation and their tradition of accommodating regional nationalism, Social Democratic and Christian Democratic parties are more likely to undertake a change in policy than Conservative parties, which have traditionally displayed a reticent attitude towards the reform of political institutions and the recognition of particularistic identities. In the parliamentary and governmental arenas, regional nationalist

parties can set the agenda either through lending parliamentary support to mainstream parties or entering coalition governments, but in the two cases, their power is determined by the strength of their bargaining position and their ideological proximity to the position of the mainstream parties in government. Finally, the thesis contends that the extent to which the demands of regional nationalist parties that are placed on the political agenda are translated into substantive institutional changes will be determined by the interaction between the decision-rules regulating changes to the territorial distribution of authority and the ideological distance between partisan actors. If a mainstream party in government or if a coalition government is deeply divided on its policy of reforming territorial structures, then institutional change is unlikely to occur.

Rational Choice and Historical Institutionalism

The notion that 'institutions matter' has become conventional wisdom in political science with the advent of neo-institutionalism as the paradigmatic approach informing the work that seeks to construct models of interaction between institutions and political actors (March and Olsen 1984; Hall and Taylor 1996; Peters 1999). The claims of this thesis draws inspiration from rational choice and historical institutionalism, as they correspond to the two-stage theoretical argument advanced in this thesis: relating micro-level scenarios, that specify how the incentives and decisions of political actors are subjected to institutional constraints, to the origin and complex development of macro-level institutions that are designed to contain social and political conflict. The thesis moreover draws on the points of intersection existing between rational choice and historical institutionalism (Katznelson and Weingast 2005). It posits that the preferences of political actors can be imputed, based upon certain assumptions about rational political behaviour, but that their strategies can be influenced over time by institutions and historical processes. It takes the foundations of institutional change seriously, by providing an analysis of micro-level strategic interactions but also by tracing how institutional arrangements are fashioned as a result of historical developments

The thesis will employ institutionalism as a methodology that distinguishes between institutional theories and theories of institutions (Diermeier and Krehbiel 2003). Institutional theories will be used in the first stage of the framework for analysis. It treats political institutions and ideologies as exogeneous structural features that influence the incentives, beliefs and behaviour of political parties and the choices of decision-makers, and is used for explaining the competitive interactions between regional nationalist and mainstream parties, the responses deployed by mainstream parties and the degree of influence that regional

nationalist parties exercise on the political agenda. Institutions are conceived as formal and informal sets of rules that structure the behaviour of political actors, which are driven by vote, office and policy-seeking motivations (Strom 1990; Strom and Muller 1999); ideology is conceived as a cognitive map that structures the linkages between the different values and goals of political parties, colours their perception of certain issues, conditions their capacity to incorporate them into their prevailing belief system and guides their political action.

The second stage of the framework makes use of theories of institutions, that seek to understand institutions as objects of collective choices and that can be used to explain why some institutional features come into existence and persist or mutate over time. The historical institutionalist approach suggests that actors act under the influence of 'bounded rationality' which limits their cognitive capacity (Elster 1983; Simon 1991). Actors design institutions according to expedient or pragmatic considerations but act in a world replete with existing institutional models, are profoundly influenced by their past traditions and practices, and aim to ensure the compatability of their different policies. Once created, institutional settlements are reproduced over time through the maintenance of the specific coalition of partisan interests that established them, but they also create a new institutional setting that conditions the interaction between partisan actors. The earliest historical events thus exercise a strong 'path-dependent' influence on the overall sequence of territorial restructuring. But 'path-dependency' does not in this context entail a deterministic inertial tendency, whereby an institutional arrangement is reproduced over time through a self-reinforcing 'lock-in', in which political actors respond to the logic of sunk costs and increasing returns (cf. Pierson 2000). Rather, it is argued that the initial institutional settlement will trigger a 'reactive sequence' (Mahoney 2000) or 'negative feedback loops' (Greif and Laitin 2004) that compel partisan actors to adapt their constitutional preferences and that shape the likelihood of subsequent institutional change. The onset of a 'reactive sequence' implies the generation of a series of analytically separate but interdependent episodes, in which there is a new partisan distribution of power and an adjustment of partisan preferences with respect to the institutional status quo. The outcomes of these successive episodes accumulate over time, fashioning the dynamics of territorial structuring and giving shape to the emerging form of state. Institutional settlements thus rarely find themselves in equilibrium: their different feature produce conflict and contain the seeds of their subsequent replacement, replacements that are prompted by changes that are endogenous to the political system. It is essential now to elaborate how this overall conjecture about the properties of the political system and the attitudes of mainstream parties operate during the agenda-setting and decision-making phases.

Agenda-Setting Power

The political agenda is an expression that is frequently employed to refer to the list of goals that motivate a government's actions. Drawing attention to the ability of regional nationalist parties to shape the content of the political agenda is a worthwhile effort because of the appropriateness of the level of analysis to which the concept pertains. In parliamentary systems, agenda-setting constitutes the first stage of a broader decision-making process that remains the prerogative of the executive (Tsebelis 2002). Moreover, the specific issue that regional nationalist parties are raising- the political decentralisation of authority is a top-down initiative that is subject to discretion of the central government. Lastly, taken at a higher level of abstraction, the concept also captures the essence of the struggle taking place between regional nationalist and mainstream parties- a control over the salience of the different issues receiving the consideration of governments. As E.E. Schattschneider (1960) pointed out, party systems do not only involve conflicts between parties, but also 'conflicts of conflicts', conflict over the type of divisions that are adjudged sufficiently pressing, to be worthy of the attention, time and resources of governments.

The relevance of this concept for our present purpose is that it points to the object which regional nationalist parties must act upon in order to advance their objectives. To bring about a change in the structures of the state, they must first be able to set the agenda by compelling the mainstream party in government to adopt policy of institutional change. The policy analysis literature has offered an understanding of agenda-setting that refers to the process by which diffuse demands are transformed into specific issues that are explicitly up for the consideration and action of decision makers (Cobb and Elder 1983; Kingdon 1995). This offers a useful starting point that will be tailored to the objective of this thesis; agenda-setting is defined in this thesis as:

"the capacity of regional nationalist parties to transform their political demands for territorial autonomy into issues that receive the attention, consideration and action of mainstream parties in government."

Since mainstream parties dominate a country's political scenery- as the principal actors in the party system and in government- setting the political agenda is conceived as the capacity of regional nationalist to influence mainstream parties to adopt a policy of institutional change. This influence can take place in three different sites of action- the electoral, the parliamentary and the governmental arena. This distinction can be brought to bear on the analysis of the process by which regional nationalist parties exercise influence on the agenda. In the electoral arena, they exercise an indirect influence on the agenda by wielding 'blackmail potential' exerting electoral pressures on mainstream political parties,

influencing the tactics of competition and compelling them to adjust their position on the territorial dimension; in the parliamentary and governmental arenas they exercise a direct influence on the agenda by wielding 'coalition potential', asserting their demands before mainstream parties during partisan negotiations that precede the forging of parliamentary alliances or the formation of coalition governments.

Electoral Arena

The electoral arena constitutes the primary sphere of political action from which regional nationalist parties can set the political agenda. By appealing to the regional electorate's sense of national identity and winning their support, regional nationalist parties constitute an electoral threat for mainstream political parties. The vulnerability of a mainstream party to this vote loss is conditioned by its strength in and dependence on the territory in which regional nationalist parties compete. The electoral system is the main contextual variable that conditions the significance of the electoral threat since it affects the ability of nationalist parties to win seats. In political systems with proportional representation (PR), the low electoral threshold makes it relatively easy for them to dispossess mainstream parties of their seats. In contrast, under a plurality electoral system, the high threshold means that regional nationalist parties have to concentrate all of their support in a few districts in order to obtain seats, reducing the significance of their electoral threat.[10]

The response of mainstream parties to this threat is driven by the logic of strategic interaction; parties are construed as rational utility-maximisers that seek to increase their share of votes and seats, increase their power within government office and determine its policy agenda (Strom 1990; Strom and Muller 1999). The saliency and directional theories of competition suggest that the choices that mainstream parties must make are firstly whether to address the demands issued by regional nationalist parties and secondly whether broadly to reject or accept them. This generates three possible types of strategic responses: dismissive, adversarial or accommodating (Meguid 2005; 2008). The first option is to deploy a dismissive electoral strategy that downplays the relevance of the issues which regional nationalist parties seek to bring to the forefront of public debate, and that instead highlights the issues on which mainstream parties hold an advantage, principally the traditional left-right issues. The second option is to deploy an adversarial strategy, the purpose of which is to oppose the demands of

---

[10] In conditions of high electoral competitiveness at the district level, mainstream parties can lose a marginal seat as a result of a small loss of votes to a regional nationalist party. In addition, the plurality system exaggerates a party's dependence on seats emanating from the particular region in which regional nationalist parties compete, amplifying their vulnerability to vote and seat losses in that region. Thus, in spite of the presence of a high threshold, regional nationalist parties can present a significant threat in a plurality system by affecting a mainstream party's chances of governing

regionalist parties, to polarise regional electorates and to secure the support of voters that are uncommitted to the nationalist cause. The third option is to deploy an accommodating strategy that acknowledges the demands of regional nationalist parties. The logic underlying this response is that mainstream parties can maximise their share of the vote by co-opting the demands of regionalist parties, converging towards their position or that of the median regional voter, undermining the latter's ownership of the issue of territorial autonomy and convincing regional voter to switch allegiances (Downs 1957; Hinich and Munger 1997).

The main consequence of the institutionalization of the territorial cleavage for party competition is the existence of the territorial issue-dimension, which mainstream political parties can manipulate in their competitive interactions with one another. Mainstream political parties may thus adjust their position on the territorial dimension not simply in response to the immediate electoral pressures exerted by regional nationalist parties but also in order to maximize their share of the vote relative to their immediate mainstream rival. The circumstances under which this is likely to happen are spelled out by Meguid (2008: 99-104). If the regional nationalist party is a centrist party threatening all mainstream parties, then they will deploy accommodating strategies and compete against each other over the ownership of the territorial issue. If the regional nationalist party is a flank party, the mainstream party under immediate threat will deploy an accommodating electoral strategy and manipulate the salience of the territorial dimension if it in opposition and is engaged in competitive electoral contests with a mainstream rival, since it is under those circumstances that the electoral gains it makes are likely to make a difference to the outcome of the election and to its chances of winning office. In response, the non-proximal mainstream party may will seek to heighten the salience of the territorial issue-dimension in order to strengthen the position of the regional nationalist party, to thwart the efforts and weaken its mainstream rival in opposition, and can do so by deploying either an accommodating or an adversarial electoral strategy.[11]

The capacity of a mainstream party to deploy an accommodating electoral strategy in its contests against regional nationalist and mainstream parties is however constrained by electoral, ideological and organisational factors. In order to undertake a policy shift on the territorial dimension, the party leadership must firstly be certain that it is a vote-maximising policy, that is, that the gains in votes it will generate will be higher than the loss of votes it may provoke. The reason a shift in policy may occasion a loss of support is if the party's

---

[11] Meguid (2008) argues that non-proximal parties will invariably deploy an adversarial strategy because the objective of the strategy is not to win over the supporters of the regional nationalist party but to polarise regional electorates around the issue of territorial autonomy, thereby strengthening the regional nationalist party and weakening the mainstream rival. Although there is evidence to support this claim, this thesis argues that Meguid overlooks the ideological constraints and that a mainstream party adopts an adversarial strategy because that is the only 'plausible' policy.

traditional followers feel that the party leadership is sacrificing the party's ideology. In the study of party competition, ideology has been conceived by Philip Converse (1964: 207) as "a configuration of ideas and attitudes in which elements are bound together by some form of constraint." Ideology thus acts as a cognitive straightjacket that colours the perception that parties hold of certain issues and that condition their capacity to respond to them or to incorporate them into their prevailing belief systems. In Robertson's(1976)formal theory of competition, ideology limits the party's capacity to undertake a shift on the territorial dimension by conditioning the 'plausibility' of the new policy. This constraint works in four different ways. Firstly, the policy must be seen to be credible, that is, consistent with a party's record of action and policy initiatives. This suggests that a party's past behaviour acts as an important catalyst or an impediment to a policy shift in the short-run as well as the long-run. Secondly, the policy shift must signal a return to an older tradition or set of practices. Certain parties are historically associated with a particular issue- for instance Socialist parties with the welfare state- and it is more plausible for them to adopt a policy in the direction of greater redistribution than a Liberal or Conservative party, which has little tradition of enthusiasm or support fort this policy. Specific policies are therefore not party-neutral. Thirdly, a policy must be compatible with other aspects of the party's programme; for example, a party cannot coherently propose to increase spending on schools and defense while maintaining taxation constant. Lastly, a policy must be aligned with the party's ideology, that is, it must be situated as a component part of the realisation of the party's broader social and political objectives.

The constraint that is imposed by a party's ideology is not merely cognitive, is also acts on a party's capacity, as an organisation, to formulate a policy. There may exist within the party's different organs- the party executive, the parliamentary group, the regional and local branches- as well as among the rank-and-file different degrees of attachment to the facets of a party's ideology or traditions, and thus there will exist different interpretations of the value of a change in policy for the purpose of vote-maximisation (Iversen 1994; Kitschelt 1994). Although, the party leadership's actions will tend to be driven by electoral expediency, the same cannot be said for the rank-and-file which may be devoutly tied to ideological purity or individuals candidates, which may be concerned with fulfilling their constituents' preferences. This suggests that the existence of policy differences or the co-existence of competing traditions within the party will make it difficult to undertake a policy shift. The conclusion that follows is that an accommodating strategy is rarely a party-neutral, automatic policy; it is an incremental process of adaptation that takes place within a specific party, according to the openness of its ideology, in an evolving environment of party competition.

It is possible to evaluate the openness an ideology to the accommodation of regional nationalism by tracing the place that this policy occupies in the belief systems of mainstream party families, classified according to their origins and ideologies (Mair and Mudde 1998). Liberalism has revealed a good deal of ambivalence on the issue of territorial autonomy and the recognition of national pluralism. Traditionally, the preference of liberals from Locke to Rawls is for any type of political arrangement that will defend the rights and liberties of individuals and will allow them to pursue their conception of the good life. In the libertarian tradition, articulated most forcefully by Nozick (1974), the state is conceived as a necessary evil that exists purely for the protection of property rights and the regulation of social interactions in the market place; there follows a general suspicion of any initiative that may lead to the growth of government.. Related to this view, classical liberalism is founded on an economistic conception of the individual driven by instrumental rationality and there are few justifications in this tradition for paying heed to cultural particularities (Freeden 1998). However, a separate tradition, articulated by James Madison (1987) in the *Federalist Papers* presents the creation of regional government as an additional sphere of democratic activity and a bulwark against a democratic majority and over-mighty state, supplementing the role of the executive, legislature and judiciary in ensuring the diffusion of authority across the political system. The recognition and acceptance of national pluralism resonates moreover, with one of the core principles at the origins of liberalism, that of toleration

Against the winds of liberal progress have stood the forces of Conservatism. Intellectual historians have resisted labelling Conservatism as an ideology, or as a coherent system of ideas and beliefs; rather, it been defined by Michael Oakeshott (1962) as a disposition that is suspicious of social and political change, that upholds existing institutions as the treasured bequest of history, and that is unreceptive to the abstract visions and empty promises of political utopias. The hostility traditionally displayed towards the accommodation of nationality claims has therefore stemmed primarily from a reluctance to reform existing political institutions. In Edmund Burke's(2003) view, a country's system of goverernment is the product of a complex historical development that has guided the actions of generations of statesmen, the authority of which cannot be challenged for the purpose of either realising a grand project or satisfying short-term wants. This lack of sympathy for particularist claims also derives, in certain strands of Conservatism, from a strong commitment to the national community as an integrative force underlying an organic society, which, alongside social constructs such as the church and the family and the values of social hierarchy and discipline, are necessary for maintaining a stable social order.

One the main variants of Conservatism found on the European continent is Christian Democracy, a political movement which strove to transcend the purely negative reaction of the ancient régime to revolutionary democratic convulsions and to reconcile the Catholic Church's teachings with democratic political institutions. Christian Democratic ideology displays a more accommodating stances towards particularistic nationalist claims, an attitude that is induced by a paternalistic concern for ensuring the rights of all segments of society, a commitment to 'personalism', the belief that individuals can only fully develop through their relationship with organic social entities such as the local community, as well as the claim to represent all sections of society. In addition, as a result of a deep distrust of the power of the sovereign states, Christian Democracy has traditionally advocated federal forms of social and political organisation. The Catholic encyclicals encouraged the productive bases of society to be organised on the basis of autonomous guilds and promulgated the principle of 'subsidiarity', according to which it is unjust to assign to a larger and higher society what can be done by smaller and lower communities (Pombeni 2000).

Social democracy has produced the most diverse set of traditions regarding the economic alternatives to capitalism and the nature and purpose of the state. Early 'utopian' socialist doctrine, expounded by thinkers such as Fourrier, Owen and Proudhon, developed their vision of the economic basis of society in opposition to large-scale industrial systems, opting instead for the establishment of industrial and agrarian local communities working on the basis of the principles of cooperation. Their views resonated with syndicalist theory, a form of revolutionary trade unionism that saw the emancipation of the working class as something to be achieved by local trade unions- autonomous, democratic organisations that would collaborate on a voluntary basis in their common action (Lichtheim 1969). This tradition was gradually supplanted with the growing hegemony of statist ideology, explicit in Marxism socialist doctrine, in the First and Second International, and then with the advent of reformist social democracy, the advance of parliamentary socialism and the recognition of the possibilities offered by democratic politics and the control over the state machinery. During the inter-war period, Socialist parties began to regard the state as an instrument that could be used for the redistribution of power and resources, and began to develop policies for economic planning and social welfare. On the basis of this comparative analysis of the origins, beliefs and traditions of different party families, we can expect that, because of their tradition of support for territorial autonomy, the Liberal, Christian Democratic and Socialist parties will be able to effect a 'plausible' shift in policy and deploy accommodating electoral strategies in their competitive interactions against regional nationalist and mainstream parties.

Parliamentary and Governmental Arenas

The parliamentary and governmental arenas constitute the second sphere of political action from which regional nationalist parties can set the agenda. By obtaining parliamentary representation, regional nationalist parties can become associated with majority power by wielding power over the formation and dissolution of governments and over the ratification of their legislative programme. Unlike the influence exerted from the electoral arena which can, theoretically, be observed across all types of democratic political systems, 'coalition relevance' is more likely to be exercised in consensus than majoritarian systems. In a majoritarian systems with a single-party government and a dominant executive which fosters adversarial relations with parties in opposition, there is tendency to narrow the scope of governmental power. In consensus political system featuring multiparty systems, coalition governments and weaker executive that fosters collaborative relations with the opposition, there is a tendency to broaden the scope of governmental power, and regional nationalist parties can expect to exercise direct agenda-setting powers. The consequences of this power is situated not at the level of the attitudes of mainstream parties, but in the actions that they take in government. In offering their parliamentary support to a government or entering a coalition, regional nationalist parties can oblige mainstream parties to instigate reforms to the structures of the state or can participate in shaping the content of the measures designed to accommodate nationality claims. The extent to which they can influence the content of the reforms will depend on the strength of their bargaining position and on the 'coalitional' character of their alliance.

The contemporary debate in political science on the composition of governments has isolated three key variables of significance for explaining the bargaining power of parties and the types of governments are formed: power, ideology and institutions (De Winter 2002). These have often been presented in opposition to one another, but empirical work has demonstrated that all of these variables are necessary for understanding substantive political outcomes (De Vries 1999; Martin and Stevenson 2001). The first determinant of a party's bargaining power during coalition negotiations is its size- measured by the number of parliamentary seats it controls. Power-oriented theories that conceive parties as rational actors concerned purely with maximizing power stipulate that if a party controls enough seats to provide a parliamentary majority, it will be included in a minimum winning coalition, one that includes the minimum number of seats and political parties. (Riker 1962). Variants of these power-oriented theories have sought to produce a priori indices to measure the 'potential' bargaining power of parties by

incorporating the format of the party system as an additional variable that affects the probability that any single party can delivery a qualified majority (Shapley and Shubik 1954). Thus, the number of seats under a party's control is not an efficient predictor of outcomes, the constellation of partisan forces in the party system and the distribution of power between them must also be taken into account. The location of regional nationalist parties in ideological space, determined by their policy position on the left-right and centre-periphery issue-dimensions, will also determine whether or not they will be incorporated into a governing coalition. Policy-oriented theories stipulate that ideological proximity in a multi-dimensional space will facilitate the negotiation process between parties by reducing conflicts of interest and lowering the transaction costs of bargaining across different issue-dimensions, and predict that the only coalitions that will form at those that included parties that are ideologically adjacent (minimum-connected-winning)or that engender the minimum policy distance in cabinet (Axelrod 1970; De Swaan 1973). It is important to consider that the format and mechanics of the party system also play a role here: the bargaining power of regional nationalist parties will be a function of the number of alternative feasible coalitions, a feature that is, in turn, determined by the ideological affinity existing between other political parties.

Finally, institutions also play a decisive role in structuring political outcomes and determining the bargaining power of regional nationalist parties, by restricting the set of feasible cabinet coalitions (Strom, Budge et al. 1994). The most important institutions are those set of rules governing the process of government formation, such as an investiture rule that stipulates whether or not and with that kind of majority an incoming government must pass a formal vote in the legislature or specific requirements regarding the partisan composition of a government and the size of its parliamentary majority for the ratification of particular policies, such as constitutional reforms. The presence of an investiture procedure provides regional nationalist parties with strong bargaining power because, in the event of a hung parliament, it prevents the formation of a minority government and forces the incoming mainstream party to broker a governing arrangement with parties in parliament in order to win their support and obtain the formal sanction of the parliament. The specification of a government's composition or the size of its parliamentary majority also enhances the bargaining power of regional nationalist parties, because it allows them to impose their demands before other mainstream parties as an exchange for their participation in a coalition government. Thus, when considering the bargaining power of regional nationalist parties, it is important to look at strength, ideology and institutions.

Decision-Making Threshold

Agenda-setting is a critical and inevitable stepping stone for understanding the influence of regional nationalist parties, but it remains just that, an intermediary step. It cannot offer insight into how their capacity to impose their preferences on the political agenda is translated into the actual transfer political authority to the regional level. A proper investigation of the influence of regional nationalist parties on state structures must therefore explore how the decision-making process- which denotes the ways in which collective goals are formulated and ratified- conditions institutional change. The angle of the framework shifts at this stage to a theoretical analysis grounded in the veto players approach, which explores the variable capacity of political systems to produce 'policy change' (Tsebelis 1995; 2002). The veto player framework is a micro-analytic model that places partisan actors in a decision-making situation, veto players being defined as those collective and individual actors whose consent is necessary before a policy can be changed (Tsebelis 1995: 293-294). The two main components to this theoretical framework are i) the number of partisan veto players and ii) the ideological distance between them. The basic proposition that follows is that an increase in either of these two components will reduce size of the win-set, viz. the set of possible outcomes for which there exists a majority that can defeat the status quo.

Tsebelis establishes a distinction between institutional and partisan veto players: the former are set by the constitution and include the institutions involved in the decision-making process endowed with a veto while the latter are set endogeneously by the party system and the governing coalition. This thesis will maintain this distinction but will focus primarily on the actions of partisan veto players. In parliamentary systems, parties in government are the agenda-setters and the majority at their command is expected to ratify their legislative initiatives, political parties therefore exercise the greatest discretion in instigating and ratifying institutional changes. However, institutional veto players should not be entirely discounted. Parties can and do suffer a lack of cohesion, and the parliamentary party or a parliamentary faction can trouble the government by refusing to ratify its proposal. Thus a congruence in the identity of majorities in government and parliament does not necessarily entail the 'absorption' of institutional veto players. If parties lack cohesion, the parliamentary institutions which they occupy will become the relevant veto players. Lastly, it is important to appreciate the crucial role of the institution of the referendum. Whether stipulated by the constitution or not, legislative initiative with constitutional implications often require popular sanction, introducing the median voter as an additional veto player.

The decision-rule attached to the specific legislative device used to decentralise political authority stipulates the legislative thresholds necessary for ratifying institutional change and thus determines the identity of institutional and partisan veto players involved in the decision-making process. The hurdles imposed by decision-rules can be analytically distinguished firstly, by the different stages through which the proposed amendment must pass, e.g. the constitutional committee, the parliament, the parliament following an intervening election, the referendum, and secondly, by the height of the thresholds during each stage, e.g. simple majority, absolute majority or qualified majority (Rasch 2003). Formal decision rules will affect the relationship between government and opposition parties: should the government not possess the requisite majority to satisfy the legislative threshold, it will rely on parties in the opposition to approve the bill, bestowing them with the power to impose amendments and to bring the outcome closer to their own preferences. The decision rule thus exercises a decisive influence on the number of veto players, on the feasibility of institutional change and on the substance of the legislative outcome.

In the second stage, ideology plays a decisive role by determining the height of the decision-making threshold. Tsebelis (2002)assigns an important causal weight to ideology, arguing that an increase in distance separating the position of veto players will decrease the size of the win-set and increase policy stability. In this respect, ideological distance is a more decisive factor than the number of veto players, since the only two partisan veto players that are relevant for understanding a system's propensity for 'policy change' are those that are ideologically furthest apart. The height of the decision-making threshold and the distance between veto players is however difficult to calibrate accurately. Existing data sources that measure the position of parties in ideological space that rely on content analysis of manifestos (Comparative Manifesto Projects, CMP) (Budge, Klingemann et al. 2001)or have relied on the placement of parties on an ordinal scale by expert surveys (Castles 1984; Laver and Hunt 1992; Laver and Benoit 2006) do not distinguish between the variety of the different formats that decentralisation can adopt, a detail that lies at the heart of partisan contention. Moreover, the CMP only provides data on the salience of the issue for parties, and while expert surveys do provide information on position, the time series is seriously limited. A simple solution to this problem is to analyse individual party statements and to gauge their overall position on the issue of territorial autonomy by establishing their position on four different dimensions of territorial autonomy identified in the first section- constitutional status, asymmetry, legislative autonomy, fiscal autonomy.

Summary of Hypotheses

This section has presented in a detailed fashion the framework for analysis employed this thesis and has isolated the role of electoral, institutional variables during the agenda-setting and decision-making phases that will condition the capacity of regional nationalist parties to influence the process of territorial restructuring. On the basis of this framework it is possible to advance four conjectures that can be verified in the empirical part of this thesis

H1: Regional nationalist parties are likely to set the agenda from the electoral arena if they are competing in majoritarian systems and are likely to set the agenda from the electoral and parliamentary and governmental arenas if they are competing in a consensus systems.

H2: In the electoral arena, regional nationalist parties are likely to compel a change in the position of mainstream parties on the territorial dimension, if they exert significant electoral pressures on Christian Democratic, Social Democratic or Liberal parties, parties that are ideologically open to the accommodation of nationalism.

H3: In the electoral arena, regional nationalist parties are likely to compel mainstream parties to compete on the territorial issue-dimension, if they exert significant electoral pressures on Christian Democratic, Social Democratic or Liberal parties, that find themselves in opposition and engaged in highly competitive contests against their mainstream rivals.

H4: In the parliamentary and governmental arenas, regional nationalist parties are likely to oblige mainstream parties to instigate institutional reforms or to participate in shaping those reforms, if they wield strong bargaining power and issue demands that are in proximity to the median position of the mainstream party (ies) in government

H5: During the decision-making process, ideological distance between partisan veto players is a more decisive factor than decision-rules, and institutional change is likely only if there is no ideological opposition by any of the partisan or institutional veto players.

Research Design

This final section attends to the critical matter of elaborating a research design that can provide the appropriate methods for the empirical investigation of the institutionalist theoretical framework. A key concern underlying the selection and deployment of methodological tools is their alignment with the ontology of a theory, i.e. the set of assumptions about the nature of causal relations that are being investigated (Hall 2003).The focus of this thesis on a large-scale outcome such as the restructuring of territoriality and the importance assigned to temporality in the unfolding of this process implies a commitment to undertaking a comparative historical analysis. This approach offers the degree of contextualisation necessary for uncovering the complex causal mechanisms underlying the protracted institutional adaptation of the state posited in the theoretical framework, namely, the interaction effects between independent variables and the feedback effects of institutional change via the onset of 'reactive sequences'. It is thus aligned to the vision of causality projected in this thesis as a branching tree whose tips represent the outcomes of events that unfold over time (Sewell 1999). The comparative historical approach is also matched to the aim of producing a configurational analysis that identifies the multiple causal pathways through which regional nationalist parties have influenced the process of territorial restructuring, (Ragin 1987).[12] This remainder of this chapter is devoted to justifying the selection of cases and the type of comparative method used is this thesis.

Case Selection

Although the problems associated with the 'nationalities question' are prevalent across a high number of countries, few have reached the degree of institutionalization witnessed in mature democratic systems, and it is useful to turn our attention to these comparable set of cases. The framework for analysis sets the 'scope conditions' of the thesis, the set of necessary conditions that delimit the universe of cases appropriate for comparisons, namely, parliamentary democracies exhibiting the presence of important regional nationalist parties that have experienced a significant restructuring of territory. Moreover, it assigns causal importance to the effects of intervening variables found at the level of the political system; it is argued that the properties of the political system themselves are key for understanding inter-systemic difference (cf.Easton 1990). This entails that a 'Most Similar Systems Design' is the most appropriate choice of design; it is a strategy that aims to select countries that are as

---

[12] The comparative historical method represents a useful strategy because it ensures a greater degree of conceptual and measurement validity,l avoiding the conceptual stretching often associated with statistical methods, a risk that is heightened when dealing with thick multi-dimensional concepts such as 'accommodation', that often vary across contexts in their empirical manifestation and are often difficult to translated into thin quantitative data (Coppedge 1999)

similar as possible, controlling for the number of inter-systemic factors that could explain differences, and allowing for the set of variables that differentiate systems to be considered as explanations for the observed differences of behaviour (Przeworski and Teune 1971: 34).[13] Contemporary Western Europe offers a fertile setting in which to study the accommodation of regional nationalism for it has undergone a common set of experiences which Bartolini (2005) has labelled the modalities of state formation: state-building, capitalist development and industrialisation, nation-building, democratization, social sharing through the creation of welfare states and more recently the process of Europeanisation. One could add the 'post-industrial revolution' (Inglehart 1977) and the emergence of a post-material cleavage which has increased salience of a 'new' politics related to such questions as cultural and political identity and rights to collective self-determination.

The way in which regional nationalism has influenced the transformation of territorial structures will be evaluated in the cases of Great Britain, Spain and Belgium, over a time period spanning the late 1960s to the mid and late 1990s. These are multinational states where the territorial and linguistic cleavage has long featured in domestic politics, where significant regional nationalist parties have made claims for territorial autonomy, but which have only recently embarked on the process of creating politically decentralized polities; they are therefore ideal candidates for analysing how the tides of regional nationalism have provoked cumulative institutional changes. The three decade-long time period is ideally suited for examining the claims of the theoretical framework. It enables an appreciation of the variation in the dynamics underlying a large-scale transformation; it facilitates a dis-aggregation of the process into different sequences that feature institutional change or stasis, and allowing the investigator to deal with the endogeneity of institutional change, by tracing its effects on the power and preferences of partisan actors (Buthe 2002). The reader will immediately object that the analysis is fundamentally biased because all of these countries display positive values on the dependent variable- all have experienced significant processes of political decentralisation over recent decades. The analysis excludes cases that either have not displayed any substantial reform to their territorial structures or have broken up as a result of the secessionist pressures exerted by regional nationalist parties. Scholars have pointed out that 'selection on the dependent variable' leads to a significant systematic error in the (over) estimation of the causal impact of independent variables and to a dramatic reduction in the internal and external validity of a theory (Geddes 1990; King, Keohane et al. 1994).

---

[13] The logic of comparative inquiry employed in this thesis corresponds to Mill's Method of Concomitant Variation, since it is concerned with identifying patterns of variation in certain outcomes across countries. The choice of design in this thesis is thus determined by system-oriented nature of the research, i.e. the level of analysis to which the hypotheses pertain, and by the quest to explain within system variation in observed outcomes (Przeworski and Teune 1970)

The methodological pitfalls imputed to a 'no-variance' research design however appear to be exaggerated. The study of specific uniform outcomes is particularly relevant when the aim is to explore processes that lead specific substantive political developments (Brady and Collier 2004). This implies the analysis of a process that ties the presence of regional nationalist parties, the pathways through which they have set the agenda, the behaviour of partisan actors during the decision-making process, to the actual outcome of institutional change. As argued below, if accompanied with a systematic process-tracing method, this type of design can produce valid findings. Moreover, as the country chapters will demonstrate, these three countries have displayed a considerable degree of variation in the value of both the independent and dependent variables. All countries have introduced asymmetrically devolved, regional and federal systems in response to the intensity of nationalist claims, but have done so at different moments, and have also experienced periods of pause and reversals in the process of decentralisation. All three countries are parliamentary regimes, but there is considerable variation in the strength of the regional nationalist pressures, in the operation of political institutions and decision-rules, and in the ideology of mainstream parties- the key variables that condition the agenda-setting powers of regional nationalist parties and the decision-making threshold. The selection of cases has therefore been driven by a theoretical concern. By displaying variation in the principal phenomena of interest in this thesis, these three countries present ideal conditions in which to examine the accommodation of regional nationalism. This thesis considers those regional nationalist parties that can pose a 'credible' threat to the political system, and include only those that have competed in more than one consecutive election and obtained a minimum of five percent of the regional vote at national elections.[14] The main parties that this thesis will examine are the *Scottish Nationalist Party* (SNP), *Plaid Cymru* (PC) in Great Britain, the *Partido Nacionalista Vasco (*PNV), *Convergencia i Unio* (CiU)*,* in Spain; the *Rassemblement Walloon* (RW), *Front Démocratique des Francophone* (FDF), *Volskunie* (VU) and *Vlaams Blok* in Belgium.

Table 3.2. Range of Policy Demands of Regional Nationalist Parties

	Protectionist	*Autonomist*	*Nationalist-Federalist*	*Independentists*	*Irrendentist*
Claim	-demand for the preservation of a cultural identity within the framework of the state	- demand for minimal degree of territorial autonomy, and differential treatment from territorial entitie	-demand greater autonomy and share of resources within politically decentralized or federal state.	-demand full independent sovereignty for region	-demand annexatic of of their region to another state
Party		PC	FDF, RW, VU, CiU	VB, SNP, PNV,	

<hr/>

[14] This threshold enables the exclusion of a number of small and ephemeral parties that have appeared in Spain, where a number of non-historic regions have witnessed the occasional appearance of regionalist parties

The common denominator underlying the goals of regional nationalist parties is their demand for the greater recognition of their national group. The range in the type of political demands that this may entail is however rather wide, as illustrated in the continuum of ideologies depicted in Table 3.2, which shows the majority of parties straddle the nationalist-federalist, independentist distinction. Though there have been attempts to maintain distinctions between the claims for outright independence and support for some degree of territorial autonomy, scholars agree that regionalist preferences tend to be mixed and may change over time (Keating 2001). We should not therefore aim to distinguish between movements for outright secession and those which aim for territorial autonomy, since secessionist have adopted a variety of strategies to suit the prevailing political climate. Furthermore, it is often genuinely difficult to determine whether a given strategy represents a sincerely held belief or only a tactic. Ostensibly moderate aspirations today may serve to mask certain far reaching objectives held in abeyance; conversely, an extreme aspiration may be satisfied with a moderate concession. This trend enables us to perform comparisons between countries, and draw valid inferences about the conditioning effects of electoral, institutional and ideological factors on their agenda-setting power

A Structured, Focused Comparison

The purpose of the comparative method is to verify the propositions specified in the framework for analysis, by searching for systematic patterns of similarity and differences in the features of political systems and drawing inferences about the strength of the posited causal relationships. As Sidney Verba (1967) put it, the key challenge of the comparative method is to identify and characterise the relevant factors in ways that do not do injustice to their essential character, but that still place them within the categories of an overarching framework. To this end, this thesis deploys a 'structured, focused comparison', in which the same theoretical claims are used to focus on the choice of variables, and to guide and structure the collection of data, thereby making systematic comparisons and the accumulation of findings possible (George 1979). It should be borne in mind that this study constitutes principally an effort at theory-development. The analytic framework aims to improve on existing accounts by developing the concept of agenda-setting and refining its operationalisation, and by assigning decisive causal importance to the decision-making threshold. The examination of the framework in the three cases should yield findings which can simultaneously uncover its empirical robustness, while allowing for the appreciation of the influence of different interaction effects between variables.

Like all research designs reliant on a small number of countries, this thesis is confronted with the 'Fundamental Problem of Causal Inference' (King, Keohane et al. 1994), the impossibility of knowing whether or not the variation in the phenomenon is in fact caused by those factors posited and not by other factors or by random fluctuations. The analysis suffers from a 'degrees of freedom' problem inherent in 'small-N' comparative political science, i.e. that the number of cases are still too few for checking the validity of the hypotheses (Lijphart 1971).[15] However, it is possible to follow Lijphart's counsel for managing the 'degrees of freedom' problem, by increasing the number of observation within each case and by verifying the causal mechanisms tying the independent and dependent variables. This dual comparative strategy allows us to enhance the 'leverage' of our theoretical framework and mitigate the problem of indeterminacy (King, Keohane et al. 1994).

Given the significance of accommodation as a process that takes shape *over time*, this thesis will opt for a 'middle range diachrony' (Bartolini 1993), by comparing the degree of accommodation across space- national political systems and political parties- and across time- institutional change within the same political systems. The congruence procedure enables the examination of the relationship between the independent, intervening and dependent variables, across temporal units within a country. The periodisation strategy employed for disaggregating the historical chronology of each case is theoretically informed: distinct periods are bounded by significant turning points that affect the value of independent and dependent variables, that is, moments in which regional nationalist parties have exercised strong or weak agenda-setting powers that have subsequently translated into either an adjustment or a maintenance of the existing territorial distribution of authority (Lieberman 2001). This method affords a greater validation of the causal mechanism by enabling the investigator to hold more factors constant- the fundamental properties of a single country are unlikely to vary across time to the same extent as those same properties are likely to vary across cases. In addition, disaggregating a case-study into distinct observations also allows us to analyse the impact of temporality on the dynamic of accommodation and to take into account the importance of path-dependent dynamics, in which the origins and evolution of regional government exercise strong feedback effects on the preferences of partisan actors.[16]

---

[15] The problem of indeterminacy is compounded by a problem of over-determination,. because as Przeworski and Teune (1970:84)"since the unmber of systems is often limited… most system-level variables will be overdetermined: several system-level variables will equally well account for the same differences of within-system relationships and which of these variables causes the dependent phenomenon will not be known."

[16] This periodisation strategy introduces two distinct but related methodological problems. The periods selected in different countries as the relevant temporal unit are not homogeneous in terms of *time,* since they take place over a wide-ranging number of years that feature differences in the frequency of elections and the length of the legislative period. Rather, each temporal unit is to be treated as homogeneous, to the extent that they exhibit is a clear relationship

Separating the causal process into distinct sequences, allows us to appreciate how decisions taken during one period may affect the context of subsequent periods, and to incorporate temporality as an element in the causal explanation (Buthe 2002).

Since the analytic framework is inspired by the process-oriented perspectives developed in public policy and hinges on the process through which the demands of regional nationalist parties are translated into substantive institutional changes, it is natural to employ a method that centres on the intervening steps in this process. One method that is particularly suited to this purpose is process-tracing, a form of theory-oriented historical explanation that seeks to uncover the precise causal mechanism linking a particular observed outcome to a putative cause (George and McKeown 1985; George and Bennett 2005). There are two distinct steps in the process tying the demands of regional nationalist parties to institutional change, corresponding to the two intervening stages in the institutionalist theoretical framework. The first step in the analysis is to examine how the electoral conjuncture, the set of formal and informal institutions and the ideology of mainstream parties condition the agenda-setting powers of regional nationalist parties. The second step is to analyse how this interacts with the decision-rules regulating institutional change and the ideology of partisan veto players to condition the feasibility, direction and substance of institutional change.[17] The aim of the method is to examine the decisions reached by political actors during two crucial steps in a sequence, in particular, the decision of mainstream political parties to adapt their position on the territorial dimension and/or to co-opt regional nationalist parties into government and the decision of partisan actors to endorse or to obstruct the attempts of the executive to instigate institutional change. Process-tracing offers the benefit of complementing the causal inferences drawn from the comparative method by corroborating the significance of certain variables and by eliminating the role of other potentially significant variables in a particular context (Hall 2008). Lastly, process-tracing is a useful tool for investigating the causal complexity presented in the framework for analysis, such as the presence of interaction effects and of 'equifinality', the possibility that specific outcomes are produced by different causal pathways.

---

between the different variables, which are distinct from the relationship in other time points. In spite of the differences in the duration of each temporal unit, they are therefore assigned equal weight in the subsequent comparative analysis.

[17] Process-tracing requires that observations in a sequence be linked in particular ways, that is, their value cannot be independent (George and Bennett 2005: 207). In this framework, agenda-setting and decision-making are dependent, since they are consecutive steps in an overall sequence that characterising the formulation of collectively binding choices. The value of each observation are also dependent because they are tied together by the formal and informal institutions regulating the *exercise of authority,* e.g. high agenda-setting powers exercised in consensus-based systems are matched by a demanding decision-making process with a high number of veto players. However, the ideological position of partisan veto players can intervene in the causal process, facilitating or hindering the decision-making process across different types of systems, rendering the value of the two observations more independent of each other.

Collection of Evidence

The process-tracing method bears important implications for the type of evidence that is conjured in the empirical analysis. The affinity of process-tracing with historical explanations, grounded in their joint quest to establish the micro-correlations tying the steps in a causal sequence, entails that the investigator employs the historian's method of examining data from a variety of sources- archival materials, memoirs, histories, newspapers- as an important part of understanding the contextual developments in which political actors are operating and of examining whether the causal process a theory hypothesizes is in fact evident in that case (George and Bennett 2005: 97). This thesis will rely on a variety of evidence for evaluating the value of the independent and dependent variables: survey data and electoral data for depicting the nature of the electoral conjuncture; primary and secondary literature on political institutions to grasp the operation formal and informal political institutions; party manifestos, and declarations for understanding the position of political parties; white papers, bills, laws and constitutions for assessing the magnitude of institutional change; as well as newspaper sources, memoirs and secondary sources on the details of specific historical events.

In addition, this thesis makes uses of elite interviews, for corroborating information that has been collected from other sources, and for gathering information about the context in which political actors were operating. This latter justification is not to be equated with the premise held by 'constructivists' that the aim of social research is to interpret the meaning that certain types behaviour have to the participants who perform them. Rather, it seeks to understand the views and beliefs that participants held of different events and to examine the motivations for certain actions, in order to probe certain assumptions that the analytical framework posits about different political actors' incentives and interests, and to understand the sequence of actions that under lied specific events. Specifically, this thesis will make use of semi-structured interviews, using a questionnaire with a set number of theoretically-guided questions that seek to uncover the ideological beliefs, the motivations and decisions of political parties, but which remains sufficiently flexible to allow new questions to be brought during the interview as a result of the responses of the interviewee. It will opt for a non-random sampling of interviewees, since the aim of the investigation is to obtain information of their experience of very specific events. Given the momentous nature of the events leading to institutional change, involving political developments at the highest level of government, it is necessary to interview those individuals that were involved or influential during the process. The thesis employs positional and reputational criteria to identify *ex ante* the identity of the relevant respondents, interviewing the party leaders of regional nationalist and mainstream

political parties, in government and in opposition. It also relies on chain-referral sampling, requesting each interviewee to suggest other potential subjects who were active in the process (Tansey 2007). However, given that some of the historical events under scrutiny have taken place more than three decades ago, the investigation also settles for availability sampling, selecting those respondents that are most readily available.

To summarise, the accommodation of nationalism is an ongoing and open-ended response to the nationality claims of regional nationalist parties. It unfolds in fits and starts, develops at an irregular pace and to uneven degrees across countries, it is the product of the accumulation of a series of discrete choices by political actors. The influence that regional nationalist parties have exerted on this process is what this thesis is about. The framework for analysis developed in this chapter posits that this influence will be conditioned by two factors: their agenda-setting powers and the decision-making threshold. It is argued that regional nationalist parties competing in majoritarian systems are likely to set the agenda from the electoral arena, while those competing in consensus political systems, are likely to set the agenda both from the electoral and from the parliamentary and governmental arenas. If they exert strong electoral pressures in the electoral arena, they can compel Liberal, Christian Democratic and Social Democratic mainstream parties to undertake a shift in policy on the territorial dimension, in order compete better against their regional nationalist and mainstream rivals. If they wield strong bargaining power in the parliamentary and governmental arenas, they can exchange their support to a mainstream party's governing authority for the instigation of institutional reforms. Whether their influence on the political agenda is translated into substantive decisions to reforms the structures of the state will depend on the decision-making threshold, and in particular on the ideological distance between partisan veto players, which condition political systems capacity for policy change.

Having established the framework for analysis, we can now turn to the examination of the politics of accommodation in Great Britain, Spain and Belgium. The case studies will be structured in a comparable fashion. They begin with a brief account of the nationality claims articulated by regional nationalist parties and with a synopsis of how electoral, institutional, and ideological factors are likely to condition their agenda-setting powers and the decision-making threshold for ratifying institutional change. This will give way to an analysis of distinct periods, marked by changes in the mechanics of party competition and by the presence or absence of institutional change, distinguishing between the moments of creation, empowerment and deepening. Such a historical delineation will provide a panoramic view of the influence of regional nationalism on the territorial structures of the state..

Part II/ Case Studies

CHAPTER FOUR

Great Britain

At the end of 1997, when the British Labour government issued two legislative proposals devolving power to a Scottish parliament and a Welsh Assembly, it instigated the most profound reforms to the structures of the British state in contemporary history. The initiative represents a landmark in British political history. By irreversibly modifying the unitary character of the British state, it opened a new chapter in the way in which regional nationalism was accommodated. But it also featured a strong degree of historical continuity, as an asymmetric and piecemeal settlement that reflected the varying intensities of nationalist sentiment and that nevertheless retained a profoundly unitarist spirit. The aim of this chapter is abstract from the unique features of devolution in Great Britain and to examine how the timing and magnitude of the institutional change that took place in the late 1990s can be traced to the influence exercised by regional nationalist parties from Scotland and Wales on the process of party competition [18]

The chapter is divided into four main sections. The first briefly outlines the political development of the British state and the nationality claims of the SNP and PC; the second examines the implications of the Westminster system and the attitudes of British mainstream parties towards territorial autonomy for the agenda-setting power of regional nationalist parties and for the decision-making process regulating institutional change. The remainder of the chapter deals with two consecutive time periods in contemporary British political history during which the SNP and PC have advanced their demands for independence and territorial autonomy. In the first period, spanning the late 1960s and late 1970s, the regional nationalist parties exercised strong agenda-setting powers by exerting electoral pressures on mainstream parties in the electoral arena and compelling mainstream parties to shift from a dismissive to an accommodating electoral strategy. This was more easily undertaken by the Labour party than by the Conservative party, as the former was under a more significant electoral pressure and displayed an ideology that was more open to the principle of devolution. However, the party remained deeply divided between its centralist and Home Rule tradition as there was little in terms

---

[18] The case of Northern Ireland will be excluded from the analysis of Great Britain. It cannot be compared with the other regions of the country firstly because it features a unique party system representing the protestant/unionist and catholic/nationalist fault line, in which British mainstream political parties do not compete and secondly because the dynamics of devolution to the Stormont Assembly since the 1920s have been dictated by the patterns of social mobilisation and armed sectarian conflict rather than by patterns of party political competition.

of existing support for the party's devolution policy, which had been deployed largely for reasons of electoral expediency. These divisions ead to the multiplication of veto points during the legislative process and to the defeat of the government's devolution bills. The cohesiveness of the Labour party constitutes the main point of contrast with the second period, dating from the late 1980s to the late 1990s. This time round, the SNP set the agenda by exerting electoral pressures exclusively on a Labour party that had become anchored in Scotland and by compelling it to change its policy on the establishment of a Constitutional Convention. Given the party's existing commitment to devolution and the presence of support for such an initiative within its Scottish branch, the Labour party was more unified on this choice of policy. However, in contrast with the 1970s, when the Labour party was forced to adopt a position that reflected an internal compromise between its different current, in the mid-1990s it forced to make adjustments to its devolution policy for Scotland that reflected the imperative of competing against an adversarial Conservative party in a nationalised party system.

Scottish and Welsh Nationalism

The resilience of national identities in the peripheral regions of Great Britain has been an inherent feature of country's political development. This process was driven by the expansion of the English state, which progressively held sway on the territories of the 'Celtic Fringe' through an 'informal' empire, built on complex relationships between the crown and local landed elites, which were charged with managing local problems within the parameters established by their English rulers (Hechter 1975; Bulpitt 1983). However, Great Britain has remained an unusual arrangement of pragmatically assembled territorial institutions that does not fit into the traditional categories of federal or unitary states. It represents what Rokkan and Urwin (1983) refer to as a 'union' state. This ideal-type of state is one in which territorial integration has developed in a highly asymmetric fashion- while certain territories are integrated and assimilated as a result of straightforward conquest and are governed by the standardised system of administration, others are the incorporated as a result of dynastic union or treaty, entailing the survival of pre-union rights and institutions. The territorial structures of the 'informal' empire were thus far from uniform and tidy. The distinct paths that Scotland and Wales adopted in their incorporation into the union state, and the different degree of institutional autonomy that the two regions enjoyed, shaped the variable strength of nationalist sentiment that the regional nationalist parties could exploit.

Political nationalism in Scotland was articulated by the *Scottish National Party* (SNP), a party founded in 1934 under the leadership of John MacCormick. In its early years, the SNP made few electoral advances and appeared to be little more than a folkloric political grouping. In the 1960s, under a new leader William Wolfe, the party began to extend its membership and to develop as a professional political organisation committed to independence. The steps for achieving this goal were clear:

"when a majority of the Scottish parliamentary seats are held by the SNP, they will ask the UK parliament to set up a Scottish legislature, with full control over all the affairs of Scotland. Failing such agreement in London, the SNP MPs and any other Scottish MPs who care to join them, will form a Scottish government" (SNP 1968).

Scottish national consciousness had been preserved and reinforced by the civil bodies that were safeguarded in the Treaty of Union of 1707- the Presbyterian Church, the Scottish educational system and Scots Law.[19] Although Scotland had relinquished its parliament in the new British unitary state, it nevertheless preserved the institutional infrastructure that allowed it to maintain a degree of autonomy. As Tom Nairn (1975: 24) put it Scotland "preserved an extraordinary amount of the institutional baggage normally associated with independence-a decapitated national state as it were." The struggle for independence was inspired by the perception that these institutions were threatened by the increasingly interventionist British state and by the failure of the movement for Home Rule to create a new constitutional settlement in which they would be protected. The SNP grew out of a collection of social movements, the Scots National League (NLS) and the Scottish Home Rule Association (SHRA), that were frustrated with the Labour party's failure to advance the establishment of a devolved Scottish parliament.

There existed within the party a pluralism of constitutional goals; the SHRA preferred Home Rule, while the NLS aimed for outright independence. Although the SNP had become explicitly a party of independence by the 1940s, internal divisions persisted between the 'gradualist' wing which is willing to support devolution as a platform for advancing the project of independence, and the 'fundamentalist' wing which wants 'independence and nothing less' and is suspicious of home rule as a sop that would hinder the attainment of the party's cardinal political aim (Lynch 2002a: 13). Initially, the party adopted a classless-inclusive strategy, remaining detached from the traditional class-

---

[19] The Treaty of Union has been subjected to divergent interpretations. The predominant Dicean view is that the Union was adapted to the pre-existing English constitution, grounded in the doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty, and that the provisions of the Treaty could be repealed by acts of parliament. The alternative view is that the Treaty of Union overrode all prior constitutional law in both countries, creating a new constitution that acknowledges the Scottish constitutional tradition of popular sovereignty, and whose provisions cannot be repealed by acts of parliament..

based issues of British politics. In the 1960s, the party leader repositioned the party on a more social-democratic platform, a shift that was reflected in the evolving social bases of its political support from its early small-town base in the Highlands and remote rural areas into the industrial regions of the central belt. However, the electoral support that it drew at its electoral peak in 1974 was drawn principally from the upwardly mobile middle-classes, that resented the intransigence of the 'landed, anglicised upper-class Tories' and the 'massed ranks of trade unions and aging councillors' (Fusaro 1979: 369).

Nationalist sentiment in Wales was much weaker because the region had been more thoroughly absorbed by its English neighbour. The constitutional goals of *Plaid Cymru* reflected its origins as a literary movement dedicated to defending the Welsh language and culture, and the Welsh way of life in the rural hinterlands. Although ambiguous about its ultimate political ambitions, it viewed self-government as a way of safeguarding Welsh culture in domains of public life such as education and the media. The Welsh nationalist movement was thus the defensive reaction of a dwindling minority culture. Since its incorporation into the English state, Wales was governed as part of England, there was little recognition of the linguistic or cultural distinction of the region and the Welsh elites became assimilated into the developing English class system, facilitating the cultural amalgamation of the two countries. In contrast to Scotland, there was little institutional infrastructure in place to act as a focal point for Welsh national identity. With the Act of Union of 1526 and 1542, the legal system of Wales was annexed to that of England. It was enacted in parliament that Wales "was to stand and continue forever henceforth incorporated united and annexed to and with the realm of England" (quoted in Williams 1982: 147). As a result, Welsh awareness of national identity has experienced a more precarious existence, and the Welsh have fitted with what Engels disdainfully referred to as the "peoples without history" (Rawkins 1978: 524).The only carrier of nationality was the Welsh language, Welsh nationalism was therefore a predominantly cultural phenomenon. The party soon realized however, that in order to win seats in the populated, industrialized and English-speaking areas of the South-East, it needed to leave behind its exclusively Welsh-speaking image. This shift was reflected in the social base of its electoral support among the agrarian groups of the rural hinterland and industrial classes of the South. On the traditional questions of class-based politics, PC espoused a genuinely social democratic vision, supporting a higher degree of state intervention, improved social security, and better social services in health care and education, and continuously calling for large-scale public investments in the region.

Setting the Agenda in the British Political System

In reviving the territorial cleavage as a form of political identification and a dimension of party competition, the electoral breakthrough of Great Britain's regional nationalist parties laid to rest the notion that class-based politics was the norm guiding British political life, and that all else was mere 'embellishment and detail' (Pulzer 1967) Their appearance shook public confidence in the stability of the two-party system, an institution that was seen to be essential to the functioning of British democracy, and fed the perception that their claims could eventually lead to 'the break-up of Britain' (Nairn 1975). The agenda-setting power of the SNP and PC is situated primarily in the electoral arena. As is well known, the British political system is the paradigmatic incarnation of a majoritarian democracy, a 'winner-take-all' system founded upon the two-party system, which sustains the pattern of party alternation in government. Given the closed nature of the party system and the distaste for the muddled politics of coalition governments, regional nationalist parties will have little opportunity to play a direct role in shaping the government's agenda. Instead, the principal site of agenda-setting is the electoral arena where they aim to influence the position of mainstream parties.

Their capacity to do so is determined by the significance of their electoral threat which is, in turn, determined by the size of their electoral support, the threshold of the electoral system, and the electoral strength of mainstream parties in Scotland and Wales. The SMP electoral system exercises an important intervening effect, since the threat will vary with how efficiently the regional nationalist party can concentrate its vote and on whether the mainstream party's seat is safe or marginal.[20] If the nationalist party's share of electoral support is scattered uniformly across a high number of constituencies, then the threat will be negligible since it will only gain a low percentage of votes in each constituency and will be unable to win any seats; if, on the other hand, its share of electoral support is concentrated in a few districts then the threat will be much higher, since it will gain enough votes to have a chance of winning the seat or forcing the incumbent out. If the threat is located in a safe district, then the mainstream party will be relatively invulnerable; if, on the other hand, the threat is situated in a marginal district the mainstream party will be highly sensitive to the nationalist vote, since even a small degree of support could lead to the loss of a seat.

---

[20] The electoral system is a 'strong' electoral system, whose basic features are i)a single ballot structure ii) a simple plurality electoral formula, iii) the absence of any stipulated legal thresholds. The electoral formula is the simplest of all: voters cast their votes for one candidate, the candidate receiving the largest number of votes is elected, and each constituency returns one member. The electoral system has a very low district magnitude of 1 seat and a high effective threshold of 35 percent (Lijphart 1994)

The responses of mainstream parties are strongly conditioned by their prevailing attitudes to regional nationalism and political decentralisation. In spite of displaying a highly centralist ideology at the time at which the SNP and PC first broke onto the British political scenery, the Labour party was more open to their political claims as its ideology contained a repertoire of traditions that were sympathetic to the principle of Home Rule (Jones and Keating 1979; Keating and Bleiman 1979). The Labour party developed its centralist creed gradually during the inter-war period and especially after the Great Depression. The economic slump, which had gravely affected the industrial areas of the British periphery, coincided with its political ascendancy and growing appetite for governmental power. The Labour party came to believe in the need for state intervention in the economy for the purpose of redistributing wealth, improving living conditions and directing economic development, and it focused on winning office in Westminster, where the concentration of executive authority provided the power necessary for tackling the country's economic problems. This transformation was also tied to electoral considerations, as the party focused on mobilising popular support from the industrial working-class in order to expand its electoral base and maintain the support of the industrial regions of the periphery. The party's centralist ideology crystallised following the Second World War, when the Labour government built the foundations of the modern welfare state, increased public ownership of the economy and used central planning to deal with the territorial dimension of economic development and public policy. With a secure foothold in Scotland and Wales and little demand for territorial autonomy, the conversion to centralism was completed when it officially abandoned its commitment to Home Rule in 1958. But this position should not be interpreted as essential to the party's ideology, because, as Keating and Bleiman (1979: 15) put it "within the Labour tradition, there has always been room for decentralist ideas and, despite the frequent characterisation of Labour as a centralist party…decentralist views are regarded as ideologically respectable and can boast a good deal of pedigree." When it was established in the last decade of the 19th century, the Labour party grew strongest in Scotland and Wales and developed a natural affinity with the radical strand of the dominant Liberal party, committed to the destruction of privilege and to state provision of welfare (Fry 1987: 147). It emerged in favour of Home Rule 'all round' in the run-up to the First World War and took a leading part in the formation of the Scottish Home Rule Association (SHRA). This policy reflected organisational and ideological considerations. The Labour movement was an amalgam of left-wing organisations- the

Scottish Labour Party lead by Keir Hardie was formed by a coalition of Home Rulers, the Highland Reformers and the Socialist League- and the party needed to address the issues which its different parts advocated. Moreover, Home Rule was associated with a broader programme of democratisation, which included the extension of the franchise. In addition, the Labour party's vision was profoundly inspired in this period by guild socialism and syndicalism, socialist theories that advocated workers' control of industry through the medium of professional guilds and which called for the management of industry by a federation of trade unions and co-operatives. The Labour party thus emerged in this period as a party with strong electoral ties to the industrial and nationalist periphery, and promoted political decentralisation as a means of recognising the distinctiveness of Scotland and Wales and as a means of deepening democracy.

The Conservative party on the other hand, has long held an essentially unitary outlook; maintaining a deeply-held devotion to the doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty and to the ideology of Unionism. Parliamentary sovereignty is identified with the political settlement of 1688, the transfer of sovereignty from the Crown to Parliament, and the birth of English parliamentary democracy; the establishment of a rival source of legislative authority is interpreted as an infringement of this supremacy and a defilement of its associated symbolic values. The ideology of Unionism is grounded more explicitly in a commitment to the maintenance of the Union between the different nations of the United Kingdom. The Conservative party's attitudes were most evident during the debates on Irish Home Rule, when it opposed Gladstone's two Irish Home Rule bills in 1886 and 1893 and forged an alliance with the unionist wing of the Liberal party when the issue lead to the latter's unravelling. The Conservative party has always maintained a stronger presence in England than in the rest of the country. It has been weakest in Wales, a region with a strong non-conformist tradition, where the party is associated with the defence of the established Anglican Church. It was more vibrant in Scotland, where the Scottish Unionist Party (SUP) grew among the industrial bourgeoisie defending the icons of Protestantism, Imperialism and Unionism, but nevertheless remained a secondary political force to the pre-dominant Liberal and then Labour party (Brown et al. 1998). The ideology of Unionism was in no way inimical to the recognition of Scotland as a distinct nation or opposed to making marginal adjustments to the structures of the state in response to nationalist demands. The Conservative party believed that the economic development and cultural flourishing of the Scottish nation were intimately bound to the prosperity of the Empire and the Union but was prepared to provide Scots with

administrative autonomy and channels of influence in the policy-making process at the centre in recognition of their particularity, as was the case when it created the Scottish Office in 1885. The party was also prone to stirring nationalist emotions from the benches of the opposition if it thought it could be rewarding, as Churchill did when he appealed to Scottish nationalism to compete against the Labour party in 1950, implicitly advocating Home Rule by suggesting that "I would never adopt the view that Scotland should be forced into serfdom of socialism as a result of a vote in the House of Commons " (cited in Miller 1981: 21). But this occasional support for territorial autonomy belied the existence of an essentially centralist ideology. For Conservatives, the British Union and parliamentary sovereignty were institutions that transcended political divisions, providing the continuity necessary for engaging the loyalty of citizens and enabling the government to undertake its functions effectively. And while the Scottish Unionist Party was divided on the desirability of setting up a Scottish Assembly when it enjoyed the luxury of opposition in the late 1940s, the objective not to pursue a separate legislature for Scotland became official policy in 1949 (Seawright 1999: 116). This preparedness to acknowledge the national distinctiveness and to make pragmatic, piecemeal adjustments to territorial structures of the state while preserving Britain's constitutional architecture intact would remain the mainstay of Conservative ideology

Lastly, although it was the third political force in the country with no access to power in the post-war era, the Liberal party has continuously recognised Scotland and Wales as distinct national entities, and called for the establishment of separate parliament within a federal United Kingdom. The Liberal party has therefore not experienced any difficulties in sympathising with the demands of the nationalist parties. This position reflects the party's former hegemonic position in Scotland and Wales during the 19th century. In Scotland, the Liberal party appealed to a wide number of sectional interests, drawing upon two different ideological strands, the Presbyterian democratic tradition, committed to the Union, and a radical strand committed to the destruction of privilege and to state provision of welfare (Fry 1987: 147). In Wales, it appealed to the tradition of non-conformism and to the deep opposition to the Conservative party, which was associated with the Anglican Church. Although internal divisions within the Liberal party regarding its commitment to the Union lead to a split in 1886 over the question of Irish Home Rule, and to its gradual decline across the country, the departure of the Liberal Unionist allowed the party to maintain a more genuine and committed posture towards the devolution of power for Britain's national groups

Decision-Making Process

If the regional nationalist parties can compel the mainstream party in government to undertake a genuine adjustment in its position on the territorial dimension, they can expect to gain satisfaction, as the decision-making process does not present significant obstacles to the ratification of the government's legislative programme. The capacity of a British mainstream party to enact its programme will depend primarily on the cohesion of its parliamentary group. The fusion of executive and legislative power and the manufacturing of parliamentary majorities mean that the party in government acts as the principal agenda-setter and its parliamentary group acts as the sole partisan veto player. The parliament is a weak institution which merely 'criticizes and publicizes', while the government legislates(Crick 1970: 41). The government can curtail partisan debates in the House of Commons and in parliamentary committees by imposing 'allocation of time' motions. In addition, the government controls the agenda of parliamentary committees since these only have the power to submit amendments to government bills to the floor (Doering 1995). The agenda-setting power of the executive is enhanced by the doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty and the absence of entrenched constitution. This doctrine entails that there is no superior corporate body in which authority is invested or from which authority can be derived, and therefore that there is no document that can restrict the legislature's activity. The corollary to this particularity is a highly flexible constitution; the laws which form Britain's constitution can be amended by simple majority and do not require the complex amendment process customarily found in other democracies.

To summarise, we expect the SNP and PC to set the agenda from the electoral arena by exerting electoral pressures on mainstream parties. They are more likely to influence the position of the Labour party as, despite its strongly centralist attitudes in the post-war period, the party displays traditions of support to Scottish nationalism and Home Rule. The Conservative party is however unlikely to revise its position, save perhaps for making short-term concession while it is in opposition; the glorification of the principles of Union and parliamentary sovereignty prevent the party from undertaking a genuine shift in policy. While the Labour party is more likely to deploy an accommodating electoral strategy, it displays competing ideological traditions, which can lead to divisions between different factions or organisational branches of the party. This division is more likely erupt when it is in government than in opposition, and can produce serious obstacles during the decision-making process given that the government depends on its party's parliamentary group' cohesiveness to enact its bills.

A False Start (1966-1979)

The capacity of the SNP and the PC to influence the territorial structures of the British state during the late 1960s and 1970s can be analysed during two distinct periods. In the first period, from 1966 to 1974, the nationalist parties were unable to set the political agenda; the Labour and Conservative parties continued to dominate the British party system and the regional nationalist parties were considered to be an ephemeral expression of regional discontent at the fringe of the two-party system. Moreover, the British mainstream parties remained ideologically committed to maintaining the unitary state. As a result, each mainstream party individually deployed measures designed to placate nationalist parties and to keep devolution out of electoral contests. In the second period, from 1974 to 1979, the SNP set the political agenda by exerting pressures on the Labour party to adjust their position on the territorial dimension and to embark on a programme of constitutional reform. The persistence of conflicts between the divergent ideological traditions existing within the Labour party concerning the desirability and extent of devolution however engendered a situation of 'divided' government, leading to the establishment of additional institutional veto players during the ratification process and to the defeat of the devolution legislation.

Nationalist Parties at the Fringe (1966-1974)

From being virtually non-existent in the 1950s, the SNP stepped into the electoral arena in 1964 winning 2.4 percent of the Scottish vote; the PC won 3 percent of the Welsh vote. The nationalist parties made further inroads in the subsequent election. In 1966, the PC maintained a steady performance while the SNP experienced its first major electoral advance, doubling its share of the Scottish vote to 11 percent. This support was concentrated in Labour constituencies in the area of Forth and Tay, where the party obtained 35 percent of the vote, as well as in the Conservative rural strongholds of Perth and Kinross, where it came second with 20 percent of the vote (Steed 1966: 322). The Labour party had returned to government for less than year when further nationalist tremours were felt. In a 1966 by-election, the PC captured a seat in the industrial zone of Carmarthen, and came close second in a by-election in Rhondda West, the safest Labour seats in the country. In March 1967, the SNP won 28 percent of the vote in a by-election in Glasgow Pollok, a marginal seat which Labour lost to the Conservatives. In November 1967, Winnie Ewing won a momentous by-election in Hamilton, a Labour stronghold outside Glasgow, obtaining the party's first parliamentary seat. In the local elections of

1968, the SNP won a third of the vote in the Labour seats and secured the balance of power in Glasgow, depriving the Labour party of overall control for the first time since 1952. However, this groundswell of support for the nationalist parties failed to propel the expected triumph in the General Election of 1970. Although the PC doubled its share of the Welsh vote to 11.5 percent, extending its support to the central Welsh-speaking constituencies, it nevertheless lost its seat in Carmarthen. The SNP doubled its share of the Scottish vote to 11.4 percent, but since it contested three times the number of seats it had in 1966, its average vote per seats contested in fact dropped from 14.1 to 12.2 percent (Butler and Pinto-Duschinsky 1971: 181). The SNP fared poorly throughout industrial Scotland, but polled well in the North East and Highlands; the Labour party recovered its seats in Pollok and Hamilton but lost one in the Western Isles. Overall then, the nationalist electoral threat to mainstream parties had diminished.

As the party of government, the dominant political force in the periphery and the principal victim of the nationalist advance, the Labour party had to address the sudden rise in grievances in the Celtic fringe. However, there were few electoral incentives for the party to adjust its position on the territorial dimension and to abandon its centralist ideology. In 1966, the Labour party held a predominant position in the Celtic fringe, winning 49.9 percent of the vote and 46 seats in Scotland, and 60.7 percent of the vote and 32 seats in Wales. This performance was mirrored England, where it secured a clear majority of support with 48.2 percent of the vote and 286 seats. Having obtained an emphatic nation-wide mandate, the Labour party was thus invulnerable to the advances of the nationalist parties in the periphery.[21] In addition, the Labour party's position in government was secure. In 1966, there was a uniform swing of 3.5 percent to Labour which won 48.1 percent of the vote and 364 seats. The mechanism at the heart of the two-party system- the periodic party alternation in power and the manufacturing of parliamentary majorities- allowed the Labour party to carry out its programme and to defend the material interests of the working-class and peripheral regions. In the 1960s, class-based politics were the norm guiding British political life, reflecting the strong hold of the class cleavage on voting behaviour. The British Election Study (BES) shows that in 1966, the Labour party enjoyed clear support among the working-class; the ratio of Labour to Conservative partisanship in the manual working class was 2.7:1. The

---

[21] What the outcome of this General Election concealed however was the Labour party's high dependence on the seats obtained in Scotland. In the previous General Election of 1964, the high competitiveness of elections in England meant that Scottish votes had proven to be critical in tipping the balance in favour of the Labour party. While Labour had obtained 246 seats in England and 43 seats in Scotland, the Conservatives had won 256 seats in England and 24 seats in Scotland; Scottish seats had thus provided the Labour government with a slim majority

partisanship of the working-class was reinforced by their identification with the Labour party; the BES reveals that 58.4 percent of the manual classes identified 'very' or 'fairly' strongly with the Labour party (Crewe et al. 1970). The existence of a nationalized, class-based two-party system enabled the Labour party to align the three cardinal considerations which guided its policies and political action. It fulfilled its role as a socialist party, advancing the material well-being of the working-class; it operated as an electoralist party that deployed the strategies necessary for winning a plurality of electoral support; it upheld the ideology of socialism, influenced at the time by statist and centralist traditions (Jones and Keating 1979). The party reconciled its electoral strength in the periphery with it commitment to the centralized British state by inserting a distinctive territorial dimension to public policy, through the deployment diversionary regional industrial policies, designed to generate a territorial equilibrium in the use of economic resources, and through the establishment of regional planning boards, charged with integrating regions into the national plan (Jones and Keating 1985: 108). In doing so, Labour maintained its function as a party of territorial integration, representing the economic interests of the peripheral regions in the policy-making process at the centre, fomenting a sense of identification with the political institutions of the British state.

The predominant view in the Labour party was that the nationalist vote was atemporary vote of protest, stirred by the grievances associated the economic slump and the devaluation of 1966, which could be contained with the existing strategy of territorial management and the return of economic growth. In addition, the Scottish and Welsh representatives in the Labour party were married to the existing institutions of territorial representation. The Scottish and Welsh Offices offered a degree of administrative discretion in the implementation of national legislation and constituted important arenas of lobbying for regional interests, while the Secretaries of State provided a privileged access to the cabinet for modifying legislation and for obtaining central government resources. Lastly, the Labour party was hostile to the idea of devolving political power for the specific reason that devolution might lead to a reduction of Scottish seats in Westminster, on which the party had depended in the past to be in government. The most instinctive reaction to the nationalist advance was to maintain a hard line and to refuse any concession on the question of devolution. There were some proposals examining the possibility of devolution on the agenda of the 1968 Scottish conference, but these were met by strong opposition by the Secretary of State Willie Ross (Keating and Bleiman 1979: 155). However, a minority of devolutionist elements in the government expressed

their dissatisfaction with the maintenance of a centralist strategy which had failed to bear fruit and demanded that the Labour party consider alternative constitutional arrangements for accommodating the regions of the periphery. Richard Crossman pushed for the establishment of a Royal Commission on the Constitution, appointed in 1969 to "investigate the case for devolving responsibility to the new institutions of government in the various countries and regions of the UK" (1973b).But the Commission was, in the words of Vernon Bogdanor (2001: 98), "the favourite expedient of a harassed administration", a strategy that enabled the government to neutralise the issue by entrusting it to a committee of experts. Even sceptics such as Ross endorsed the measure as a useful way of keeping the issue off the government agenda long enough for the nationalist threat to recede. Thus, the incursion of the nationalist parties was insufficient to shake the Labour party's confidence in the virtue of its ideological beliefs and in the effectiveness of its strategy of territorial management.

Although it was less severely affected by the advance of the SNP than the Labour party, and less dependent on Scottish votes and seats, the Conservative party adjusted its position in favour of greater self-government for Scotland. The Conservative party had witnessed the steady erosion of its electoral support in Scotland; from winning 50.1 percent of the vote and over half the Scottish seats in 1955, the party obtained 37 percent of the vote and 23 seats in Scotland in 1966, a disconcerting outcome for the party of Unionism.[22] The party was in opposition and it chose to play the nationalist card in order to distinguish itself from the centralist Labour party and recover electoral ground in Scotland by regaining votes lost to the SNP and by competing against the SNP for anti-Labour votes. The party's room for manoeuvre was constrained by its belief in the ideology of Unionism and its conservative disposition, which implied firstly a staunch commitment to preserving Scotland's constitutional position in the United Kingdom and secondly, a preparedness to countenance only piecemeal changes to the prevailing constitutional framework. In addition, the Conservative party had played a leading role in developing the prevailing system of territorial management. Notwithstanding Churchill's vociferous opposition to Labour's collectivist policies, by the time they returned to power in 1951, the Tories had incorporated into their governing programme the various commitments that formed part of the Keynesian post-war consensus- a mixed economy,

---

[22] The distortive effects of the SMP electoral system and the spatial concentration of the Labour and Conservative parties' electoral support exacerbated Labour's dependence on Scottish seats and exaggerated the Conservative party's decline as a parliamentary force representing Scotland. With 48.7 percent of votes, Labour won 43 Scottish seats (64 percent), while the Conservatives obtained almost half as many seats (23), with 37 percent of the vote.

social security, national wage bargaining, full employment.[23] During the 1950s, the party began to use regional policies to tackle Scotland's economic stagnation, providing financial inducements to firms to move northwards, with flagship industrial projects such as the Ravenscraig steel mill and by establishing the Scottish Development Department in the Scottish Office for coordinating industrial development and planning functions. These ideological constraints meant that there was little enthusiasm in the party for legislative autonomy, and the leadership would only be able to bring about a marginal adjustment the party's policy. In the summer of 1967, the party set up two groups to investigate the reform of the Scottish government, for making it more responsive to Scottish needs. In 1968, Ted Heath (1968) made a statement during the Conference of Scottish Conservatives, known as the 'Declaration of Perth', showing an appreciation of the rising tide of Scottish nationalism:

> "People feel that they are taking little part in making or even influencing those decisions…It is right that Scotland, which has for so long had her own legal system, her own local authority organisations and her own arrangements in so many other spheres should give lead in new developments in which she is governed."

Heath subsequently set up a Scottish Constitutional Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Alec Douglas-Home, a Scottish Unionist, to consider the modalities in which the autonomy of Scotland could be realised. The Committee proposed the establishment of a directly elected Scottish assembly with responsibility over the second reading, committee and report stages of bills that were exclusively Scottish measures, reserving the third reading and House of Lord stages for Westminster. The scheme was Unionist in spirit- it ensured that the activities of the Scottish Grand Committee would be accountable to the Scottish electorate, but it retained final say over any decisions with Westminster, ensuring that the sovereignty of parliament remained intact.

Despite its electoral pledge to establish a Scottish assembly, the Conservative party was unwilling to take any decisive action towards this end once in office. The threat of regional nationalism had receded; the SNP did gain support in four of the Conservative party's marginal seats, but the Tories had also gained three seats in the North-East at the expense of the Labour and Liberal parties. Although the Conservative party had failed to win a plurality of votes and seats in Scotland- in spite of narrowing the gap between itself

---

[23] The Conservative party's electoral appeal among the middle classes meant that they adopted a different strategy for meeting the 'consensus' objectives of full employment and welfare state, maintaining a commitment to using fiscal and monetary policy to stimulate demand and to some measure of indicative planning, but emphasising the reduction of government controls and focusing on 'supply-side' micro-economic factors- greater domestic competition, reduced taxation on personal income and corporate profits, and greater industrial training (Tomlinson 1995: 73-8)

84

social security, national wage bargaining, full employment.[23] During the 1950s, the party began to use regional policies to tackle Scotland's economic stagnation, providing financial inducements to firms to move northwards, with flagship industrial projects such as the Ravenscraig steel mill and by establishing the Scottish Development Department in the Scottish Office for coordinating industrial development and planning functions. These ideological constraints meant that there was little enthusiasm in the party for legislative autonomy, and the leadership would only be able to bring about a marginal adjustment the party's policy. In the summer of 1967, the party set up two groups to investigate the reform of the Scottish government, for making it more responsive to Scottish needs. In 1968, Ted Heath (1968) made a statement during the Conference of Scottish Conservatives, known as the 'Declaration of Perth', showing an appreciation of the rising tide of Scottish nationalism:

> "People feel that they are taking little part in making or even influencing those decisions…It is right that Scotland, which has for so long had her own legal system, her own local authority organisations and her own arrangements in so many other spheres should give lead in new developments in which she is governed."

Heath subsequently set up a Scottish Constitutional Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Alec Douglas-Home, a Scottish Unionist, to consider the modalities in which the autonomy of Scotland could be realised. The Committee proposed the establishment of a directly elected Scottish assembly with responsibility over the second reading, committee and report stages of bills that were exclusively Scottish measures, reserving the third reading and House of Lord stages for Westminster. The scheme was Unionist in spirit- it ensured that the activities of the Scottish Grand Committee would be accountable to the Scottish electorate, but it retained final say over any decisions with Westminster, ensuring that the sovereignty of parliament remained intact.

Despite its electoral pledge to establish a Scottish assembly, the Conservative party was unwilling to take any decisive action towards this end once in office. The threat of regional nationalism had receded; the SNP did gain support in four of the Conservative party's marginal seats, but the Tories had also gained three seats in the North-East at the expense of the Labour and Liberal parties. Although the Conservative party had failed to win a plurality of votes and seats in Scotland- in spite of narrowing the gap between itself

---

[23] The Conservative party's electoral appeal among the middle classes meant that they adopted a different strategy for meeting the 'consensus' objectives of full employment and welfare state, maintaining a commitment to using fiscal and monetary policy to stimulate demand and to some measure of indicative planning, but emphasising the reduction of government controls and focusing on 'supply-side' micro-economic factors- greater domestic competition, reduced taxation on personal income and corporate profits, and greater industrial training (Tomlinson 1995: 73-8)

and Labour- this asymmetry was not by itself sufficient to compel the Tory government to gain further electoral support in Scotland by implementing the Home Report. The two-party system continued to operate according to well-established parameters- there was a nation-wide swing of 4.8 percent towards the Conservative party, which won 46.4 percent of the vote and 330 seats, while the Labour won 43.1 percent of the vote and 287 seats. Class-based electoral alignments were beginning to loosen and electoral behaviour was more volatile than in the previous election, with total volatility jumping to 6.1 percent. However, 4.9 percent of the electoral interchange took place between the two blocs suggesting that the class cleavage remained the principal dimension of competition. Having deflected the nationalist threat and returned to government with a confident majority, the Conservative party could now concentrate on its core business- negotiating the country's entry in to the EEC and pressing ahead with the local government reform.

The government made little progress on the question of devolution, stating that it wished to wait for the report of the Royal Commission, to ensure that the devolution legislation it eventually enacted did not differ significantly from the recommendations of the report (Bogdanor 2001: 135-136). The Tories prevaricated on their devolution policy throughout Ted Heath's period as a Prime Minister. A resolution requesting the government to re-assert its commitment to establishing the Scottish Convention was eventually defeated by a majority at Scottish Conference in May 1973. While Heath was a forceful defender of devolution, he was isolated, and the policy had a significant number of opponents, such as Ian Sproat, who were apprehensive of the difficulties of handling what was likely to be a Labour-dominated assembly. The publication of the Kilbrandon Commission's report in October brought to light the enduring vitality of Unionist sentiment; a number of prominent MPs opposed the recommendations of the report on the basis that they would simply lead to the creation of an additional layer of bureaucracy and diminish the influence of Scotland at the centre (Mitchell 1990: 67). The behaviour of the Tory party in government was a far cry from its electoral pledge. The party leadership had manipulated the issue of devolution as a part of its opposition to the Labour government, and strategically fused its appreciation of Scottish nationalism with its belief in the modernization of public administration to issue a moderate proposal for enhancing Scottish self-government. Once in government, the Unionist creed prevailed

When it found itself back in opposition, the electoral incentives for the Labour party to adjust its position on the territorial dimension had scarcely grown. It had lost five percent of the vote and three seats in Scotland, but only one seat was lost to the SNP.

Moreover, the SNP had lost support across the industrial parts of Scotland, and thus did not threaten Labour's electoral strongholds in the region. The Labour party resumed its role as defender of regional interests, opposing the Conservative government's Housing (Scotland) Act, which would have entailed significant rises in the rents charged by Scottish local authorities. However, disagreements persisted within the party's different organisations regarding the desirability of devolution. The different responses of the Welsh and Scottish Executive varied according to whether there was a pre-existing commitment to decentralisation. Enjoying a hegemonic position in Wales, the Welsh Executive had developed its own project for the establishment of an elected Welsh Council within the context of local government reform. In contrast, the Scottish Executive remained committed to existing channels of influence at the centre and feared that a policy shift towards devolution would simply serve to raise the salience of the issue and benefit its nationalist competitor. It remained resolutely opposed to the idea of a Scottish self-government, maintaining in its evidence to the Kilbrandon Commission that 'any new fangled assembly' would reduce Scottish influence at Westminster, undermine the economic unity of the UK and fail to bring substantial benefits to the people of Scotland (Jones and Keating 1982: 185-8). Instead, it proposed the expansion in the remit of the Scottish Grand Committee and the creation of a planning agency to tackle the region's economic problems. Thus, the pressure to shift strategies and adopt devolution when it appeared to be an accommodating strategy for Labour's regional rivals caused serious internal dissent within its regional branches.

The tone of the independence debate in Scotland had been transformed by 1973 with the discovery and exploitation of North Sea oil, which altered the economic calculus of separatism and undermined Labour's argument that only a socialist government in a centralized British state could resolve Scotland's economic problems.[24] This year also witnessed the publication of the Kilbrandon Commission's recommendation for the establishment of a Scottish assembly and the revival of nationalist electoral pressures, spurred by the victory of Margo MacDonald for the SNP in the Govan by-election, one of Labour's traditional strongholds around Glasgow. This was an ominous defeat for the Labour party, given that a general election was expected in the next year. Placing territorial autonomy for Scotland and Wales within a broader initiative of symmetric decentralization offered a possible way out for the party to endorse devolution without

---

[24] However, not too much should be made of this new development. Miller *et al.* (1977) found that prevailing attitudes to self-government, satisfaction with the performance of the British government and trust in British political institutions were much more influential determinants of support for the SNP than attitudes towards oil revenue.

compromising its core ideological tenets. This became evident in the speech by Harold Wilson (1973), in which he proposed the creation of regional assemblies:

> "...we need.. first, to decentralize and democratize more and more work presently undertaken by the central government either from Whitehall or through their own regional machinery, and second, to create democratic regional authorities accountable to the people they serve"

The Labour party was gradually moving away from its staunchly centralist outlook; devolution was compatible with the ideology of the Labour party when it was undertaken on a symmetric basis across the regions of Great Britain, including English regions. Nations, it seemed, did not have a distinctive entitlement to self-government. In spite of enjoying the possibility of quelling regional nationalist demands from the opposition benches, the Labour party was still afflicted with ideological rigidity, a legacy of decades of orthodox centralist socialism; it remained opposed to devolution for Great Britain's national groups, preferring instead to defend territorial interests at the centre when necessary and to situate devolution within a broader process of regionalization.

The dismissive attitudes of both mainstream parties towards the nationalist parties were exposed in the campaigns for the General Election of 1970 and February 1974, during which devolution remained an issue of low salience. The Labour party's manifesto defended the performance of the existing system of territorial management and re-iterated its commitment to ensuring economic prosperity through regional development funds and economic planning councils (LP 1970). The Conservative party on the other hand promised to use the Home report as the basis for legislative proposals to be put before parliament, but the question did not feature highly in the party's programmatic agenda, which was on the whole dedicated to the issues that mattered most to the British electorate, such as inflation, taxation and public spending, industrial relations and so on. Moreover, devolution was included as a component of a programme for the modernisation of government, and it would need to take into account, and implicitly take second place to, the reform of local government (CP 1970). Despite enjoying the possibility of recovering electoral ground in Scotland by raising the salience of the devolution issue in its confrontation with the Labour party, the Conservative party focused its energy during the campaign on attacking the Labour government's economic record, on re-iterating its commitments to reforming industrial relations and entering the EEC (Butler and Pinto-Duschinsky 1971). The issue of devolution had been picked up by the Tories as part of a broader strategy of opposition to the Labour government, but it was kept off the agenda during the electoral contest.

Even the momentous events of 1973 failed to enliven the devolution debate between the mainstream parties. The SNP entered the electoral campaign with the two slogans 'Scotland's oil' and 'Rich Scots, Poor Britons', claiming that a British government would not extract the oil at a rate that corresponded with Scottish social needs and priorities (SNP 1974). But despite these developments, mainstream parties remained indifferent toward the issue of devolution, and it was once again dismissed as an issue of competition during the campaign. The Conservative party mentioned in passing, at the end of its manifesto, that it would continue to study the recommendations of the Kilbrandon report (CP 1974a). The Labour party did not acknowledge the work of the Commission and stood against devolution, rejecting any proposal that would lead to a reduction in the number of Scottish MPs at Westminster (LP 1974a). Devolution was overshadowed by the graver concerns of industrial organization reform, economic growth, inflation control, public ownership of the economy (Butler and Kavanagh 1974: 94-129). Thus, although the mainstream parties were competing in an increasingly polarized atmosphere, they were unwilling to bring the question of devolution into the debate. Like the nationalist parties that called for the restructuring of the British state, devolution was an issue that remained at the fringe of British party politics.

Setting the Agenda from the Fringe (1974)

After the February 1974 General Election however, devolution could not longer be ignored. The election produced a hung parliament and provided an unprecedented opportunity for the regional nationalist parties to push their claims to the forefront of the Labour government's agenda. The Labour party was highly vulnerable to the electoral and parliamentary pressures exerted by the SNP. The SNP had a triumph, increasing its share of the Scottish vote from 11.4 to 21.1 percent, winning four Conservatives seats in the North East, winning two Labour seats in Dundee and East Stirlingshire, and coming second in 16 seats, draining votes from both Conservatives and Labour.[25] In Wales, the support for PC fell from 11.5 to 10.7 percent, but it did well in most Welsh-speaking areas and took two seats from the Labour party. Having lost four seats to the SNP and PC, the Labour party was in office as a minority government, holding on to 301 seats, and was dependent on informal parliamentary support of the regional nationalist parties (Steed

---

[25] The SMP electoral system and the spatial concentration of electoral support for mainstream and regionalist parties conditioned vulnerability of the mainstream parties to the SNP. The SNP won as much as 10.5 percent of the Labour party's 1970 electorate and 9 percent of the Conservative party's electorate. However, the SNP was concentrating its support in the Conservative constituencies, resulting in a greater loss of seats for the Conservative party; the SNP won four Tory seats, three of which had been considered safe.

1974: 326).[26] Moreover, the Labour party had lost the election in England, winning 237 seats against 268 seats for the Conservatives, and relied on its forty Scottish seats to be in government. As in 1964, the Labour party once again desperately needed the Scottish electorate to govern and was thus highly attuned to its preferences.

Labour's vulnerability was exacerbated by the crumbling of the two-party system. For the first time since 1929, an election had failed to manufacture a parliamentary majority. There was a low nation-wide swing from the Conservative to the Labour party of 0.6 percent, which proved to be insufficient for producing a clear alternation of party in power. The sources of this systemic crisis were tied to the eroding social foundations of the two-party system. Mark Franklin (1984: 500) argues that by February 1974, class-measured by a number of different social structural variables- lost its capacity to structure voting alignments; at the height of class voting in 1964, class forces contributed more than half of the influence on voting choice, but by 1974, this effect had diminished by a third. The BES corroborated this trend. Between 1966 and 1974, the ratio of Labour to Conservative partisanship among the manual working class fell from 2.7:1 to 2.3:1, and among professional classes it fell from 1:3.7 to 1:3. Moreover, the partisanship of the electorate also fell dramatically, the share of respondents that volunteered a 'fairly' strong identification with the Labour and Conservative parties dropped from 71 to 63 percent, while the share that volunteered a 'very' strong identification fell from 39 to 28 percent (Crewe et al. 1975). The fickle predisposition of the electorate was manifested in its voting behaviour; there was a sharp increase in total volatility to 15 percent, but only 5 percent the interchange took place between the two blocs, providing a rush of support for the SNP and for the Liberal party, which won 24 percent of the vote. The electorate had expressed its dissatisfaction with the performance of the Labour and Conservative parties, by supporting third parties, portending the possibility of a profound transformation of the British two-party system. For Labour, this was deeply worrying. The territorial asymmetry in electoral support had reinforced its dependence on the periphery, and now, it could no longer count on its traditional base of support in the working-class to be returned safely to government. The erosion of the two-party system thus magnified Labour's vulnerability to the incursions of the nationalists.

The outcome of the October election reinforced the threat of regional nationalism. The SNP's victory was astounding; it made advances everywhere, raising its share of the

---

[26] The Labour party did not reach a formal governing pact with SNP, the Cabinet Minister Shirley Williams argued that: "there is no way that Labour would have brought into a pact with the nationalists, since they were still going for independence". But, the leader of the SNP parliamentary group, Gordon Wilson, confirmed: "that there was an understanding among the whips that the government depended on the SNP to get things though parliament."

Scottish vote from 21.9 to 30.4 percent, returning 11 MPs to Westminster and becoming the second party in Scotland. The Conservative party was routed, losing four seats to the SNP in the North East, and was reduced to winning a quarter of the Scottish vote and a mere 16 seats. The Labour party on the other hand put a halt to the electoral haemorrhaging which it had continuously suffered in Scotland since 1966, winning 36 percent of the vote and 41 seats. But, the territorial imbalance in electoral support exacerbated Labour's sensitivity to potential future nationalist advances. Although the Labour party had won the election in England, the situation remained highly competitive, with Labour obtaining 40.1 percent of the vote and 255 seats, against 38.9 percent of the vote and 253 seats for the Tories. With such a competitive situation, any erosion of support in Scotland would prevent the Labour party from being in government. Ominously, the SNP had come second in 36 of Labour's 41 Scottish seats, and within 15 percent of victory in 24 seats; it thus posed a present and future danger to the Labour party's capacity to govern (Steed 1975: 345-51). Moreover, the attenuation of electoral flux also meant that the Labour government remained in a precarious position; the swing in favour of Labour was insufficient to manufacture a government with a strong majority, and the party held on to power with a slim majority of three. As a result, the Labour party was vulnerable to voting defections and to the loss of seats in by-elections.

With the growing electoral threat of the SNP, the Labour and Conservative parties changed their tack on devolution and deployed accommodating electoral strategies. In Scotland, there were powerful incentives for them to adjust their position. The survey conducted for the RCC in the summer of 1970 revealed that 50 percent of respondents wanted either more decisions to be made in Scotland or a new system of government in Scotland, and 23 percent were in favour of full independence (1973a). There existed moreover, an important relation between devolution and partisanship, as support for the SNP was closely related to the demand for self-government; 58 percent of SNP identifiers were in favour of independence and 91 percent in favour of devolution (Miller 1981: 104-111). In Wales, the demand for devolution was a less significant, as 60 percent of respondents were in favour of the status quo, and only 30 and 15 percent were in favour of devolution and independence. By adopting a pro-devolution policy in Scotland, the Labour and Conservative parties could undermine the SNP's ownership of the devolution issue, move towards the median voter in Scotland, appeal to a significant share of the Scottish electorate and bolster their electoral prospects in the region.

The Labour party moved cautiously towards an accommodating strategy. The erosion of class-based electoral alignments had disrupted the harmonious configuration of criteria that had hitherto guided the party's electoral strategy and informed its ideological profile. The support of the traditional working-class was no longer sufficient to ensure the Labour party's electoral success, and the party leadership was thus prepared to make adjustments to its prevailing centralist ideology in order to win the support of voters in Scotland and Wales. Although the shift in the Labour party's position was driven primarily by the party leadership's concern for electoral success, the move was facilitated by the plausibility of a pro-devolution policy. The support for a regional assembly with legislative powers could be presented as the extension of the party's programme for regionalism that had been developed only the year before; having accepted the principle of territorial autonomy, the Labour party could now endorse the idea of forging ahead with the initiative in Scotland. Moreover, save for the period between 1958 and 1974, Home Rule had always been a policy of the Labour party: it had been supported by the industrial wing of the Labour movement in the early 20th century; it had been endorsed by the Labour party's Scottish founder, Keir Hardie; it was congruent with the radical ideology adopted by many of the early socialist movements active in Scotland and Wales. Political deecentralisation was intimately bound with the Labour party's earliest vocation as a progressive political force rooted in the periphery. Although the party was internally divided on the issue, it did not coincide with existing ideological divisions within the party, as did for instance, the question of EEC membership which reinforced divisions between the radical left-wing and pro-market right-wing currents. Lastly, unlike questions such as the public ownership of the economy, the devolution issue was not perceived as "vital for the continuing battle for the party's soul" (Keating and Bleiman 1979: 169).

However, hostilities to devolution persisted. Although an accommodating strategy would have helped the party to challenge the SNP, the Scottish Executive remained divided on the likely electoral rewards of such a strategy, and at a sparsely attended conference, it voted the devolution policy down. The National Executive Committee (NEC) exercised pressure on its Scottish branch by re-iterating its commitment to devolution and by recalling the Scottish conference. The 'Dalintober Street' conference voted in favour of two propositions that called for the setting up of a 'directly elected assembly with legislative powers within the context of the political and economic unity of the UK' In September, the government issued a White Paper, *Democracy and Devolution* (1974)which proposed the establishment of directly assemblies in Scotland and Wales,

elected with a SMP electoral system, in which only the Scottish assembly would enjoy legislative powers in matters administered by the Scottish Office, while the Welsh assembly would enjoy secondary powers of legislation only, an asymmetric arrangement that reflected the intensity of nationalist sentiment and demand for devolution in the two regions. In continuity with the existing financial arrangements, the assemblies would be financed by block-grants and there would be no devolution of revenue-raising. The number of Scottish and Welsh MPs would remain; the Secretaries of State would continue to sit in Cabinet, exercising control over the appointment of the regional executive and wielding a veto over the decisions of the Scottish assembly.[27] The White Paper was a compromise that represented the only feasible option for the leadership for overcoming the party's deep internal divisions, preserving the structure of the unionist settlement by maintaining the institutions of territorial representation and upholding the economic unity of the country by ensuring that autonomy was limited to matters of 'low' politics.

In opposition, the Conservative party leadership also attempted to produce a policy that could reconcile recognition of the surge in support for the SNP with the persistent hostility to constitutional change among the Unionist elements within the party. The party had abandoned its devolution policy in May 1973, but after the February 1974 election, the party leadership needed to respond to the important electoral losses suffered at the hands of the SNP and it once again recanted the existing policy. Ted Heath established a committee on devolution and proposed a new 'Charter for Scotland', an indirectly elected assembly composed of local councillors with autonomy over spending Scotland's share of UK income. By adopting an accommodating strategy that stopped short of devolution, the leadership hoped to overcome the party's instinctive reticence for constitutional change (Mitchell 1990: 67-70).

The postulates of the directional and proximity theories of competition offer only partial accounts of the adaptation of mainstream parties. In accordance with the directional theory, the two parties abandoned their dismissive strategies and adopted accommodating electoral strategies, shifting their position in a broadly 'pro-devolution' direction and heightening the salience of the devolution issue in their competition against the nationalist parties, in order to undermine the nationalist parties' ownership of the

---

[27] The RCC recommended elections by the Single Transferable Vote (STV), assemblies with exclusive competence over the existing jurisdictions of the Scottish and Welsh Offices, a reduction in the number of Scottish and Welsh MPs to a level proportional to their population, and suggested that the role of Secretary of State be maintained to ensure Scottish representation in reserved matters, but that the role be combined with a Cabinet position. (RCC 1973)

devolution issue and to bolster their own electoral position in the region.[28] However contrary to the expectations of the proximity theory of party competition, they did not fully converge towards the position of the regional median voter or the position of the challenger nationalist party; they adopted very distinct positions on an ordered scale of alternatives for territorial autonomy. As a result, devolution remained a 'positional' issue, as they adopted differentiated policies in favour of a directly and indirectly elected assembly. This reflected the fact that mainstream parties put forth proposals that were within an ideological boundary, set by the party's different beliefs and raditions and the intensity of their articulation within the party. The existence of a tradition within the Labour party which was sympathetic to political decentralisation as a method for recognising national distinctiveness and promoting greater democracy, meant that the party was more receptive to the demands of the nationalist parties and willing to adjust its position to a further degree than the Tories, whose very identity was intimately bound to the preservation of the Union.

Decision-Making under Divided Government (1975-1979)

In November 1975, the Labour party submitted to parliament a second White Paper, *Our Changing Democracy. Devolution to Scotland and Wales (1975).* The decision-rule for the ratification of the devolution proposals was straightforward, requiring a simple majority of votes in parliament. But the devolution legislation nevertheless needed to surmount a high ratification threshold, as the persistence of deep ideological differences within the Labour parliamentary party over the desirability and extent of devolution engendered a situation of 'divided government', in which the executive and legislative branches of government came into conflict as a result of the divergent positions adopted by the NEC and Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP) (Laver 1999) The main consequence of this lack of partisan cohesion was the introduction of two institutional veto players- the parliament and the referendum. The parliament represented the most significant obstacle to the enactment of the devolution bill; the dissenting behaviour of members of the PLP lead to the defeat of the bills and to the introduction of a mandatory referendum clause with a high ratification threshold. Thus, an otherwise 'flexible' British constitution was offset by the deep ideological divisions within the Labour party.

---

[28] The two parties also put forth an extensive list of financial goodies to allure Scottish voters. The Tories proposed the establishment of a Scottish Development Fund for financing Scottish infrastructure projects tied to the oil industry, as well as greater financing for industrial renovation programmes. The Labour party promised to establish a British National Oil Corporation and a Centre for Oil Drilling Technology in Scotland, to move civil service jobs to Scotland and to continue with increases in public spending (Butler and Kavanagh 1975b)

The immediate consequence of the White Paper was to expose the diversity of attitudes within the PLP towards the government's devolution bill both over the desirability of devolution *tout court,* as well as over the specific measures contained in the devolution Bill. Although the Welsh Executive had been more encouraging of a territorial assembly than its Scottish counterpart, the proposal for devolution faced significant opposition from some prominent MPs, most notably Neil Kinnock, which articulated his conviction in maintaining the solidarity of the working class:

"I believe that the emancipation of the class which I have come to this House to represent can best be achieved in a single nation and in a single economic unit…I believe that the organised strength of the working-class people has brought the only benefits to have been secured by those whom I cam here to represent. Their misfortunes are not the result of being British, Welsh or Scottish." (cited in Bogdanor 2001: 186)

Within the Scottish Labour Party, the most vocal opponent of devolution, Tam Dalyell, argued that the lack of significant revenues at the disposal of the Scottish Government would reduce its scope for making substantial changes in its areas of responsibility, aggravate grievances in Scotland and increase the level of conflict with Westminster. In addition, Dalyell (1977: 25) warned of the pathology of asymmetrical devolution in unitary states, one that became known as the 'West Lothian' question

"we would have the absurd situation in which Scottish and Welsh MPs could continue to legislate on subjects which had been devolved to the assemblies in their own countries. They would not be responsible to their own constituents for such legislation, nor would they be answerable to the English voters who would be affected by it."

This problem would not be resolved by the establishment of a federation in view of the disproportionately large size of England in the UK and the lack of public support for regional assemblies. Objection to the Bill was justified in terms of the impracticability of the measures rather than in terms of how they would compromise socialist ideology.

These reservations contrasted with the perspectives of the proponents of devolution, such as John MacKintosh (1968) who argued that divergent interests and traditions in Scotland entailed that distinct policies should be devised by a representative government that could control the Scottish Office. This need not necessarily turn into a continuous accretion of powers and appetite for independence, given the stable character of demands for self-government in Scotland. More activist exponents, such as Jim Sillars, advocated the creation of an assembly with economic, industrial and tax-raising powers. In an interview, Sillars defended his perspective, arguing:

"A Scottish assembly could not be bereft of economics powers. It was precisely the decline in Scotland's economy, its heavy industry, which fanned the popular feeling that Scotland should run its own affairs."

A separate economic policy would be the best method for resolving Scotland's industrial crisis, while revenue-raising powers would ensure that the executive could pursue a distinctly socialist agenda. This strongly pro-devolution position fomented a dispute among Scottish politicians that broke out in the 1975 Party Conference over the devolution White Paper- and specifically over the devolution of the Scottish Development Agency (SDA)- leading to the defection of 'maximalist' elements, lead by Jim Sillars, and to the formation of the Scottish Labour Party (SLP) (Drucker 1978: 47).[29]

A final source of opposition to the White Paper emanated form representatives from Northern England. Some were opposed to devolution on purely constitutional grounds, fearing that the government's rushed accommodating strategy would inadvertently lead to the break-up of Britain; others simply sought to obtain pork-barrel concessions for the North, in exchange for support for regional assemblies. There was widespread resentment toward the idea of maintaining the number of Scottish and Welsh MPs at Westminster, even though Scotland and Wales were already over-represented and there was anger at the fact that the SDA would be obtaining a sizeable budget for industrial promotion, although Scotland already received a greater share of public expenditure per head of population than Northern England, a region with comparable economic needs (Guthrie and McLean 1978: 194)

The conflict within the PLP went to the heart of the very matter that the government's bill was meant to have settled, namely, how to ensure that the autonomy of regional assemblies did not endanger the economic unity of the country or jeopardise the economic interests of the working-class. The ideological polarisation had predictable repercussions on the party's cohesion during the enactment of the devolution bill. The period 1974-1979 witnessed a dramatic fall in party discipline, with an increase in the number of divisions and in the number of dissenting votes. The issue of devolution attracted the highest degree of dissent. In total, out of the 24 Labour votes defeated because of Labour MP defections, 13 concerned Scottish and Welsh devolution (Norton 1980: 429). The enduring hostility of the centralist elements within the PLP was clearly visible in their voting behaviour during the different stages of the enactment. The bill

---

[29] As a result, the government published in August 1976 *Devolution to Scotland and Wales. A Supplementary Statement* , which made a concession by repealing the powers of the Secretary of State over the appointment of the Chief Executive and the cabinet of the Scottish administration and over the legislation of the Scottish government.

passed the second reading in December 1976 by 292 votes to 247, but with a significant degree of cross-voting; 10 Labour MPs voted against the bill, and 45 abstained; five Conservative MPs voted for the bill, and 42 abstained; 13 Liberal MPs voted for the bill. The rate of defection was high among Labour MPs during this stage, but the government could rely on the support of the Conservative and Liberal members.

By the time it reached the committee stage however, mustering a majority looked improbable, as the Conservative pro-devolutionist signalled their intention to rejoin their party, while the Liberals stated that their support for the bill in the committee stage hinged on the adoption of amendments introducing proportional representation and revenue-raising powers. But making concessions to the Liberal party would alienate Labour backbenchers, which were already sceptical of the whole exercise. As a result, the government, Bogdanor writes (2001: 180), "seemed caught in a revolving door situation" incapable of halting at a point at which its proposal would satisfy a majority of MPs. The government decided to make a concession to the Labour dissidents, by inserting a clause making the implementation of the bill subject to referendums in Scotland and Wales. However, the delay in the bill's approval, raised the troubling prospect that it would be filibustered until the end of the session. The government moved to impose an allocation of time or 'guillotine' motion. The Prime Minister Callaghan (1987: 502) argued:

> "if the government had given up the bill without testing the House, the SNP would have had an electoral field day… the demand for independence might reach dangerous proportions if not effort was made to accommodate the middle ground".

In February 1977, the guillotine motion was defeated by 312 votes to 283, by a combination of Conservative, Liberals and Labour MPs. The dissent of Labour MPs proved to be fatal. Twenty-two Labour MPs voted against the motion, while twenty-three abstained; of these, five were from Scotland, seven were from Wales and nine were from the North of England (Norton 1980: 240).[30] The second notable feature of the defeat was that cohesive behaviour of the Conservative party, which had voted in unison against the guillotine motion, signalling a dramatic shift in the party's strategy.

Until late in 1976, the Conservative party presented itself as a party of devolution. In January 1976, the Council had approved a resolution affirming a commitment to a directly elected Scottish Assembly. But, while it supported devolution, the party was careful to maintain its opposition to the government's White Paper and articulated its

---

[30] The SNP parliamentary group voted in favour of the devolution Bills during their passage in parliament, but the party remained divided on the issue. In 1976, the SNP party conference had accepted the government's devolution proposal with a compromise between the gradualist and fundamentalist positions: reaffirming the goal of independence and the sovereignty of the Scottish people but accepting an assembly as a possible stepping stone (Lynch 2002: 147-8).

reservations about the rivalry between the separate executive and the Secretary of State, the lack of proportional representation, and the failure to make the assembly a chamber of the UK parliament (Mitchell 1990: 77). However, by 1977, the Tories adopted a more adversarial strategy, a shift that reflected ideological and electoral considerations. The new leader of the party, Margaret Thatcher, was hostile to devolution, stating that:

"Ted had impaled the party on an extremely painful hook for which it would be my unenviable task to set it free. As an instinctive unionist, I disliked the devolution commitment." (Thatcher 1995: 322).

The appointment of Teddy Taylor, a vehement opponent of devolution, as Shadow Secretary of State in December 1976 confirmed the leader's decision to carry the party in a strong anti-devolution direction. In addition, it appeared that the Conservative party would not reap any electoral dividends from maintaining a pro-devolution stance. Results from the Scottish Electoral Study (SES) of 1979 show that the Labour party was more widely viewed as favourable to devolution than the Tory party (Miller and Brand 1981). Labour had the benefit of being the party of government, and used this position to put forth the only concrete bill on devolution; it was thus considered a more credible proponent than the Tories which, in contrast, had prevaricated continuously while in government. Moreover, the Conservative party was aware that a high number of Tory MPs and voters from England and Wales were unsympathetic toward devolution to Scotland and Wales and that the continued support for devolution could come at a significant electoral cost in its electoral bastions. Finally, devolution continued to be a highly divisive issue for the Tories, which were split between the die-hard unionists, moderates which pushed for a directly elected assembly, and a more radical group which supported a quasi-federal scheme of devolution. It was quite telling that none of the 37 resolutions submitted on the devolution issue were debated during the Conservative party conference of 1976; the party leadership preferred to keep it off the agenda than to exposed internal splits (Mitchell 1990: 80) In the second half of 1976, the unionist faction gathered momentum, by establishing a number of anti-devolution groups, such as 'Keep Britain United', isolating the pro-devolutionists and pushing the party back to its traditional Unionist roots. The party thus eschewed its stance in favour of devolution. A document released in 1975 foresaw what the potential consequence of this strategy:

"the strictly party interest of the Conservatives in Scotland and Wales is limited and probably declining. It is hard for any party to write off particular areas, but the Conservative party may, whatever happens on devolution, be compelled to do this in Scotland and Wales." (cited in Meguid 2008: 218).

After the failure of the guillotine motion, it appeared that the devolution bill had effectively been killed. However, in November 1977, the government returned to the issue and put before parliament two separate legislative proposals for devolution to Scotland and Wales. The government's decision to make this distinction reflected the differential intensity of nationalist sentiment in the two regions and the asymmetrical threat posed by the SNP and the PC. The government could simply not use the defeat of the devolution bill as a pretext for disregarding Scotland's constitutional future. After the defeat, the Callaghan government found itself in a minority, following a series of defections and by-election defeats to the SNP, on whose parliamentary support it now depended. Riding high in the opinion polls, which showed that it was the leading party in Scotland with 36 percent of the electorate whilst Labour's support slumped to 27 percent, the SNP withdrew its support for the government, in the hope of precipitating a new election and improving its strength. The motivations of the SNP parliamentary group were fairly simple, as Gordon Wilson explained:

"devolution was a step towards independence and not necessarily vital…what was vital was winning the support of the Scottish people…we gave support to the government, only if we thought what it was doing was beneficial for Scotland."

The Conservatives forwarded a 'no confidence' motion on the 18th March, forcing the Labour party to establish a pact with the Liberal party- forming a majority government 'in disguise'- and to establish a common legislative programme that included devolution. Although sidelined from the negotiations, the SNP kept up the electoral pressure in local elections in May, doubling its share of the vote to 24.2 percent, winning three local authorities from the Labour party, compelling the government to begin anew with the enactment of the devolution bill (Lynch 2002). In Wales on the other hand, the demand for devolution was much weaker, the PC did not exert comparable electoral pressures and the opposition from the Welsh group in parliament was more determined. Issuing a separate bill, the implementation of which was subject to referendum, would help the Labour party drop its commitment to devolution in Wales, by assigning responsibility for failure to the Welsh electorate. In November 1977, the two devolution bills were given a second reading and immediately guillotined.[31]

---

[31] Many of the Labour rebels fell back into line with government policy, fully cognisant that any further dissent on the devolution issue would likely bring the government to its knees. A number of them supported the bills, even though they disagreed with its content, , in the hope that they would be defeated at the referendum stage.

The decision to introduce a referendum clause in February 1977 reflected a number of pragmatic and ideological considerations. The immediate purpose of the amendment was to placate sceptical Labour backbenchers- in particular Welsh dissenters, lead by Leo Abse- that believed that the popular demand for devolution should be verified by means of a plebiscite. Introducing a referendum clause would allow the Welsh dissidents to support the bill in parliament, but then to oppose devolution during the referendum campaign (Bogdanor 1979: 181). The measure also enabled the government to shift the responsibility for any possible rejection of the bills from the English-dominated House of Commons to the electorates of Scotland and Wales. It was believed that the rejection of the bills by parliament would equip the nationalist parties with the ammunition necessary to give further impetus to their demands for independence. This was also the reasoning used for restricting the referendum to the residents of Wales and Scotland, even though devolution was a measure that affected the constitution of the whole country. Thus, the referendum amendment allowed the government to assemble the majority necessary for the ratification of the bills, but to divest itself of any responsibility for failure. The final justification was that devolution constituted a significant transformation of the British constitution and that it could not simply be left to parliament to ratify and that needed to meet additional thresholds of approval. During an interview Cabinet Minister Shirley Williams argued that :

"there was a fairly strong view that, spread across people who were either for or against, that like the accession to the EC, because this was an issue about the constitutional future and identity of the entire country, it was right and proper that there should be a final decision made by the people of that country."

This rationalisation found resonance in January 1978, in the argument used by George Cunningham, an expatriate Scottish MP, to justify a further amendment, the so-called 40 percent rule, which required that 40 percent of the registered electorate support the devolution bill in order for it to be implemented.[32] Since devolution was a practically irreversible constitutional change, it was important to have evidence of widespread support for it. By raising the threshold on turnout and support, the amendment ensured that devolution would not occur without strong public support for it.

Held in March 1979, the referenda resulted in an emphatic defeat for the government. In Wales, the proposals were decisively routed: the support amounted to a

---

[32] A critical aspect of the amendment was that it required the Secretary of State to lay down a repeal order before the parliament if the yes vote was less than 40 percent. The parliament could however vote down the repeal order. The amendment only settled whether the matter would go back to parliament in the event of an inconclusive referendum.

mere 11.9 percent with 60 percent turnout. In Scotland, the result was ambiguous: there was a narrow majority of 51.6 percent in favour, but this represented only 32.8 percent of the electorate, falling short of the threshold (Balsom and McAllister 1979). The results reflected the genuine disinterest in devolution in Wales and the mounting apathy with constitutional reform in Scotland, the unpopularity of the Labour party and its highly publicised divisions during the campaign. Prominent Labour members hostile to the assembly such as Tam Dalyell and Robin Cook created the 'Labour Vote No' group and actively campaigned against the referendum, creating confusion over the Labour party's position. The tremours of the referendum defeat breached the safety of the cabinet. The devolution issue had lost all principled standing and the government was struggling to stay alive. The SNP refused to let the issue lay to rest. It drew on the uncertainty of the result in Scotland and invoked the ambiguity of the threshold amendment to give the cause of devolution one last assist. Showing an unusual display of unity, the National Council of the SNP called on the government to respect the decision of the democratic majority and to reject the Order of Repeal, leaving the Scotland Act on the statute book. If parliament was to reject the decision of the Scottish majority, the members of the SNP were instructed to seek an early election. Gordon Wilson stated:

"the SNP decided that it should try to get a Scottish parliament, and we believed tried to persuade the government to follow the rule of majority voting, disregarding the 40 percent threshold and using the clause of the amendment to introduce the bill."

The Labour party remained deeply split. The bill's shepherd, Michael Foot, wished to keep the bill alive and demanded that the government call for a vote of confidence. The Prime Minister was unconvinced, believing that the government had neither the moral authority nor political ability to act, and that a vote of confidence would result in defeat. The pressure coming from the SNP grew as it put forth a 'motion of no confidence', intending for the government to demand that the Order of Repeal be voted down. This was a highly risky decision for the SNP, whose popularity had been steadily declining in Scotland since the passage of the devolution acts in February 1978. The SNP was in a steep downward spiral and had chosen to produce a general election at the worst possible time. Fully aware of the implications of the decision, Gordon Wilson stated:

"We faced a quandary: either we backed down and lost credibility or we stood firm and watched the government fall. Either way we would get a hammering.. In other words, we decided to put our heads on the block for the sake of devolution."

The Conservative Party latched onto the SNP's motion, and on March 28, the House voted against the government by a margin of one vote. Labour was out, and devolution, was dead. The threshold amendment has, according to Bogdanor (2001: 186) "some claim to being regarded as the most important back-bench initiative in British politics since the war", because it was the measure that effectively put an end to devolution. But, the deeper significance of the amendment was to illustrate the decisive importance of partisan ideology in conditioning the feasibility of institutional change. The shift in the Labour party's position was driven largely by the external pressure exerted by the SNP. However, deep ideological differences regarding the desirability and extent of devolution continued to exist within the PLP, and a resilient set of dissenters from England, Wales and to a lesser extent Scotland, continued to place obstacles in the path of the devolution bills during the various stages of its enactment, by delaying the bill and subjecting its ratification to referendum. Ultimately, the ideological polarisation of the PLP proved too difficult a constraint for a reluctant Labour government to overcome, resulting in devolution's demise. Thus, although it was the referendum that sealed the fate of devolution, the ideology of the Labour party was the variable at the source of the obstruction. As Philip Norton (1980: 429) put it::

"had a number of Labour members not opposed the government, the Scotland and Wales Bill would have been guillotined (and presumably passed), there would have been no referendums with a requirement for a 'Yes' vote by forty percent of eligible voters, and presumably there would not be Assemblies in Scotland and Wales."

The Settled Will (1979-1997)

The plausibility of Norton's counterfactual would be substantiated twenty years later, when the Labour party returned to power as a cohesive force committed to devolution. The ability of the nationalist parties to advance their political objectives during the eighteen-year period separating the defeat of the devolution referenda and the Labour party's return to power in 1997 can once again be analysed in two distinct phases. In the first, from 1979 to 1987, the weakness of the SNP and PC and the emergence of a dominant party system meant that they were unable to set the political agenda. Although the Labour party retained a commitment to devolution as 'unfinished business', neither mainstream parties had the incentive to raise the salience of the devolution issue in their electoral battles. In the second period, from 1987 to 1997, the persistence of a dominant party system featuring a profound territorial imbalance in the distribution of electoral support and the rise in electoral support for the SNP in Scotland occasioned the

'Tartanisation' of the Labour party, whereby Labour was compelled to endorse the establishment of a cross-party Constitutional Convention set-up to produce a blueprint for Scotland's constitutional future. The adversarial strategy adopted by the Conservative party to polarise the Scottish electorate and weaken its Labour rival and the intensification of competition between the two mainstream parties induced a heightening in the salience of the devolution issue and provoked a number of adjustments in the Labour party's position. Once elected, the Labour party acted as a cohesive political force and fulfilled its long-standing pledge to implement devolution for Scotland and Wales.

The Eclipse of Devolution (1979-1987)

The failure of the devolution referendum was a devastating blow to the SNP, who paid for sacrificing the Labour government on the altar of devolution with a spectacular decline in its electoral performance in the General Elections of 1979 and 1983. In 1979, the SNP lost support across Scotland, its share of the Scottish vote fell from 30 to 17 percent and its parliamentary representation collapsed from 11 MPs to 2. It retained its seats in Dundee East and the Western Isles, but lost two seats to Labour and seven seats to the Conservatives. After an impressive electoral surge in October 1974, the parliamentary activity of the SNP was subjected to greater public scrutiny and the party was being punished for having failed to deliver the chief policy which its supporters were expecting and for displaying an erratic attitude in its support to the Labour government. In particular, the divisions between the gradualists and the fundamentalists on the relative merits of devolution for achieving the party's long-term goal of independence became visible during the passage of the devolution act at Westminster, creating confusion among the rank-and-file as well as among the party's supporters. In addition, by siding with the Tories against some Labour legislation and by provoking the fall of the government in 1979, the SNP was pray to being depicted as a group of 'Tartan Tories' and was vulnerable to the claim that it had 'let Thatcher in' (Lynch 2002b: 141)

The electoral defeat resulted in bitter internal struggles to determine the party's ideological identity and electoral strategy, featuring divisions between the social democratic current that wished to rebuild the SNP's philosophy around a social democratic consensus, the fundamentalist wing which believed the SNP had mistakenly involved itself with British politics and should endorse a policy of 'independence or nothing less', and the radical wing- a notorious faction called the 79 Group- composed of a younger cohort of radical professionals that espoused independence, socialism and the

establishment of a Scottish Republic (Kauppi 1982: 240). The latter's call for the party wholeheartedly to embrace socialism gradually influenced the party's electoral strategy (SNP 1987, 1983). There were strong electoral incentives for pursuing a leftward strategy. For the SNP to win a majority of Scottish seats, it would have to concentrate its support in the populated working-class constituencies. In addition, the social profile of the SNP voter became increasingly similar to that of the Labour supporter, as it tended to perform better among the working class and younger generations. Although the distinctive feature of SNP voters was their position on constitutional change, they also emphasised the material concerns of the working-class community, such as unemployment and industrial closure (Brand et al. 1994). In these circumstances, it made sense for the SNP to make inroads into Labour's electoral stronghold. The idol of the 79 Group, Jim Sillars, explained the rationale for the leftward repositioning:

"there was a general belief that our success depended on breaking the Labour party in its heartlands- in the central belt of Scotland.. There was a long held influence of socialism in Scottish nationalism, we were instinctively left of centre, and we knew that beating the nationalist drum with kilts and haggis did not resonate with people."

The internal wrangling that preceded the SNP's ideological reconfiguration was harmful to the party's performance. In the local elections held between 1980 and 1982, the SNP saw its share of the vote fall to 15 percent, while its rating in opinion polls fell continuously, reaching some of its lowest level in the months preceding the General Election of 1983 (Hassan and Lynch 2000: 381). In the General Election of 1983, the SNP witnessed its share of the vote fall from 17.3 to 11.8 percent, slightly below the level it had reached in 1970. It maintained its two seats and performed well in the rural constituencies of the North East and South West, but everywhere else, the Alliance- a coalition comprising the Liberal Party and the breakaway Social Democratic Party- recovered the electoral ground that the Liberal party had lost to the SNP during the mid-1970s. Crucially, it remained weak in Scotland's central industrial belt. [33]

The fate of the *Plaid Cymru* featured a lesser degree of intrigue. Although the failure of the devolution referendum was a clear defeat for the PC, whose share of electoral support fell from 11 to 8.1 percent, it nevertheless maintained two seats in 1979, in former Liberal strongholds at the centre of the country. Under the new leadership of Dafydd Thomas, the party maintained the socialist-oriented platform that it had

---

[33] The SNP incapacity to concentrate its electoral support- it won less than 20 percent of the vote in four fifths of the constituencies- meant that it continued to suffer the distortive effects of the SMP electoral system, winning two seats (2.8 percent) with 17 percent of the Scottish vote in 1979, and two seats with 11.8 percent of the vote in 1983.

developed during the 1970s, in order to make inroads into the populated industrial areas of the South-East, traditionally dominated by the Labour party. On the constitutional status of Wales, the party adopted a deliberately ambiguous position favouring 'self-government' in order better to fight elections in a territory that is divided on the question of the status of Wales (PC 1983, 1987).In 1983, the PC fared little better, winning 7.8 percent of the Welsh vote and maintaining two seats.

The decline of the nationalist parties was matched by the advent of a dominant party system and the onset of eighteen years of Tory rule, in which the party and its assertive leader Margaret Thatcher steered the country through profound economic, social and institutional transformations. Attending to the matter of self-government for the stateless nations of Great Britain however did not feature in the party's crusade to carry the country towards its ideal free society. On the contrary, in continuity with its previous policy, the party set itself against devolution. Moreover, the Conservative party's macro-economic objectives- in particular the reduction of public expenditure-produced a significant centralisation of authority. The party's territorial strategy throughout its time in office reflected the absence of electoral pressures from the nationalist parties and the consequent lack of any incentive to modify its centralist ideology. In 1979, it recovered electoral grounds in Scotland, increasing its share of support from 24.7 to 31.4 percent by winning the support of 20 percent of former SNP supporters and reclaiming seven seats from the SNP in the North-East, obtaining a total of 22 seats (Miller and Brand 1981). In 1983, the party's support fell to 28.3 as a result of losses to the Alliance party, but it nevertheless maintained 21 seats. In Wales, it witnessed an unprecedented surge in support, increasing its share of the vote form 23.9 percent to 32.2 percent and obtaining 11 seats; in 1983, it won 31 percent of the vote and 14 seats. The Tories thus seemed to have revitalised their presence in the periphery. In addition, the party was relatively immune from the electoral pressures of its mainstream and nationalist rivals due to the overwhelming support it gained in England. In 1979, the party obtained 47.2 percent of the English vote and 306 seats; in 1983, it obtained 46.5 percent of the English vote and 362 seats, a number sufficient for an outright parliamentary majority. As a result, the party's position at the national level was secure. In 1979, there was there was a substantial swing of six percent towards the Conservatives party which obtained 339 seats with 43.9 percent of the vote, enjoying an impressive lead of 7 percent over the Labour party. This dominance was amplified in 1983, when the party obtained 397 seats with 42.4 percent of the vote and enjoyed a lead of 14.8 percent over Labour. The dominance of the Tories

over the British party system and firm control over government business meant that they were able to keep the question of territorial autonomy off the political agenda.

After having flirted intermittently with the idea of a directly elected Scottish assembly, the Conservatives party returned to its Unionist tradition. In the period leading to the 1979 General Election some Scottish Tories, led by notable figures such as Alick Buchanan-Smith (shadow Secretary of State) and Russell Fairgrieve (Scottish Party Chairman) still hankered after some form of devolved government, so Thatcher pledged to contemplate an all-party conference on the question. However, this transpired to be a vaporous commitment and the party quickly moved to consider reforms to parliamentary procedures: adjusting the composition of the Scottish Grand Committee, increasing the frequency of its meetings and the scope of its debates, enabling it to sit periodically in Edinburgh, and establishing a Scottish Affairs Select Committee with powers of inquiry into the activities of the Scottish Office (CP 1979). Devolution was thus laid to rest.

The Conservative party's newly forged ideology- a heterogeneous collection of ideas termed 'New Right'- had no patience for either regional nationalism or political decentralisation. The Conservative Party had always been the party of the Union, but traditional Conservatism also embraced an organic conception of British society, giving due recognition to the role of social entities such as nations in intermediating relations between the individual and the state. There existed moreover a deep appreciation of the traditions underlying the autonomy of civil bodies in Scotland and of the role of the institutions of territorial representation in articulating regional distinctiveness. This proclivity was brusquely brushed aside with the dawning of the 'New Right'. Classical liberalism was indifferent at best towards sentiments of national belonging; they were perceived to be ascriptive forms of identity stirring irrational passions that were anathema to the ideal of the autonomous individual. In addition, the Tories needed to foment a strong sense of constitutional patriotism with the *British* nation-state if they were to restore the authority of the state in certain areas such as public order and defence and, paradoxically, if they were to strengthen the government's hand in fulfilling their mission to create a free economy and society (Gamble 1988). Finally, the Tories were hostile to devolution not simply because it would put the country on a 'slippery slope' to the break-up of the Union, but also because it was associated with the proliferation of tiers of governmental authority, a development which was inimical to the party's cardinal objective of rolling back the scope of the state's activity.

As a result, devolution was kept off the government's agenda; to quote Mitchell (Mitchell 1990:109): "the Conservative position between 1979 and 1987 was simply to deny that legislative devolution was an issue." The party was purged of the ardent devolutionists. Buchanan-Smith was ruled out as Secretary of State, and the post was instead given to George Younger, a detached patrician that projected himself as a guardian of Scottish interests, but who in fact exercised little influence on the cabinet's policies. Others, such as Malcolm Rifkind came to terms with the hegemonic intellectual current in the party. There were thus hardly members left in the party that could bring the issue of devolution to the forefront of the party's internal debates. An analysis of the reports of the party's annual conferences show there was no resolutions submitted on devolution between 1980 and 1986 (CP 1991). In her speeches to the Conservative Party Conference, the Prime Minister never once mentioned the topic of devolution, and instead spent considerable efforts arguing that the Conservative party had received a clear mandate to put a halt to the vicious cycle of trade union militancy, inflationary pay settlements and government profligacy unleashed by the Labour government. In her speeches to the Scottish Conference, the Prime Minister repeatedly turned to a slanted interpretation of Scottish intellectual history by tracing a lineage from Adam Smith and David Hume to Friedrich Hayek and Keith Joseph, extolled the virtues of 19th century Scotland as a country of science and invention, and urged Scots to rediscover their sense of enterprise for overcoming their pernicious economic difficulties (Thatcher 1997).

Not only did the Conservative party spurn the issue of devolution, but the economic policies that it deployed threatened the welfare of Scotland and Wales and placed considerable stress on the institutions of territorial representation. The social consequences of the economic recession were exacerbated in Scotland and Wales by the government's lambasting of the 'dependency culture' prevailing in the two regions and by its faith in the 'hidden hand' of the market for allowing territorial disparities to even out. Regional policy was gradually disregarded as a tool for tackling economic problems. The concentration of unemployment in cities across the country meant that it was increasingly difficult to justify automatic assistance to deprived regions, in particular to voters in constituencies in the West Midlands, where the Conservatives had recorded important electoral gains. The 1980s witnessed a reduction in the number of assisted areas, the substitution of regional policy with European Community structural funds, public-private partnerships and 'inner cities' policies, to the net detriment of Scotland and Wales (Hogwood 1987). The late 1980s would also see the steady closure of flagship industrial

projects of British regional policy such as the Gartcosh and Ravenscraig steel mills, and a decline of the old heavy industry, leading to major job losses in Scotland.

The concern for limiting public spending produced a number of initiatives which modified the relationship between local and central government in Scotland. The Secretary of State for Scotland was given responsibility over the allocation of funds to different programmes within the departmental budget and over expenditure limitations-including local government expenditure. This distinctive administrative arrangement did not however obstruct the centralist drive of Conservative policy when it came to limiting the expenditure of local governments, which Mrs Thatcher perceived to be one the 'immune target' of the old collectivist order. This was achieved with the imposition of two nation-wide pieces of legislation, the Local Government Act (1980) and Local Financing Act (1982), which reduced grant support to any authority which spent over a level of expenditure established by the central government and which abolished the right of local authorities to set supplementary rates. With these initiatives, the government effectively reduced the autonomy of local governments by controlling both the levels of capital and revenue expenditure, as well as the discretion of the Secretary of State in satisfying expenditure ceilings (Midwinter et al. 1991: 154-161).[34]

The central government's hand in local finance was further strengthened following the process of property revaluation in Scotland which produced a sharp increase in local government rates that adversely affected some of the Conservative party's constituents in the wealthy suburbs of Edinburgh. This lead the government to introduce in 1986 a flat-rate community charge for the funding of local government services. The purported objective of this 'poll tax' was to increase in accountability- informing electors of the true cost of additional local government spending- but the net effect was an increase in the central government's control over public expenditure, since it set the rate of tax and redistributed its receipts to local authorities on the basis of criteria which it determined. Thus, the period of Conservative rule, committed to a sweeping reduction in the role of the state, introduced a renewed centralism that profoundly affected the territorial balance of power in the Union. There was little that was incoherent in this approach, as Crouch and Marquand (1989: viii) point out, "if the market was to reign supreme…then the political must be gathered into a tight, predictable, unit controlled by the friends of the free market."

---

[34] Revenue expenditure covered daily costs of services, such as the wages of local government employees and was financed through rates levied on domestic and business. Capital expenditure are long-term expenditure on physical s that are purchased over a number years. These are financed by borrowing and repayment through the revenue budget, by central government capital grants or by European agencies. (Midwinter, Keating, Mitchell 1991: 150).

From the benches of the opposition, the champion of the state maintained its commitment to devolution for Scotland that it had adopted in 1974. This strategy can be explained by the fact that although it had recovered its position in Scotland, the territorial imbalance in electoral support and the persistent public demand for greater self-government meant that it needed to maintain its policy on devolution in order to secure its place as the leading party of the region. In 1979, the Labour party increased its share of support in Scotland from 36.3 to 41.6 percent by capturing the support of 6 percent of former SNP voters and winning 44 seats (Miller and Brand 1981). Moreover, Labour's control over Scottish seats was safe, as the number of marginally-held seats fell from eleven to five, and the number of seats in which the SNP was second fell from eleven to one. In 1983, the Labour party's share of the vote dropped to 35 percent and it lost three seats, but this loss was the result of the advance of the Alliance party rather than the SNP. The growing territorial imbalance in the two-party system meant that the Labour party was highly sensitive to changes in electoral behaviour in Scotland, including potential future nationalist incursions. While Labour's defeat in 1979 was felt across the country, the swing against the party was more dramatic in the South (7.7 percent), than in the North of England (5.1 percent) and Scotland (2.1 percent) (Curtice and Steed 1980: 394-403). The Labour party had been wiped out as a parliamentary force in the South as well as in the rural towns of Britain and retreated to the urban centres of the Midlands, to the industrial districts of Northern England and to Scotland. The territorial polarisation between Conservative South and Labour North was exacerbated in 1983, when the swing reached 8.3 percent in South, 3.1 percent in the North of England, 2.2 percent in Scotland (Curtice and Steed 1984: 336-45). Scotland thus remained the least hostile territory for the Labour party. The net of effect of the territorial imbalance in support and the declining electoral strength of the Labour party was an increasing dependence on Scottish seats.[35] Between 1964 and 1974, the Labour party collected around 12-15 percent of its seats in Scotland, but in 1979 and 1983, this figure had risen to 17 percent and 20 percent. This territorial asymmetry in electoral support sharpened Labour's attentiveness to the constitutional preferences of Scottish voters. The SES (1981) reveals that there was a general shift in mood away from the issue of territorial autonomy; the share of respondents that supported devolution fell from 65 percent in October 1974 to 46

---

[35] The SMP electoral exaggerated the impact of the parliamentary representation of the territorial imbalance in electoral behaviour and exacerbated Labour's dependence on Scottish seats. In 1979, the Tories won 51.5 percent of the vote and 146 seats (75.6 percent) in the South-East of England; in 1983 they won 50.4 percent of the vote and 162 seats (84.4 percent). In contrast, the Labour party won 41.6 percent of the vote and 44 seats (61.2 percent) in Scotland, and in 1983, In contrast, it won 35 percent of the vote and 41 seats (57.7 percent) in Scotland.

percent in 1979, and the share that wanted Scotland to 'run its own affairs' fell by more than half. However, there was still a plurality of support for devolution and the survey shows that the SNP supporters that defected to the Conservative and Labour party were more likely to endorse devolution than SNP loyalist.

In Wales, the unambiguous defeat of the devolution referendum and the weak public demand for territorial autonomy meant that there was no warrant for the Labour party to endorse devolution. The Welsh Election Study (1979), reveals that the share of Welsh voters that supported devolution remained in a minority (30 percent) , while those supporting the institutional status quo stood at 60 percent. In addition, in contrast with Scotland, the Labour party in Wales was under attack on both flanks by the Conservative party and the Alliance party- losing ground both in the industrial areas of the South East and in the rural central areas. In 1979, it experienced a modest retreat, but in 1983, it suffered a significant loss of support from 48.6 to 37.5 percent, a crushing defeat for the party that once projected itself as the party of Wales. The changing political colouring of Wales indicated that the advocacy of devolution would yield few electoral gains.

The Labour party thus upheld its existing position on devolution for Scotland. It was a plausible policy for the party to advocate, as it was in continuity with its previous efforts in government to ratify the Scotland and Wales act. The sincere incorporation of devolution for Scotland as a central tenet of Labour's platform was first and foremost a reaction to its turbulent experience in government during the late 1970s, one characterised by internal party divisions, legislative deadlock and cabinet instability. During the 1980s, devolution was widely perceived to be what party leader John Smith later called Labour's 'unfinished business'; a commitment that the party would honour and deliver as soon as it returned to government, since failure to do so was intimately associated with a period of discord and defeat. In a clear contrast with the internal politics of devolution of the 1970s, this phase witnessed a convergence in the positions of the Scottish Executive and the NEC. The Scottish Executive's position was clarified in an *Interim Policy Statement on Devolution* (1981) which issued a set of proposals that were later sanctioned in the Labour party's manifestos (LP 1983, 1987). The party endorsed the basic parameters of the Scotland Act (1978), but also supported the devolution of certain economic powers, such as control over the SDA, the Selective Assistance grants to industry and the training programmes of the Manpower Services Commission. The boldest innovation was the proposal to devolve tax-raising powers, for enhancing the financial responsibility of the assembly and allowing it to resist public expenditure cuts imposed by the central

government. The assembly was thus presented as Scotland's bulwark against the Tories. The Labour party nevertheless remained faithful to doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty, stating that:

> "because of parliament's ultimate power to do anything and alter anything, this difference in the handling of Scottish politics will be an expression of parliament's view that devolution is a more democratic and efficient way of dealing with Scottish distinctions… it is not a loss of ultimate parliamentary power." (LP.SC. 1981: 17)

The Labour party was able to present the endorsement of territorial autonomy as wholly compatible with its internal political reforms, economic and industrial policies and with its ideological traditions. Devolution was congruent with the decentralisation of party structures, a process of party organisational reform that had begun in 1980 when the radical current in the party successfully pushed for the mandatory reselection of MPs by constituency parties, the establishment of an electoral college composed of trade unions, constituency parties and the parliamentary party for the election of the party leader, and the joint drafting of the party manifesto by the National Executive Committee and the Shadow Cabinet (Whiteley 1983). In addition, devolution could be aligned with the Labour party radical left-wing programme outlined in the Alternative Economic Strategy (AES), an integral aspect of which was a formidable commitment to using state power to rebuild industrial capacity in depressed regions and return the country to a state of full employment.[36]. It was believed that providing the Scottish assembly with important financial resources, revenue-raising powers and with an autonomous industrial policy would enable it to play a strategic role in the central government's national plan for reindustrialisation. Finally, the party's position on political decentralisation coincided with its policy for the decentralisation of authority within the industrial work place. In a joint statement with the TUC, the Labour party's *Economic Planning and Industrial Democracy* (1982) proposed to enfranchise the workforce by giving workers the right to influence management of the firm, bringing capital and labour on an equal footing in the decisions that affected the operation of an enterprise. Thus, the party was able to present a coherent ideological package in which the decentralisation of power would take place in the spheres of party political organisation, economic production and state authority. Finally, this package of reforms could moreover, be presented as genuine to Labour's philosophical beliefs, finding resonance with the tradition of guild socialism, associated with the

---

[36] The Labour party's commitment to devolution and the simultaneous adoption of a strongly left-wing stance on socio-economic matters confirmed that the party's position on the left-right and the territorial dimensions of competition were wholly independent of one another. The party maintained a pledge to establishing a Scottish assembly, while denouncing the deflationary policies pursued by the previous Callaghan government, because of its association with a weak form of monetarism.

libertarian ideas of G.D.H Cole, who promoted the social ownership of industry, not through the nationalisation of means of production, but through the democratisation of industry for workers (Beech 2007: 120). The existence of a tradition in the Labour party's ideology which was able to link the idea of political decentralisation to a broader set of principles regarding the place of democracy in different spheres of life thus enabled the party to present itself as a genuinely socialist and territorial party.

The Labour party however chose not to raise the salience of the devolution issue during its internal political debates or during its confrontations with the Conservative party. This decision can be explained by the fact that there were no immediate electoral incentives for emphasising this policy since it would not determine the party's capacity to govern. The territorial heterogeneity of electoral support was so acute in 1979 and 1983 that even if the nationalist threat had been quashed with a highly visible advocacy of devolution, the Labour party still would not have been able to win office. If Labour had won all 71 Scottish seats in 1979 it would still have been 22 seats short of a majority and 43 seats short of the Conservative's majority. The same holds for the general election of 1983. Given that it would have little consequence for its capacity to be in government, there was little reason for the Labour party to place devolution as core component of its electoral strategy against the nationalist party or against the Conservative party.

Instead, the Labour party needed to address the continued weakening relationship between class and partisanship. The BES showed that the Labour party's support among the working-class crumbled; the ratio of Labour to Conservative partisanship in the manual working class fell from to 2.5:1 in October 1974 to 1.4:1 in 1979 and to 1.2:1 in 1983. The mass defection of the working was driven by a declining identification with the Labour party and its policies. The BES reveals that the share of the manual classes that identified 'very' or 'fairly' strongly with the Labour party fell from 82.5 percent in 1974 to 76.7 percent in 1979 (Crewe et al. 1979). Crewe (1982) demonstrates that there was among Labour's ranks a spectacular decline in support for the 'collective trinity' of public ownership, trade union power and social welfare. [37] The emphatic victories of the Conservative party in the early 1980s were thus due to its ability to follow the movement in public mood and reposition itself closer to the median voter.

This occasioned a protracted exercise in soul searching within the Labour party. Like other social democratic parties across Europe, it was confronted with an acute

---

[37] In 1964, a clear majority of Labour identifiers approved of further nationalisation (57 percent) and repudiated the idea that trade unions were too powerful (59 percent); an overwhelming majority wanted more spending on social services (89 percent). By 1979, support for these tenets was down to a third among manual workers and lower still for the general electorate.

dilemma regarding the direction in which to re-orient its ideological profile and electoral strategy in light of the deep-seated changes that were breaking down the structure of social class and changing the political orientation of British voters (cf. Kitschelt 1994). The Labour party would spend the better part of the 1980s conjuring the electoral strategy that would enable it to confront this dilemma. But the question of devolution never featured as a highly salient consideration in the party's choice of strategy since it was not the issue on which it would win the election; that outcome would depend on the credibility of the policies it put forth for tackling the country's economic difficulties. The Labour party did not however initially follow the centripetal incentives underlying the majoritarian electoral system and seek to follow the distribution of political sentiments in the British electorate (Cox 1990). Instead, under the sway of radical left-wing activists, the party aimed to rebuild its standing by adopting an overtly left-wing profile dedicated to the re-assertion of state authority in the management of the economy (Iversen 1994).[38] This gradual capture prompted intense battles over the party's identity, heightening the polarisation between left and right wings of the party. The struggle was visible in the contests for the party leadership and deputy leadership; in the fragmentation of the party into different factions; and in the efforts of the NEC to purge the party of Militant Tendency- a Trotskyist faction that had taken over a number of local party organisations in inner cities. There was little space in this polarised atmosphere to examine the question of devolution, and an analysis of party conference reports reveals that the issue of devolution did not feature as an item for debate (LP 1981-1983).

The electoral campaign for the 1983 General Election reflected the polarised climate of politics; Labour distinguished itself from the Tories by presenting an equally radical, but diametrically opposed, programme of action for resolving the country's economic woes. It highlighted the government's failure to reverse the country's economic malaise- unemployment had reached four million and, for the first time since the industrial revolution, Britain had become a net importer of manufactured goods. It vowed to put Britain back to work through an ambitious programme of state-directed industrial development. The Conservative party on the other hand, promised the continuation of policies aimed at reducing inflation and public expenditure and lowering income tax (Butler and Kavanagh 1984: 81-123).

---

[38] The position and influence of the radical left-wing elements within the Labour party was bolstered by the organisational reforms carried out during the 1980s and by the formation of the breakaway Social Democratic Party (SDP), which prompted the defection of many moderate Labour activists and MPs. The SDP was created in 1981 by four former cabinet members in opposition to the proposal of the radical left-wing activists and their leader Tony Benn to shift power away from the parliamentary party towards party conference.

The disinterested attitude of the Labour party towards devolution persisted after its humiliating defeat in 1983. The party elected a new leader, Neil Kinnock, who had been at odds with party policy on devolution in the 1970s, but the issue nevertheless did not feature in the leadership contest (Drower 1994: 52). The agenda of the Labour party's annual conferences was saddled with problems pertaining to the reselection of MPs and the expulsion of Militant Tendency, with issues such as the Conservative party's reform of local authorities and the police's handling of the miners' strikes and with the traditional issues of unemployment, social security and public ownership of the economy (LP 1984-1986). Kinnock's speeches to conference aimed to revitalise Labour's purpose and to carry the party in a moderate direction, emphasising the need not to "make fanciful, self-indulgent promises…that can be falsified by the realities we know we shall encounter." (*Guardian* October 2nd, 1985).

A the annual conference of the Scottish Labour Party in 1986, the Labour leader came under pressure to support a motion tabled by Scottish Labour councils and trade union for the outright defiance of government-imposed spending cuts. In his statement, the leader maintained an ambiguous stance. He made it a clear that he expected lawful conduct on behalf of party members but that he intended to put a devolution bill before parliament in the first session of a Labour government. However, he also told the conference that the fight against unemployment would take priority over other aims and laid claim to the 'patriotism of freedom and fairness' as one of Labour's principal values (*Guardian* March 8th, 1986).Thus, although the Scottish branch was beginning to demand assurances from the party leadership for a commitment to devolution, the pressures exerted were not sufficient to compel a re-adjustment of the party's priorities.

This stance was visible in the low salience of devolution during the 1987 contest. The Labour party moderated its programme, accepting British membership of the EEC, but remained committed to higher levels of taxation and public funding for industry, education and training, and promised a major expansion of public ownership. The Conservative party on the other hand advanced a bold programme of privatisation; after having sold off local authority housing, the government wished to press ahead with the denationalisation of public utilities as well as some of the leading British commercial brands (Butler and Kavanagh 1988: 89-125). Thus, the Labour party continued to be far too pre-occupied conducting traditional class warfare and emphasising issues of economic management to devote much attention to the constitutional preferences of the Scots, and the issue of devolution was kept off the agenda.

The 'Tartanisation' of Labour (1987-1997)

In the General Election of 1987, the SNP's share of the vote rose to 14 percent; it was a modest performance, far from the heyday of the 1970s, but it was the first time in eight years that the party had increased its electoral support and parliamentary representation. The SNP's recovery was fuelled by the defection of both Labour and Conservative supporters; the BES shows that the SNP captured 7 percent of former Conservative voters and 14 percent of former Labour voters (Heath 1989). The party's capacity to concentrate its vote in the constituencies of the North-East meant that it was able to win three seats from the Conservative party. The SNP increased its support in some of Labour strongholds in the centre, such as Clackmannan, Linlithgow and Tayside North, where it came in second place with 25-30 percent of the vote; but the SNP leader Gordon Wilson and the long-standing MP Donald Stewart nevertheless lost their seats in Dundee East and the Western Isles to the Labour party. The recovery of the SNP was confirmed in a by-election a year later when Jim Sillars won the safe Labour seat of Glasgow Govan. Although the SNP's parliamentary representation remained modest, this victory was highly symbolic- it was where Margo MacDonald had won her seat in 1973, a year before the tidal wave of nationalist support that besieged the Labour party, and it was won by a strongly pro-devolutionist former Labour MP. The SNP thus appeared once again to be making a significant threat to Labour's position in Scotland.

In spite of this notable revival of regional nationalism, the Conservative party refused to compromise its Unionist ideology. This intransigence reflected the balance of electoral considerations: although it had lost three seats in the nationalist attack, it remained relatively immune from electoral developments in Scotland. The first source of this immunity was the Conservative party's predominance in England and its reliance on English seats to be in government; in 1987, the Tories won 46.6 percent of the English vote and 358 seats, enough to win an outright parliamentary majority. The second source was the continued dominance of the Conservative party over the British party system and the security of its position at the national level. With a swing of 3.7 percent towards Labour, the Tories lost some electoral ground, but they were nevertheless able to win 376 seats with 42.3 percent of the vote, enjoying a solid parliamentary majority of 51 seats and a substantial lead of 11.5 percent over Labour (Curtice and Steed 1988: 333-5). There was thus little immediate pressure for the party to revise its position. The Conservative Party Conference in 1988 voted by a margin of 50-1 against any measure of legislative devolution. Although there were some demands on behalf of Scottish councillors that the

party recognise the wishes of the Scottish electorate, these calls were effectively muffled (Mitchell 1990: 111). In her speech at the Party Conference, the Prime Minister stated: "as long as I am Leader of this Party, we shall defend the Union and rejected legislative devolution unequivocally" and she urged Scottish Tories to revitalise their fortunes by championing the Thatcherite gospel (*Guardian* May 14th, 1988)

What the Tories lost in this election however was the claim to being a mainstream party with a state-wide basis of electoral support. Its share of the Scottish vote fell from 28.4 to 24.1 percent and it lost 11 seats, leaving it with a mere 10 Scottish seats. For the third consecutive election, a majority of Scots had voted for a left-wing pro-devolutionist Labour party but were being governed by a right-wing Unionist party, generating a serious democratic deficit in the British polity. This situation exposed the questionable relevance of the institutions of territorial representation. The drop in the number of Scottish MPs created difficulties for the parliamentary system since there were too few Tory MPs to staff the Scottish Office, the Scottish Grand Committee and the Scottish Selected Committee. Moreover, although the Secretary of State continued to act as the guardian of territorial interests, he had been externally imposed and was anyway incapable of influencing macro-economic debates or determining the budget of regional offices. As Midwinter, Keating and Mitchell (1991: 108) explain: "the British political programme was applied, with the Scottish Office refraining from independent policy initiatives, and concentrating on a conventional defence of Scottish interests within the framework of that programme." The policies of the Conservative party were increasingly at odds with the preferences of the Scottish electorate, which maintained its distinctively collectivist ethos. The government's industrial strategy, the progressive dismantling of the welfare state and the privatisation reforms reduced the material benefits that Scots could expect from membership to the Union and undermined their loyalty to Britain (Mitchell 1996: 53). Polls taken in Scotland revealed that respondents viewed the Conservative government and Mrs Thatcher as antipathetic to Scottish interests: with 32 percent considering the PM to be good for the UK, while only 9 percent as good for Scotland (Kavanagh 1990: 22). By highlighting the disjuncture between the unitary political system and the absence of a unitary national identity and political culture, the period of Conservative rule gave substantial impetus to demands for the establishment of a Scottish parliament, and both the Labour party and the SNP would seek to manipulate the widespread disaffection of Scottish voters with Tory policies for electoral gain.

In the opposition, the Labour party faced much more powerful incentives to address the rise of the SNP. Although it experienced a significant improvement in its electoral performance in Scotland, winning 42 percent of the vote and 50 seats, there were intimations that the SNP was threatening to break into its electoral strongholds. Moreover, the growing territorial heterogeneity in electoral behaviour increased the Labour party's vulnerability to competition from the SNP. This trend was evident in the territorial variation in the magnitude and direction of electoral interchange: whereas the mean change in vote share was 1.2 percent in favour of the Conservative party in the South/East, there was a change of 2.7 percent against the party in the North/West. In contrast, whereas there was a mean change in favour of Labour of 6.5 in North/West, the increase in South/East was merely 1.6 percent (Curtice and Steed 1988: 320). The difference in the fate of the two mainstream parties in Scotland was remarkable: the deviation in the Labour's share of the vote from the British-wide mean increased from 5.1 to 7.8 percent between 1979 and 1987, and the deviation in the Conservative share of the vote increased from -13.3 to-19.3 percent (McAllister and Studlar 1992: 172).[39]

The implications of these trends were significant for two reasons. The first was that a fifth of Labour's seats now emanated from Scotland, making it all the more sensitive to the growth SNP. The second was that, in spite of a net rise in its share of the total vote, the Labour party remained weak in England and was thus incapable of winning office. As a result, the 1987 General Election turned out to be the so-called 'Doomsday Scenario' for the Labour party, in which had won a majority in Scotland but not in England, and would therefore be unable to satisfy the demands and protect the interests of its regional electorate. This type of problem was very distinct from the one posed by the nationalist threat. The incapacity of the leading party in Scotland to win access to the centre constituted a challenge to its function as an agent of territorial integration (Jones and Keating 1988). The break-down of the central mechanisms underlying the functioning of the two-party system- an even territorial distribution of support and a regular alternation of parties in government- meant that management of the periphery during the late 1980s was not merely a question of staving off an external nationalist threat, it meant rescuing the two-party system.

---

[39] The SMP electoral system exaggerated the territorial imbalance in electoral support and the regional basis of parliamentary support and exacerbated the perception that the British nation was dividing. In Scotland, the Labour party won 50 seats (70.5 percent) with 42 percent of the vote. In contrast the Conservatives won 11 seats (15.5 percent) with 24 percent of the vote. In England, the Labour party won 155 seats (x percent) with 29.6 percent of the vote. In contrast, the Conservatives won 376 seats (x percent) with 42.4 percent of the vote.

In response to this momentous conjuncture in British party politics, the Labour party deployed over the course of the late 1980s and 1990s a dual-edged electoral strategy for winning office and restoring its status as a party of territorial integration; the first component would serve to maintain the party's electoral support in the Scottish periphery while the second would help the party to pierce the Conservative party's electoral bastion in the populated southern English region. It is this dual-edged electoral strategy that shaped the character of the devolution settlement proposed by the Labour party and that determined the place that the issue of devolution was to occupy in its competitive interactions with the Conservative party.

The Labour party adjusted its strategy by seeking to accentuate its 'Tartan' profile (Geekie and Levy 1989). The shift in the Labour party's position was most evident in the re-assertion of its commitment to devolution. Shortly after the 1987 General Election, the Labour party issued a White Paper signalling its renewed commitment to a Scottish Assembly and after the SNP's victory in Govan in 1988, Neil Kinnock gave his firmest commitment on the establishment of a regional assembly, stating:

"we hold it to be self-evident that there must be established in the capital of Scotland a democratic assembly to govern with the Scottish people, for the Scottish people and by the Scottish people in Scotland" (*Times* March 11th, 1989)

The most remarkable change in the Labour party's position was the acceptance of the Scottish mandate, the idea that Scottish political sovereignty is vested in its people rather than in parliament. It found its principal expression in the argument that the Conservative party had 'no mandate' to govern Scotland, given that it had failed to win a plurality of seats and votes.[40] The argument captured the democratic deficit that beset the British polity: the people of Scotland had shown their support for the Labour party and for devolution at successive General Elections, but their preferences had been continuously denied by the Conservative party. For some within the Labour party, this justified disruptive tactics; the pressure group Scottish Labour Action (SLA) called for the Scottish Labour party to withdraw its MPs from Westminster and establish a parliament should the Tories win at the next election. For the moderates, it enhanced the appeal of devolution, which was increasingly interpreted as a corrective to the disjuncture between the central government's and the Scottish electorate's policy priorities. Robin Cook, a

---

[40] The argument stood on thin grounds since it implied that to be legitimate a government needed to obtain a concurrent majority across all parts of Great Britain. The no-mandate argument thus amounted to an argument for self-determination, the right of Scotland to determine its own constitutional preferences in the United Kingdom and to negotiate its constitutional status with Westminster (Jones and Keating 1988)

leading Scottish Labour politician and erstwhile opponent of devolution stated that in the 1970s, devolution had been a 'compromise with nationalism', a decade later it was a means of protecting Scotland from Thatcherism (Mitchell 1998: 486). The corollary to this shift was the abandonment of Labour's long-standing opposition to the establishment of a 'Constitutional Convention', a forum comprising representatives of political parties,. trade unions, local authorities and the Churches, charged with drawing-up a blueprint for Scotland's constitutional future. Devolution had long been accepted as a programmatic commitment but the realisation of this objective was envisaged to be in conformity with the institutional provisions of the Westminster system, in which the Labour party would legislate for devolution once it returned to government. Establishing a cross-party extra-parliamentary convention represented a departure from the tradition of 'responsible party government', since it would give other parties the power to steer government policy, as well as an infringement of the doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty, since it recognised Scottish people's right to determine the status of Scotland within the British state.[41]

Nevertheless, in setting the agenda of the Convention while simultaneously cooperating with other parties and civil institutions during the debates, involvement in the Convention allowed Labour to project itself as the national party of Scotland. Moreover, even if the exercise was highly unlikely to wrest an assembly from the Conservative government, it would enable the party to ward off the external threat of the SNP. The idea of establishing convention had always been a favourite rhetorical device of the SNP since it reinforced the idea of a Scottish mandate- harking back to Scottish constitutional tradition of popular sovereignty- and resonated with its efforts in 1939 to establish a Convention to discuss Scotland's social and economic problems as well as changes to the legislative and administrative machinery of the British state (Mitchell 1996: 122). Advocating the establishment of a Constitutional Convention and recognising the sovereignty of Scots would thus enable the Labour party to steal the SNP's thunder.

The change in policy would help the party reconcile internal differences. These differences were not, as in the 1970s between a unionist Scottish Executive and a pro-devolutionist Labour leadership, since there was no disagreement over the need for devolution. Rather, they were due to the reticence of the party leadership to compromise its ideological commitment to the doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty and to the willingness of Scottish MPs to jump on the nationalist bandwagon. After the referendum

---

[41] The Convention was established in March 1989 with the signing of the 'Claim of Right' by 58 of Scotland's 71 MPs. The preamble of which stated that: "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, and do hereby declare and pledge that in all our actions and deliberations their interests shall be paramount"

defeat in 1979, a number of Scottish MPs had joined members of the SNP in the pressure group Campaign for a Scottish Assembly (CSA), which called for the establishment of a Convention; others had formed their own pressure groups, such as the Scottish Labour Action (SLA), which endorsed disruptive tactics such as the establishment of an extra-parliamentary interim assembly should the Conservative party be returned to government; others followed the SNP's lead in endorsing the non-payment of the poll tax. Thus, contrast to the 1970s, the Scottish Executive was less reticent to embrace an accommodating strategy: although it would heighten the salience of the devolution, it had an existing policy commitment to the issue, its position a plausible one. The Scottish Executive was able to exert pressure on the party leadership because they could threaten to withdraw their loyalty to a party that was incapable of winning power at the centre. The leadership came to believe that inaction on its behalf would push the nationalist elements within the Labour party into the arms of the SNP. Participating in the Convention was thus a method of maintaining the party's cohesion.

Finally, there was a precedent to which the Labour party could refer in order to make the shift in its strategy come across as a plausible one. During the 1920s, the Labour Party had taken a leading role in the Scottish Home Rule Association (SHRA) and had repeatedly undertaken efforts to establish a Scottish National Convention (SNC), comprising professionals, local authorities, trade unions and the Churches, for the purpose of submitting a proposal to the British government for the establishment of a Scottish parliament. Although it was intended to represent the cross-section of Scottish interests, the Convention was quickly dominated by the Labour party and its Secretary Roland Muirhead. The National Convention submitted a bill to parliament in 1926, but it was criticised as being an overtly partisan bill and fell on the deaf ear of the Conservative government, pushing Muirhead to form alongside John MacCormick a party with a distinctly national profile (Mitchell 1996: 113-21). Thus, the Labour party had a history of steering the Conventions that were meant to project the voice of Scotland's citizens.

Agreeing to participate in the Convention however also meant accepting the recommendations that it eventually produced. The principal negotiators were the Labour party and the Liberal Democrats, as the Conservative Party and the SNP had refused to take part in the talks. The two parties arrived at a compromise embodied in the draft document *Towards Scotland's Parliament* (1990). The proposal listed the powers devolved to the Scottish parliament, while also stating Westminster's reserved powers. This shifted the balance of power to Scotland as compared with the Scotland Act (1978), but it left

Westminster with its sovereignty intact. The most important concession that the Labour party made was on the voting arrangement. Initially, the Scottish party conference rejected an executive statement that 'seats won by any party should reflect the votes cast for that party at the Scottish level' but supported a resolution calling for 'a system that fairly rewards parties with representatives broadly equal to the number of votes cast.' (Mitchell 1998: 490). Thus, there was a consensus that the assembly needed a fairer system than a SMP electoral system, but little agreement on the specific details. Finally, some technical issues were not resolved in particular, the delicate questions of finance; the number of Scottish MPs at Westminster; the position of the Secretary of State.

While Wales did not witness the pageantry of the Constitutional Convention, it nevertheless also experienced a modest revival of nationalist sentiment in the late 1980s and early 1990s. During the 1980s, the Conservative had made certain 'output' type concessions in recognition of Wales' distinct language and culture. But the outcome of the General Election of 1987 placed the constitutional question back on the agenda. The Labour party regained its predominant position in the region, winning 45.1 percent of the vote and 24 seats in 1987 and 49.5 percent and 27 seats in 1992. Plaid Cymru also strengthened its performance, winning 8.8 percent of the vote and 4 seats in 1992, principally in the Welsh-speaking regions. As a result, the Welsh Labour party resurrected its earlier policy but resisted the pressures from the Campaign for a Welsh Assembly (CWA) to emulate the grassroots democratic exercise in Scotland. The party was still torn between its centralist and devolutionary traditions and was reluctant to expose publicly a policy on which it was divided; it thus opted to settle the issue quietly within the party. However, after the 1992 defeat helped to revive the devolution issue and the new party leader John Smith asked the new Shadow Secretary Ron Davies to develop policies and gather support for a Welsh Assembly. Another spell in opposition thus strengthened the devolution commitment in a region that was otherwise never more than lukewarm towards the issue (Morgan and Mungham 2000: 87-100).

A Decisive Moment for Devolution (1998)

The response of the Conservative party to the Labour party's constitutional proposals was at first rather hesitant. There was a good rationale for the Tories to play the Home Rule card: the departure of Margaret Thatcher from office in 1990 and the intensification of competition between the SNP and the Labour party opened a political space for them to consider a change of position on the issue of devolution. This could

help them to soften their image as a predominantly English party unsympathetic to Scottish social and economic needs and to reverse the losses they had suffered in some of their traditional strongholds. However, in early 1992, the Secretary of State, Ian Lang, ruled out devolution, a position that was backed by the Prime Minister John Major. The party leadership realised that a sudden conversion to devolution so close to an election and so patently motivated by the pressures exerted by its mainstream rival would not have appeared plausible, in particular in light of the previous years of ardent opposition to Home Rule (Mitchell 1992: 623). Crucially, there was no tradition that offered a normative template for legitimating such a shift and there was no genuine record of supporting Home Rule. The commitment to devolution had been abandoned in 1976 and the Tories had not since contemplated any proposals for constitutional change. The Conservative party's attitudes imposed a rigid straightjacket on its room for maneuver.

During the campaign leading to the 1992 General Election, the Tories made the calculated gambit of opposing devolution. Mr Major was intent on salvaging the party's fortunes in Scotland by polarising the climate of competition and offering Scottish voters a clear choice between the pro-Union Conservatives and the pro-independence SNP. It hoped to squeeze out the Labour party, by depicting devolution as little more than a step towards independence, downplaying the relevance of this constitutional option, and by forcing devolution supporters to choose their political camp. The Conservative party spent considerable efforts during the electoral campaign re-iterating its steadfast defence of the Union, warning that the proposals for devolution and the return of Labour ran the risk of inadvertently leading to the break-up of Britain. Devolution would deprive Scotland and Wales from a seat in the Cabinet and the additional layers of government would exacerbate rather than solve regional grievances. The Conservative party manifesto detailed how the government's various initiatives for supporting business and local investment had encouraged the region's gradual economic recovery (CP 1992). In an interview, Ian Lang, defended the record of the Conservative party in Scotland and its position on devolution:

"during my tenure, we brought down unemployment in Scotland, brought in new investments to replace the declining coal and steel industries, advancing the Scottish economy. I went into the campaign on a strong anti-devolution platform. Devolution was a low priority issue for Scots; it was an artificial issue that was turned into a grievance by the Labour party, which would destroy the existing structures."

121

In the last stages of the campaign, John Major transformed devolution for Scotland into an issue for the whole of Britain, warning with alarm that the election of Labour to government would lead to the break up of the Great Britain:

"If I could summon up all the authority of this office, I would put it into a single warning- the United Kingdom is in danger. Wake up, fellow countrymen! Wake up now before it is too late !" (cited in Butler and Kavanagh 1993: 130).

The strategy paid off unexpectedly well. In 1992, the Tories recovered support in Scotland, increasing their share of the vote by 1.6 percent and winning an additional seat from the Labour party. The threat of the SNP had been kept at bay; in two of the three seats where it hoped to make a gain from the Conservative party, in Galloway and Perth, the SNP experienced only a five percent increase in support and fell short of winning the seat (Curtice and Steed 1993: 341). The SNP's increase in support in Scotland from 14.5 to 21.5 percent, just short of the level it achieved in February 1974, was primarily concentrated in the Labour districts of Clackmannan and Fife and in the outskirts of Edinburgh and Glasgow, where it registered a 10 percent increase in support. Thus, although the Tories had put a halt to their electoral decline while the competition between the SNP and Labour party escalated. The Tories won the election against all odds; defying an adverse economic climate and electoral fatigue, they obtained 336 seats with 41.2 percent of the vote. Their position was thus precarious, their parliamentary majority was reduced to 11 seats and their lead over the Labour party narrowed to 7.5 percent. In spite of a historic fourth victory, the competition between the Conservative and Labour party was intensifying, portending the revival of the two-party system.

Convinced that their hostility to devolution had helped to shore up their electoral fortunes, the Tories persisted with their adversarial strategy. In a speech to the Conservative Party Conference in 1993, the Secretary of State proposed to improve existing parliamentary arrangements by allocating more time to Scottish legislation and to emphasise the distinct nature of government policy in Scotland. Lang re-iterated the Conservative party's opposition to the establishment of a Scottish Parliament and, maintaining the party's campaign tactics, intentionally placed the SNP and the Labour party in the same category as separatists and semi-separatists, arguing that the credibility of the devolution scheme had been 'torn to shreds' by Labour's performance in Scotland (Paterson 1998: 236). Lang added that the ill-though out proposals to devolve tax-raising powers would increase the tax burden on Scottish voters. The taxation powers of the Scottish assembly became the main rallying point for the Tories. In 1995, Lang's

successor, the libertarian ideologue Michael Forsyth, emerged as a vocal critic of the Constitutional Convention's final report *Scotland's Parliament, Scotland's* Right (1995) which included what he called the 'Tartan Tax'- a three percent tax-varying power for the Scottish parliament.[42] Forsyth argued that the tax was an ingredient in a sinister plot hatched by Labour and the SNP to bring about socialism in one country. He warned that it would place a ball and chain around Scottish people, by increasing the tax-burden and discouraging inward investment (*Scotsman* August 28th, 1995). And in the backdrop to this opposition surfaced the shadow of English nationalism, a suddenly aroused form of national self-consciousness in the parochial parts of 'Middle England', that was as hostile to the accretion of powers towards the European Union as it was to Home Rule.

The Conservative party's adversarial strategy placed the Labour party between the proverbial rock and hard place. It was under increasing pressure from the nationalists in Scotland whose new slogan 'Independence in Europe' had proven to be electorally rewarding (SNP 1992); although the diffusion of its electoral support meant that the SNP had not deprived the Labour party of any seats, it had nevertheless made significant inroads into its electoral strongholds. In addition, Scottish seats still amounted to around a fifth of the Labour party's total parliamentary representation, such that any loss of seats would harm its chances of beating the Conservatives. The Labour party needed to defend its commitment to the proposals of the Constitutional Convention if it wanted to maintain its hold over Scotland and maintain the momentum of its pursuit for office. Thus, although the party's new leader Tony Blair was not particularly enthusiastic about devolution, he nevertheless kept the policy which had been bequeathed to him.

The most serious difficulty posed by the Conservative party's taunting of the 'Tartan Tax' was that it threatened to derail the Labour party's repositioning towards the centre on the left-right dimension. Following the abject failure of its leftward lurch in the first half of the 1980s and the plummeting of its support in the South, the Labour party followed the centripetal incentives of the majoritarian electoral system and moved to the middle ground. It realised that to succeed it would have to broaden its electoral appeal beyond its dwindling base in the working-class and become a 'catch-all party' that targeted voters in what Blair called 'middle-income middle-Britain' (Seyd 1998). To do so, the Labour party would have to adapt to the politics of Thatcherism and to the new set of values which were slowly taking root in British culture, such as thrift, self-reliance and

---

[42] The final report also established the agreement on the electoral system: there would be 129 MSPs elected on the basis of an Additional Member System (AMS), 73 of which would stand for Westminster constituencies and 56 of which would be elected on the basis of the multi-member districts.

enterprise. This endeavour began with the Policy Review (1988-1991) which sought to enhance the party's electability with a conversion to 'supply-side socialism'- abandoning the commitment to nationalisation and redirecting the state's activity towards the regulation of industry and support for training, investment and research. The party's shift to the right was also evident in the priority assigned to the reduction of inflation and public spending (Shaw 1993). The strategy paid off. The BES shows that the Labour party extended its appeal among the Conservative party's social basis of support. In the non-unionised salariat its support rose from 11 to 14 percent, in the routine non-manual class it rose from 24 to 28 percent and in the non-unionised working-class home-owners it rose from 34 to 38 percent (Heath 1993). The Labour party also recovered support in the geographical 'middle' Britain. The narrowing divide between North and South was visible in the territorial variation in the electoral swing away from the Conservative party which was 4.8 percent in the South of England the Midlands and 1.2 percent in the North of England and Scotland (compared to a nation-wide average swing of 2.4 percent). The Labour party increased its share of the vote from 29.9 to 33.9 percent in England, leading to a net gain of 40 seats (Butler and Kavanagh 1993: 286).

When he was elected party leader, Tony Blair therefore had good reasons to press ahead with the Labour party's modernisation; the Policy Review had proven to be rewarding, but having just missed the mark, the party could not take victory for granted. The most symbolically important changes were the revision of Clause IV in the party's constitution and the corollary commitment to nationalisation; the abandonment of the Keynesian demand-management interventionist strategies with the associated obligations to wealth redistribution through general taxation; the distancing of the party from the trade unions and the preservation of the Conservative government's trade union reforms (Hindmoor 2004). A central element of the 'New' Labour party's move onto Conservative territory was the pledge not to increase income tax rates. Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor made a clear public commitment to remain within the Conservative spending plans with the first two years of parliament (Heath et al. 2001: 109). Having staked its electoral success on acquiring the image of a moderate party committed to fiscal prudence, the Labour party was thus highly vulnerable to the Conservative party's repeated criticisms that it was inconsistent or disingenuous in its position on economic issues. The Labour party thus needed to refashion its position on the question of devolution, lest it jeopardise its bid for power.

The first tactic deployed was to re-adjust the importance assigned to taxation powers: Blair refuted that there would be an automatic increase in income tax. But amid increasing unease over the success of the Tory campaign, the Labour leader instituted a progressive u-turn in its position. It first highlighted the negligible fiscal autonomy of the assembly, it then stated that the Scottish Labour party would not raise taxes for its first term, and in the summer of 1996, it announced devolution would be subject to a two-part referendum, overturning the previous position that a referendum was unnecessary. Thus, Scots would be asked two separate questions, one on the desirability of a parliament and the second on whether it should have tax varying powers, putting paid to the idea that a vote for a Labour would automatically mean a vote for the 'Tartan Tax'.

The second tactic was to place devolution squarely within the vision of the 'Third Way', as a critical ingredient of the modernisation of the British constitution to the needs of the 21st century. The accommodation of nationalism was painted in colours that were designed to neutralise its ramifications. Devolution offered the best available means of strengthening the Union and removing the threat of separatism. Moreover, the policy as aligned with the remainder of the party's programme: it was a component of a wholesale programme for modernising Britain's constitution [43]; it coincided with the party's long-standing project of extending decentralisation to English regions by democratising Regional Development Agencies; it was aligned with the party's rhetoric on the doctrine of subsidiarity, devoted to enhancing the accountability and effectiveness of government by bringing it closer to the citizens (LP 1997). In addition, in order to quell English fears that Home Rule would signify the thin end of the wedge for the Union, the red lines of the party remained clear: the constitution would be a reserved matter and sovereignty would remain with Parliament. Tony Blair depicted the Scottish Parliament as a subsidiary territorial assembly, stating unequivocally that 'sovereignty rests with me as an English MP' (*Scotsman* April 4th, 1997). Thus, in spite of having kow-towed to the Scottish tradition of popular sovereignty by putting its signature to the 'Claim of Right' and accepting the need for a pre-legislative referendum on the question of devolution, the party maintained the strictly Diceyan, and English, view of the constitution in which all sovereignty rested with parliament. The decision rule regulating the reform of the Scotland Act and the Government of Wales Act was thus left untouched, and sovereignty remained intact, in Westminster.

---

[43] This included the reform of the House of Lords, the incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), electoral reform, and changes to procedures at Westminster (Hazell and Sinclair 2000)

The competitive interactions between British mainstream parties during the 1990s thus had a decisive effect on the Labour party's position on devolution; while it did not affect the content of the devolution proposals, it certainly did modify the party's proposed method of ratification and alter the frame in which the proposals were presented to the electorate. In contrast to the late 1970s, when the Labour party produced proposals that sought to minimise internal tensions, in the 1990s, it needed to adapt to the pressures of the Conservative party which threatened its bid for power by conflagrating its position on the territorial and left-right dimensions of competition and questioning the credibility of its move to the centre. This highlighted the transformation of the territorial dimension in the British party system, as one on which mainstream parties competed in order to stave off the external threat of regional nationalism to one on which mainstream parties competed against each other, in order to record marginal electoral gains in contests which were becoming increasingly competitive.

Once again, the directional and proximity theories of competition offer partial explanations of the dynamics of party competition in this period. Faced with rising electoral pressures from the SNP and with the need to orchestrate an attack against a centralist Tory government in order to win power at the centre, the Labour party maintained its accommodating strategy but changed its policy on the establishment of a Constitutional Convention, a plausible shift in view of the party's tradition of organising and participation in the SNC. However, the extent of the party's repositioning was circumscribed by its ideology and it proved unwilling to recognise the original sovereign right of Scotland, implicit in the spirit of the 'Claim of Right' and the Convention, and maintained its Diceyan view of the constitution in which sovereignty was vested in parliament. The Conservative party on the other hand chose instead to maintain its 'anti-devolution' position. With little tradition of support to territorial autonomy, and having opposed devolution since 1976, it would have been implausible for the party to have competed against Labour by adopting an accommodating strategy. Although it could have sought to shore up its fortunes in Scotland by dismissing the issue of devolution, it chose to maintain its broadly adversarial posture in order to heighten the salience of the devolution issue, polarise the regional electorates, reduce the relevance of the devolution option, undermine Labour's efforts to thwart the nationalist threat and regain power at the centre. The choice of adversarial strategy was thus not simply determined by its position in the party system as a non-proximal party but by the reputational constraints imposed by its beliefs and traditions. That strategy however failed.

The Labour party's emphatic victory in the 1997 General Election ensured devolution's success. It published the White Paper, *Scotland's Parliament (1997a)* largely based on the Convention's final document save in one crucial respect- it defined the reserved powers for Westminster rather than enumerated the devolved powers for the Scottish parliament.[44] In addition, the Labour party issued a separate White Paper for Wales, *A Voice for Wales (1997b)*, comprising a more modest set of proposals for the devolution of executive powers and powers of secondary legislation. The decision-making threshold for the ratification of the devolution bills was low: the Labour party enjoyed the largest majority in post-war British history and there were no substantial intra-party conflicts over the format or the content of the devolution settlement, save perhaps for some residual differences over the representation of Scottish and Welsh MPs in Westminster, a matter for which there was no foreseeable solution other than an imperfect *modus operandi* (Keating 1998). However, any divergence was neutralised by the Labour party's decision to hold a two-part referendum *before* introducing the devolution legislation, ensuring that there was a sufficient level of support for the initiative prior to embarking on the process of parliamentary ratification The approach was justified in the party's campaign manifesto: "popular endorsement will strengthen the legitimacy of our proposals and speed their passage through parliament"(LP 1997).

The Labour party displayed a remarkable degree of cohesion during the referendum campaign and, in contrast to the 1979 campaign, there was no organised Labour opposition to the government's bill. In the Scottish referendum, held in September of 1997, of the 60 percent of those that voted, 74 percent supported the creation of a Scottish parliament, and 64 percent supported tax-varying powers for that parliament. The proposal for devolution in Wales was endorsed by a wafer-thin margin: on a turnout of 50.1 percent, only 50.3 percent voted in favour. The result reflected the intensity of national identities in the two regions but was also swayed by the clear positions that parties adopted and by their resolute and united commitment to their constitutional preferences (Denver 2002).The endorsement of the devolution bills by referendum, the Labour party's large majority and the lack of internal divisions over the content of the proposals meant that the government did not face any veto players during the legislative process, and the bills emerged unchanged from their passage in parliament. In 1998 devolution had become a constitutional reality

---

[44] While the adjustment may have been justified for pragmatic reasons-as it made for a neater schedule that would not require regular updating, it represented a significant extension of the law-making powers of the Scottish parliament by providing it with exclusive responsibility in a wide range of domains, comparable to the authority of states and provinces in federal countries (Intreview with Robert Hazel, Constitution Unit, UCL)

In conclusion, the influence of the SNP and the PC on the territorial structures of the British state hinges principally on their capacity to influence the position of mainstream parties on the territorial dimension. In the mid-1970s, a sudden surge of support for the SNP and PC, taking place in the context of a sharp decline in partisanship, compelled the two mainstream parties to change from a dismissive to an accommodating electoral strategy. The Conservative changed its policy, but in view of its ideological beliefs and traditions, as well as its prevarication in government and opposition, this was not a plausible shift. The SNP constituted an important threat to the Labour party, which found itself in a minority government and dependent on its Scottish seats to be in office. Its ideology was more open to the accommodation of nationalism, but the party was divided between its centralist and Home Rule traditions, largely because there was no prior commitment to a policy that had been adopted by the leadership for expedient reasons. This division was visible in the content of the devolution bills, which reflected the asymmetric intensity of nationalist sentiment in Scotland and Wales and a compromise between the unionist and devolutionary currents. It was most visible however in the decline of the party's cohesiveness during the legislative process which produced additional veto point generating deadlock, governmental instability, and leading to the defeat of the devolution bills.

In the late 1980s, a resurgence of support for the SNP in Labour's heartlands coincided with the Labour party's third successive defeat and a profound territorial imbalance of electoral support. The combined electoral threat and challenge to the Labour party's role as agent of territorial integration compelled the Labour party to change its position on the territorial dimension by endorsing the establishment of a Constitutional Convention, both in order to undercut support for the SNP and to make opposition to a centralist Tory government. The Labour party was more unified in this choice of policy because, although it had been chosen by the leadership largely for reason of electoral expediency, there already existed strong support for the policy within its Scottish branch. However, the Labour party was forced to adjust its position in the mid-1990s in the face of attacks by the Conservative party on the tax-raising powers of the Scottish parliament, which threatened to conflagrate its repositioning to centre ground. Thus, while in the mid-1970s, the Labour party developed its policy to stave off an external threat and adjustments to its policy were made to satisfy internal constraints, in the mid-1990s, the policy was developed to compete against a centralist mainstream rival, and adjustments were made in the face of competition with its rival in a nationalised party system.

128

CHAPTER FIVE

Spain

The intractable difficulties associated with the management of national and territorial diversity have not been more clearly illustrated than in the case of Spain, a country whose tentative experiences with democracy and federalism were beset by crisis and breakdown. The capacity of the constitutional framework established during the democratic transition to provide a territorial formula that satisfied both demands for autonomy and territorial cohesion is a testimony of the ability of institutions and their designers to craft systems that can reconcile colliding imperatives and ensure the legitimacy of a political system. In spite of this unprecedented success, the politics of democratic Spain have nevertheless witnessed the persistence of oscillations between the centralist and peripheral tendencies, a phenomenon that can be traced throughout the country's history. This has nevertheless taken a more nuanced form, given the sensitivity of political parties to electoral competition and to the constitutional setting in which they operate, and has become articulated mainly by the alternation between a symmetric form of decentralization- averting Ortega y Gasset's (1937) fear of the 'invertebration' of Spain, and the asymmetric form of decentralization- giving institutional recognition to the *hecho diferencial*, the set of features distinguishing historic from non-historic regions.

The objective of this chapter is to examine how regional nationalist parties from Catalonia and the Basque country have given shape to the direction of decentralization in the Spanish State of Autonomies. The first section examines briefly the role of the territorial cleavage in the political development of Spain and the nationality claims of the Basque and Catalan nationalist parties. The second section examines the implications of the institutional arrangements established by the Franquist regime and the attitudes of mainstream parties for the agenda-setting powers of regional nationalist parties. The remainder of the chapter looks at three distinct episodes in contemporary Spanish political history, in which regional nationalist parties have advanced their demands for greater territorial autonomy and for recognition of their national distinctiveness. The first period, the 'critical juncture' of the democratic transition in the late 1970s, is one in which regional nationalist parties exercised strong agenda-setting powers, firstly by influencing the position of the centre-left parties in opposition on the territorial dimension and secondly by seizing the opportunity created by the advent of a hung parliament and the

deployment of power-sharing devices to participate in the constituent process and leave a definitive imprint on the constitutional framework of Spanish democracy. This was followed by a decade-long period of Socialist rule, during which the unfolding process of territorial autonomy was tightly steered towards its vision of a gradual and symmetric format of decentralization. The Socialist party's entry into office with an important parliamentary majority, the extension of its electoral support across the Spanish territory and among the urban working-class and rural proletariat induced a revival of its centralist tradition and the strengthening of its commitment to socialist principles of equality and solidarity. The competitiveness of the electoral conjuncture in the 1990s interacted with the investiture requirement and the pivotal position of regional nationalist parties, to provide them with the bargaining power necessary to set the political agenda by forging pacts with the Socialist and Conservative mainstream parties, and to give an impulse to the autonomic process by pushing for the decentralization of competences and resources.

Basque and Catalan Nationalism

The strength of political nationalism in the Basque Country and Catalonia in the prelude to Spain's democratic transition can be appreciated as the product of the national and territorial diversity that persisted throughout the country's tumultuous political development. The continuous attempts of the Castilian central elites to advance their state and nation-building project during the 18th and 19th centuries and to transform the decentralized architecture of the original dynastic union into a modern centralized bourgeois polity with a single predominant Castilian culture were frustrated by a number of different factors: the important time-lag separating the state and nation-building projects, the failure of the liberal economic revolution to take hold at the centre, the economic dynamism of Catalonia and the Basque country and the administrative frailty of the state (Linz 1973; Linz and De Miguel 1966). Although the Basque and Catalan nationalist movement appeared almost simultaneously in the late 19th century, in the context of deep cynicism with Spanish political institutions, the character of the movements was profoundly shaped by the different economic structures of the two regions, their economic and political ties to the centre, and the social bases of their electoral support. Nevertheless, the leading political entrepreneurs of the nationalist movement were able to exploit the existence of distinct cultures and tap into a rich history of territorial autonomy to mobilize the support of regional constituents and project their demands for greater self-government.

Nationalism in the Basque Country was represented principally by the *Partido Nacionalista Vasco* (PNV), a party founded in 1895 by Sabino Arana. The existence of a single nationalist political organization belied the existence of a number of competing traditions- liberal and moderate, conservative and radical- that have uneasily co-existed within the movement and produced schisms and alliances at different moments in its history (Zirakzadeh 1991). The transition to democracy provided a crucial opening for the PNV to articulate the moderate foral tradition, demanding the restoration of the *foral* regime and the inclusion of the *fueros* in the Constitution, a Statute of Autonomy with a significant degree of fiscal autonomy, the inclusion of Navarra in the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country and the right to self-determination for the Basque country.[45] In its electoral programme for the founding election, the party claimed that:

"the immediate objective of the PNV is the recuperation of the original political power enjoyed under the foral system…which will be concretised in the framework of a democratic structure." (PNV 1977)

The PNV left behind the exclusivist, deeply religious and separatist nationalist doctrine that had flourished at its foundation, when Basque nationalism was a largely defensive reaction of the urban lower-middle class to the abrogation of the *foral regime* and to the rapid process of industrialization that had disrupted the Basque country's traditional way of life. It no longer embraced independence as a means of protecting the Basque race and spirituality against the moral decadence of modernity introduced by the Basque industrial elite and the Hispanic proletariat that had flooded into Bilbao. However, in spite of the moderation of its rhetoric, the PNV remained ambiguous about the future role and status of the Basque Country in the Spanish state. A striking similarity to the draft Statute of Autonomy that it submitted to the constituent assembly of the Second Republic (1931-1939) was the demand for the right to self-determination, on the basis of the Basque nation's natural and 'historic' rights (Diez Medrano 1995: 183). This right did not entail a claim to separatism, but was meant to reflect the principle that the constitution should be based upon the sovereignty of the constituent peoples of Spain. For Basque nationalists this right precedes, and thus cannot be delimited by, the constitution, since it reflects the natural rights of nations and the specific historic compact reached between the provinces of the Basque country and the Spanish crown.

---

[45] The foral regime comprises the set of customary laws, political privileges, fiscal and economic exemptions and institutions of representative government which the Basque provinces had enjoyed in their relationship with the Spanish crown from the period of the Reconquista in the 15th century. It was abrogated in 1876 following the defeat of the Carlist cause in the Third Carlist war, largely under the compulsion of Basque urban elites which were dissatisfied with the functioning of the General Assemblies, in which rural municipalities held a disproportionate influence, and with the customs union which cut off Basque industry from the Spanish market (Heiberg 1982: 360-3)

The liberal and traditional currents in the PNV were incarnated in the party's moderate Christian Democratic ethos, which accepted capitalism and private property but was wary of the social fragmentation and exploitation engendered by capitalist relations of production and their detrimental consequences for the cohesion and democratic life of the Basque nation. With strong support among the industrial and petty bourgeoisie, and a 'catch-all' profile that sought to appeal to the less prosperous classes, the PNV was in a strong position to project itself as the Basque nation's champion. However, its monopoly over the representation of the Basque nationalism was challenged by the left-wing separatist organization ETA (*Euskadi Ta Askatasuna,* Basque Land and Freedom) formed during the Franquist period. The group fused a traditional emphasis on the preservation of Basque language with a strictly aconfessional and Marxist profile that sought the support of Basque working-class, and a separatist agenda that endorsed an armed 'liberation' struggle against the Spanish state. Once the Basque Country was granted a Statute of Autonomy, ETA split over the issue of armed struggle and many of former militants established an electoral alliance with the local Communist party *Euskadiko Ezkerra* (EE) which adopted a Marxist, pro-independence but non-violent line. The fragmentation of the Basque nationalist movement along the territorial and left-right dimensions created conditions for a highly polarized regional party system.

Catalan nationalism has also demonstrated a variety of traditions, but has adopted a more inclusive form of nationalism and more pragmatic approach to territorial autonomy and to its relationship with the Spanish state (Keating 1996). The leading party of Catalanism was *Convergencia Democrática de Cataluna* (CDC), formed in 1976 by Jordi Pujol and Miquel Roca. The CDC's political ambitions during the democratic transition were two-fold. The first was to obtain the political autonomy and economic resources necessary to '*Fer País',* as Pujol's slogan went, or constructing the Catalan nation. The purpose of autonomy was thus to build a cultural and economic infrastructure that would strengthen Catalan identity. The second was the to uphold its commitment to intervene in Spanish politics in order 'Catalanise Spain', to make a positive contribution to the stability and development of the Spanish polity, but also, to secure Catalan interest in the decisions adopted at the level of the state (Aguilera de Prat 1993). The two ambitions were intimately tied, as suggested by the party's manifesto in the founding elections:

> "from the Catalan fashion of doing politics and from the coherence of a compact political force, it is our task to invite the Catalan people to project to the rest of the state the will to modernise Spain…this is the point of departure from which the national reality of Catalonia will find the full recognition of its identity." (CDC 1977)

This vision resonated with earlier nationalist traditions of the late 19th century, which had espoused a federalist framework for nurturing the Catalan language and culture and protecting the remaining distinctive institutions such as Catalan Civil Code, but which had also sought to enter the 'citadel of power' and influence Madrid's choices, in particular in the commercial matters that affected the interests of Catalonia's industrial bourgeoisie (Conversi 1997: 18). The CDC's ancestor was the *Lliga Regionalista,* a conservative party founded by the nationalist icon Prat de la Riba, which drew support from the industrial and commercial classes and the intelligentsia. Its main achievement was the establishment of the *Mancommunitat Catalana* in 1914, a body that coordinated the administration of the four Catalan provinces and through which the *Lliga* implemented an ambitious programme of economic, education and cultural reforms. Although it relied on the bourgeoisie as its main body of support, the CDC's origins in the Catholic Catalanism that emerged during the Franquist era, also allowed it to project itself as socially progressive force with a concern for people's welfare and to broaden its electoral appeal across social classes. As a political option that articulates the 'conscience of a people', it has sought to use nationalism as the axis of union and identity between different ideological positions (Caminal 1988: 163).

Catalan nationalism also developed a separatist variant, represented by *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (ERC), a party that aims to achieve the territorial unity and independence of Catalonia and that endorses a progressive left-wing programme devoted to the promotion of social security, state intervention in the economy and the elimination of social inequalities. This party also drew on an older tradition, inheriting the alliances established between republican, socialist and nationalist forces in the inter-war period. The heavy-handed repression of the wave of general strikes that followed the Great War provoked the socialist radicalisation and confluence of republican and Catalanist parties. In the twilight of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship (1923-1930), six Spanish republican parties, the Socialist party and three Catalanist parties signed the San Sebastian Pact, in which the Catalan representatives agree to support the Republican committee in exchange for granting Catalonia a Statue of Autonomy (Balcells 1996: 90). Lead by the charismatic Francesc Maciá, the ERC routed the *Lliga Regionalista* in the first elections of the Second Republic. Although Maciá had immediately proclaimed 'a Catalan republic in Spanish Federal Republic', the Republican government persuaded him to opt for a less ambitious project: to begin negotiations for the establishment of a Statute of Autonomy and to restore the Generalitat, the institutions of self-government of medieval Catalonia.

Setting the Agenda in the Spanish Political System

The regional nationalist parties of the Basque Country and Catalonia have acted as dynamic and ambitious political forces during Spain's intermittent spells of democratic rule during the 20th century by exercising a forceful influence on the structures of the Spanish state. Thus, in spite of the attempts by Spain's authoritarian regimes to suppress nationalist identity in these two regions, the vitality of nationalist sentiment and the reputation for assertive political action meant that the democratic opening of the late 1970s offered a renewed opportunity for obtaining recognition and territorial autonomy. Their influence on the political agenda is situated in the electoral and parliamentary arenas and is strongly conditioned by the quasi-majoritarian institutions bequeathed by the Franquist regime and by the attitudes of mainstream parties on the question of territorial autonomy. In the electoral arena, the 'strong' PR electoral system imposes a moderate threshold that enables them to influence the position of mainstream parties on the territorial dimension and the salience of this issue-dimension in the competitive interactions between mainstream parties. In the parliamentary arena, the advent of a hung parliament, the 'imperfect' two party system and the investiture procedure endows them with the bargaining power necessary to obtain concessions from mainstream parties on matters of territorial autonomy during the process of government formation.

Looking firstly at the electoral arena, we expect that the influence of regional nationalist parties will be determined by the significance of its electoral threat which is, in turn, determined by their electoral support, by the geographical distribution of support for mainstream parties, and by the threshold of the electoral system. It is difficult to assess how, in the context of a democratic transition, the electoral system conditions the perceived significance of the regional nationalist threat, given that nationalist parties are not attempting to break into an already constituted and functioning party system; in a founding election all regional votes and seats in a region are available for all parties, an electoral system thus cannot affect the probability of seat dispossession for any party. However, what the electoral system does is to condition the threshold of representation for regional nationalist and mainstream parties. The electoral system established by the Franquist regime in March 1977 is a proportional but 'strong' electoral system, with an important reductive effect on the party system and constraining effect on voter choice.[46]

---

[46] The electoral law established i) the principle of proportional representation using the d'Hondt highest average formula, ii) a lower chamber of 350 seats distributed over 52 single-tier districts, iii) the allocation of a minimum of two seats per district, with the remainder being determined by population, iv) a three percent legal threshold at the district level and v) the existence of blocked and closed party lists. This was subsequently enshrined in the *Ley Organica del Regime Electoral General* (LOREG 5/1985) (Valles1986).

The district magnitude in Catalonia and the Basque Country is around 7, a figure commensurate with the state-wide average. Although it is rather low in comparison with other European PR systems, it does not represent an insurmountable threshold for the regional nationalist parties which, in contrast to the British SMP electoral system, can obtain representation by reaching second or third place in a district and are not confronted with the arduous task of concentrating all their support in a few districts. Drawing support from a sizeable electoral base among the regional middle-class and confronting a moderate threshold of representation, regional nationalist parties constituted potentially powerful electoral force. The responses of mainstream political parties to their demands are conditioned by their own strength in the Basque Country and Catalonia and by their attitudes towards the issue of territorial autonomy. In spite of the prolonged discontinuity in Spanish democratic politics, it is possible to trace the different attitudes of these parties to the stance they adopted during the Second Republic. The main caveat with this historical allusion is that in the Second Republic, the depth of social divisions and intensity of ideological conflicts interacted with the majoritarian electoral system to produce dramatic swings between loose electoral coalitions representing the left and right. In contrast, the nascent party system of the 1970s witnessed the emergence of a centrist political force, the *Unión del Centro Democratico* (UCD), a broach church that captured in its fold many of the moderate and centrist currents whose voices were eclipsed by polarized climate of politics in the 1930s.

The parties of the left had historically drawn a considerable electoral support in the Basque Country and Catalonia due to the advanced industrial development of the two regions and the presence of a sizeable working-class; their position on the question of territorial autonomy was however directly conditioned by the social bases of support and electoral strategies of the nationalist parties. In the Basque country, the proletariat was conceived by the PNV as a group of foreign invaders derogatorily called 'maketos', and there few attempts either to incorporate the immigrants into the national community or to seek their electoral support. In contrast, Catalanism was a more open creed that placed emphasis on the diffusion of Catalan language and values and the incorporation of the immigrant community into the regional culture, facilitating the emergence of a strong working-class nationalism. The Communist Party (*Partido Communista Espanol,* PCE) was strongest in Catalonia and the party's regional branch adopted a distinct Catalanist profile demonstrating a strong commitment to Catalan political and cultural traditions. In 1936, it merged with a breakaway Catalan socialist party to forge the *Partit Socialist Unificat de*

Catalunya (PSUC), a party that defended Catalan nationhood and advocated a federal Spain (Molas 1972). In the Basque country, the representation of the working-class was quickly monopolized by the Socialist Party (*Partido Socialista Obrero Espanol,* PSOE). Bilbao provided Spanish Socialism with its first real basis of mass support, and it was there that the PSOE organized, alongside the *Union General de Trabajadores* (UGT), Spain's first general strikes in the 1890s. However, by collecting the support of the non-native community, the PSOE placed itself in a direct confrontation with the PNV, which had defined its political identity precisely in opposition to this group. Although the two parties competed for the support of the small native working-class, their mutual hostility meant that there was little electoral incentive for the PSOE to cultivate a nationalist profile. On the contrary, it was in this region that the party's centralist and Jacobin vision prevailed as it stressed protecting the immigrant working-class community against a conservative Basque nationalism and using the state and the UGT for improving the lot of the working class (Eguiguren 1994: 54-9). In Catalonia in contrast, the Socialist party had very little electoral support, as the working-class had been mobilized by the anarcho-syndicalist *Confederación Nacional del Trabajo* (CNT) founded in Barcelona in 1910. But the pervasiveness of Catalanism across different social segments-including the industrial proletariat- compelled the PSOE to develop a nationalist profile and advocate a federation of 'Iberian nationalities' for the Spanish state in 1918, in order to insert itself in the region and to compete against the left-wing republican and nationalist parties.

The PSOE thus adopted a differentiated response towards nationalist parties according to the social bases of nationalist support (Keating 1992). The ambivalence of the Socialist party was evident when the first Republican-Socialist government sanctioned the Catalan Statute of Autonomy in 1931, in accordance with the Pact of San Sebastian, but delayed the ratification of the Basque Statute until 1936, expressing strong reservations about the procedures through which the PNV's draft was elaborated. The tensions between the PSOE's two tendencies clashed most acrimoniously in Catalonia, in the form of continuous feuding between the CNT and the UGT, in particular over the imposition of a system of state-wide labour legislation passed by the UGT leader, Largo Caballero, which provided the central administration with a rigid control over worker's right (Carr 1982: 610-25). Thus, the parties of the left had a strong tradition of support for federalism, in particular in Catalonia, where socialism and nationalism had become closely intertwined. However, for the PSOE this support was also driven by tactical considerations and co-existed, often uneasily, with a centralist tradition.

The parties of the right constituted an altogether more heterogeneous and fragmented alignment, comprising a monarchical Carlist group, a Catholic conservative group and a corporatist Falangista group. Their principal point of affinity was a deep distaste for the crude atheist values of liberalism and socialism and a resistance to the change in the religious, social and economic order threatened by the Republican regime. Their social and geographical support base was among the conservative aristocracy and professional classes, officers of the military, the conservative peasant small-holders of centre and North, and the landowners of South; they had little presence in the Basque Country and Catalonia, where the centre-right option had been monopolised by the PNV and the *Lliga*. The Carlists were in favour of regional autonomy as it formed part of the old feudalistic order, and thy appeared in the constituent assembly alongside the Basque nationalists in support for the reinstatement of local liberties (Preston 1975: 11). The Catholics and Falangistas on the other hand were devoted to an assertive brand of Spanish nationalism known as *integrismo,* which valued above all the internal unity and integrity of the Spanish nation. The Catholics associated the nation with other traditional values such as religion and family and were prepared to work with the parliamentary system, but the Falangistas embraced the dark irrationalism and cult of violence of other fascist movements and were committed to the instauration of an authoritarian state

After the first Republican-Socialist government issued a spate of anti-clerical legislation, the Carlist group joined ranks with the Catholic Conservative group, the *Confederacion Espanola de Derechas Autonomas.*(CEDA) under the leadership of Gil Robles, and the only voice on the right in favour of regional autonomy was effectively muted. The conservative right's praise of the unity of the Castilian spirit was first evident during the Primo de Rivera military dictatorship, which suspended the Catalan *Mancommunidat* in 1925. Similarly, the CEDA-Radical government dissolved the Catalan Generalitat in 1934 and re-imposed a centralized form of government after it President, Lluis Companys, frustrated with conflicts with the central government over agrarian reforms, declared the existence of a Catalan state within a Spanish federal Republic (Carr 1982: 633-5). Two years later, after a further escalation of tensions, General Franco would lead the Spanish army in an insurrection against the Republic in defense of 'eternal' Spain, plunging the country into a civil war. Thus, notwithstanding a residual tradition of sympathy for local customs, parties of the right in Spain have demonstrated a strong and event violent tradition of hostility to the idea of decentralisation and to any party that compromises the unity and integrity of the Spanish nation.

Turning secondly to the parliamentary arena, the influence of regional nationalist parties on the political agenda is conditioned by the properties of the party system, by the competitiveness of elections and by the formal institutions regulating executive-legislative relations. The principal consequence of the electoral law is to have produced an 'imperfect' two-party system, in which power is concentrated in the hands of the large state-wide parties but which is nevertheless highly fragmented on the territorial dimension. The majoritarian 'correctives' of the electoral system mitigate the proportionality of electoral outcomes by favouring the larger state-wide parties and discriminating against smaller state-wide parties. The electoral law thus encourages parliamentarians to join the large state-wide parties that are likely to win seats, dissuades dissenting members from breaking away and generally discourages the entry of small state-wide parties into the electoral market place. While the biases of the electoral system have contained the fragmentation of state-wide parties, they tend to privilege the largest party in a district, whether state-wide or not, and have therefore been incapable of preventing parties with geographically concentrated support from winning seats. This has allowed regional nationalist parties to introduce the territorial cleavage as one of the principal dimensions of competition. As Linz and Montero (1999: 44) put it, their presence in the party system,

"reflected the importance of the regional cleavage as a second dimension of competition that structured both the existence of regional party systems in some regions and their complex interaction with the party system at the statewide level."

In addition, the Christian democratic ideology and 'catch-all' electoral profile of the PNV and CDC allows them to occupy the broad centre ground on the left-right dimension and thus to adopt a 'pivotal' position in the party system with a strong potential for coalescing with the state-wide parties on their two flanks. The capacity of the nationalist parties to adopt this 'pivotal' position in the party system will be dictated by the competitiveness of an election and the balance of power between left and right partisan forces, a set of conditions that are, in turn, determined by the superimposition of the 'imperfect' two-party system on an ideologically moderate electorate with a weak sense of partisanship. The relevance of these variables for party competition derives from the function of ideology as an anchor of voting choice. Studies of voting behaviour in Spain have demonstrated that although sociological cleavages- in particular religiosity- continue to bear some influence on party preference, their impact is not as significant as ideological orientation (Lancaster and Lewis-Beck 1986; Barnes et al. 1985). The electorates' centre of

gravity and weak sense of partisanship accentuates the competitiveness between the two leading parties on the centre-left and centre-right. It forces them to renounce defending the specific interests of a *class guardée* and to adapt 'catch-all' electoral strategies designed to capture the median voter and maximize their share of votes and seats, encouraging the emergence of a centripetal dynamic of competition. Ideological moderation, weak partisanship and the bipolar configuration of the party system also creates the conditions for a high degree of electoral and parliamentary competitiveness, in which two leading parties are separated by only a small share of votes and seats and the winning party is a short distance from the majority threshold (Mair 1997: 206; Sartori 1976: 260-1). Under these conditions the regional nationalist parties can be expected to make use of their strategic position in the centre ground of the party system and to emerge as the 'pivotal' players, lending their parliamentary support to the leading state-wide party in government.

Lastly, the bargaining power of regional nationalist parties is bolstered by the formal relations of power between the executive and legislature. The Law of Political Reform (LPR), enacted by Adolfo Suárez in 1976, established a bicameral parliamentary monarchy with a strong executive. However, the legislature plays a decisive role in the formation of governments. To form the government, the prime ministerial candidate must receive the support of an absolute majority of the Congress of Deputies in a vote of investiture. Thus, if an election fails to yield an absolute parliamentary majority for the leading party, it must turn to parties in the opposition for support during the investiture vote. This provides the regional nationalist parties with a crucial leverage for setting the agenda of the party in government, who must make concessions to its nationalist allies on matters of territorial autonomy in order to obtain their support. It should be noted that the parliament's strength is subsequently balanced by the Cabinet's safety: the legislature cannot remove the executive except by a constructive motion of censure which requires an absolute majority in the Congress and the name of an alternative candidate for the presidency of the government.[47] Moreover, the dominance of the executive is enhanced by the important prerogatives of the Prime Minister who decides when to ask for a vote of confidence or dissolve the *Cortes* (Heywood 1991; Bar 1988). Thus, while the nationalist parties have the capacity to act as kingmakers after an election, they are unlikely to have the power to bring down a government.

---

[47] The formal rules regulating executive-legislative relations were subsequently adopted in the Spanish Constitution of 1978 in Articles 99.1 and 99.2). The characteristics of the vote of confidence are set out in Art 112. It is worth underlining that unlike in France or Germany, the Spanish government cannot use the vote of confidence as an extraordinary law-making instrument, since it cannot to be linked to a particular government bill (cf.Huber 1996). It can pose the question of confidence on a general programme or general policy declaration, but this does not entail that the programme automatically becomes law upon a positive vote (Flores Juberias 2004)

Decision-Making Process

If regional nationalist parties can influence the position of the mainstream party in government or compel it to make certain concessions on territorial autonomy during the formation of the government, the moderately strong agenda control of the Spanish executive means that they can expect to obtain satisfaction. The government's ability to advance its programme through the legislature will depend principally on the type of legislation it seeks to pass, the size of its parliamentary majority and the cohesion of its parliamentary group. The 'closed' party system is inclined to producing single-party governments whose electoral programme will determine the content of the political agenda. The formal powers of the parliament were not specified at the time of the democratic transition, but the Constitution has furnished the executive with moderately strong agenda control[48] Thus, the decision rule does not present significant impediments to the enactment of a government's bills. The only significant veto player in this process is the government's parliamentary group in the Congress, the cohesiveness of which will condition the likelihood of a bill's successful passage. However, the LPR and Constitution distinguished between ordinary laws that require a simple majority and organic laws with a quasi-constitutional status that require an absolute majority. The significance of this distinction intervenes only in case the party in government lacks a parliament majority and must seek the support of opposition parties. In this scenario, the chance of a bill's successful enactment will depend on the ideological distance between the party in government and the parties in opposition and on their capacity to forge a compromise.

To summarise, we expect the CiU and PNV to set the political agenda firstly by exerting electoral pressures in the electoral arena. There they can expect to exercise the greatest influence on centre-left parties-the PCE and PSOE- which have a strong electoral base in the two regions and a belief system that was open to territorial autonomy and which are likely to deploy accommodating electoral strategies in order to compete both against their nationalist competitors and their centre-right mainstream rivals. They can also set the agenda directly from the parliamentary arena. Depending on the outcome of elections, they can manipulate their pivotal position in the party system and the investiture requirements to exercise coalition potential and to assert their demands before a mainstream party during the process of government formation.

---

[48] The LPR only specified that both the Congress and Senate should approve any type of constitutional reform, and stipulated the creation of mixed commission composed of members of the Senate and Congress in case the two chambers could not reach an agreement on constitutional reform. The 1978 constitution provided the government with a moderately strong degree of agenda control: the plenary refers bills to a committee and can supervise that committee's agenda and timetable, but committees are free to rewrite government texts (Doering 1995)

Democratic Decentralisation (1977-1982)

The process of democratization that began with the founding elections of June 1977 provided the regional nationalist parties of Catalonia and the Basque country with the unprecedented opportunity to exercise a strong influence on the political agenda and to obtain the symbolic recognition and territorial autonomy that had been denied to them during the dictatorship. This influence was exercised firstly in the electoral arena, where the nationalist movement active in opposition during the Franquist regime raised the salience of the territorial issue and influence the position of the PCE and PSOE on the territorial dimension. The second site of their influence was in the parliamentary arena where the advent of a hung parliament enabled them to lend support to the minority UCD government in exchange from a broadening of participation in the constitutional negotiations. The numerical strength and ideological moderation of the Catalan nationalist party allowed it to play a more decisive role in the elaboration of the constitutional draft than its Basque counterpart. As a result, the nationalist parties were able to affect decisively the institutional order of the new Spanish democracy.

Political Opposition and Territorial Autonomy

The transition to democracy in Spain got under way in July 1976 with the appointment of Adolfo Suárez as Prime Minister. As Juan Linz (1993) has observed, his appointment was critical to ensuring the peaceful dismantling of the old regime for he displayed the political skills necessary for persuading the established powers of the need for political reform and simultaneously satisfying the opposition's objective of creating a democratic political system. His efforts to tranquilize the regime's fears of upheaval and to coax the opposition into accepting evolutionary reforms would give rise to the paradigmatic case of a 'pacted' democratic transition and presage an important role for political elites in steering the transition and crafting the constitution (Colomer 1995; Linz and Stepan 1996; Share 1986). The institutionalization of the democratic process was achieved with the enactment of the Law for Political Reform (LPR) in October 1976, and its approval by 94 percent of the electorate in the December referendum. The Prime Minister effectively used the existing constitution to convince the *Cortes* to vote for its own disappearance and to establish the procedures that would regulate the elections to new parliament. Shortly afterwards, political parties were legalized and in June 1977, Spaniards went to the ballot box for the first time since 1936, marking the beginning of the longest period of democratic stability in Spanish history.

It is problematic to ascertain, in the context of a campaign preceding a founding election, the exact influence of regional nationalist parties on the position adopted by mainstream political parties on the territorial dimension, given that the latter are not responding to the prior electoral pressures and that the salience of the territorial dimension is determined primarily by the dynamics of centre-periphery relations under the authoritarian regime. We can expect nevertheless that the PCE and PSOE would emerge during the democratic transition strongly in favour of territorial autonomy: the centre-left parties expected to compete against nationalist parties in regions in which they had drawn considerable electoral strength; the nationalist and the left had found common cause in their opposition to a right-wing, centralist dictatorship; under the authoritarian regime, the nationalist movement was spearheaded principally by left-wing organizations; there was rising nationalist sentiment among the working-class of the Basque country and Catalonia; there existed a vocal public demand in these regions for the restitution of the Statutes of Autonomy as well as for independence.

The Franquist regime's efforts to defend the sacred unity of 'eternal' Spain and to eliminate all forms of party political activity and political associations, provided with the nationalist, communist and socialist forces with a common target of opposition. The regime reinforced this association, as the two movements considered the most dangerous threats to Spain were lumped together as '*rojoseparatistas*' ('red-separatists'), a unique category created by the propagandists of the regime (Conversi 1997: 110). In the aftermath of the civil war, the Basque Country and Catalonia were subjected to a brutal treatment by Franquist government which, under the sway of the ultra-nationalist Falange, forcibly and vindictively repressed all outward signs of distinctiveness, proscribing all symbols of Basque and Catalan culture, such as dance and music, flags and anthems, eliminating the use of the Basque and Catalan language in schools, churches, the media and the broader public sphere and suppressing all Basque and Catalan cultural societies (Clark 1979; Benet 1979). The repression extended to the PCE and PSOE, whose organizations and members were continuously harassed and imprisoned, driving the parties into clandestine activity.[49] But the regime's strategy seriously backfired. Nationalist groups feed on 'adversity and denial' and repression only radicalized the nationalist movement and to widen the social basis of its support (Connor 1977; Zariski 1989).

---

[49] The PSOE in particular was devastated, as the party's relatively open organizational structure and itsdecision to maintain its own trade unions made it vulnerable to the regime's inquisitions and meant that the party in exile had very little contact with developments in the interior over Spain (Maravall 1980).

In the Basque country, the flame of regional nationalism was kept alight by the radical left-wing separatist organization, ETA. Fearing government repression, the PNV adopted a discrete role in opposing the regime, alienating the nationalist youth movements which sought a more pro-active organization. In the 1960s, ETA gradually espoused a revolutionary rhetoric and launched a terrorist campaign on behalf of Basque independence, targeting the most notorious symbols of the Spanish state. The strategy was to unleash an 'action-repression spiral' in which ETA's acts of violence would trigger indiscriminate state repression, intensifying the feeling of oppression and rallying Basque people to the cause of independence (Clark 1984). The strategy worked remarkably well. Targeted assassinations, in particular that of Prime Minister Luis Carrero Blanco in 1973, lead to government reprisals, mass arrests, military trials and an outpouring of public sympathy for ETA. The escalation of violence served to mobilize the support of the immigrant working-class, which were attracted to ETA's progressive message and to the possibility of being integrated into their host culture. This conversion was facilitated by the fact that the Basque industrial oligarchy had sided with the Franquist regime, by the large number of Spanish state police that poured into the Basque country, creating among all segments of the population the impression of a country under siege, by the elimination of all references to race and religion in ETA's nationalist discourse, and by the weakness of traditional labour organizations such as the UGT (Zirakzadeh 1991). However, ETA's allegiance to the working-class and its alliance with the labour movement created a deep schisms within the organization over the priority assigned to its different, and potentially irreconcilable, objectives of Basque independence and working-class emancipation. This division elevated the role of the PNV, whose populist ideology enabled it to come forward as the principle champion of Basque nationalism.

Political opposition to the Franquist regime in Catalonia also assumed a pronounced leftist character, as the PSUC provided the leadership to a nationalist front that included all relevant sectors and ideologies of Catalan civil society At first, the Catholic church acted as the unlikely repository of Catalan national identity; the Catalan lower clergy resisted the deliberate attempt of the Church hierarchy to Castilianise liturgy, an act of defiance that drew the admiration of all nationalists. However, the religiously inspired movements limited their activities to cultural initiatives conceived to awaken national consciousness and, as a result, the PSUC assumed increasing responsibility for the instigation of all overt acts of opposition. It infiltrated the corporatist labour organizations, supported the creation of the illegal union the *Comissiones Obreras,* a

grouping of firm-level workers' committees, and played an important role in mobilizing the student movement (Diez Medrano 1995: 164). It maintained its role as the spearhead of the nationalist movement by maintaining an inclusive attitude towards rival political ideologies and organizations. Following the closure of an illegal student assembly in March 1966, PSUC took the lead in forming a roundtable comprising all Catalan parties and in 1971, it initiated and organised the Assembly of Catalonia, an opposition front that included socialists, Catholics, and nationalists under the slogan of Liberty, Amnesty and Statute of Autonomy (Colomer 1976). The PSUC's strength also derived from its capacity to draw on the support of the large population of Hispanic working-class immigrants that trickled through Catalonia during the 1960s, by encouraging their cultural integration into Catalan society. Their identification of with the Catalan nation was evidenced in 1967 when a considerable number participated in the *Diada*- the Catalan national holiday (Conversi 1998: 131). Catalanism would serve as a vehicle of national integration, as the leading organisations of the nationalist movement, the PSUC and the Catholic church, converged in their demands for territorial autonomy, the recognition of Catalan as an official language and the integration of migrants into Catalan culture.

In addition to a strategic alliance between nationalists and forces of the left, there were strong electoral incentives for mainstream parties of the left to adopt an accommodating stance on the issue of territorial autonomy, as public opinion surveys revealed that there was a pronounced demand for autonomy among the voters of Catalonia and the Basque Country and among those that identified with left-wing political tendencies (Gunther et al. 1986: 252-6). In 1977, 51 percent of respondents in Catalonia favoured territorial autonomy and 17 percent favoured federalism, while in the Basque country 47 percent favoured autonomy, 16 percent favoured federalism and 13 percent favoured independence. Among voters that identified with socialist or social democratic options, 59 percent favoured territorial autonomy and 14 percent favoured federalism; among those that identified with communists options, 40 percent favoured territorial autonomy, 31 percent favoured federalism and 11 percent favoured independence (Linz et al. 1981). Autonomy was the preferred option of the natural constituents of the parties of the left- the young, the working-class, the non-practicing and the urban residents, while centralism was a more prevalent choice among the religious, the older generations, the professional classes and rural dwellers. Following the preferences of their electorate, all the parties of the left emerged in support of a reform of territorial structures in the direction of federalism.

In its electoral manifesto, the PCE advanced the establishment of a federation that recognized the multinational character of Spain and the right to self-determination for Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia (Blas Guerrero 1978). The PCE's stance was shaped primarily by genuine ideological conviction, but was also an indication of prestige and intellectual authority that the Catalanist PSUC commanded within the party as result of its steadfast resistance to the regime. For the PCE, the recognition of national distinctiveness was to be incorporated into the party's democratic and socialist doctrine because it was part of a broader revolutionary process of emancipation, one which also included the working class. In his address to the party conference in 1975, the party's leader, Santiago Carillo, balanced an appreciation of the minority nationalities' right to self-determination with a re-assertion of the PCE's identification with the Spanish nation and working-class, the social entity that had provided the ties between the regions and nations of Spain. He also stood firm on the need for a unique political strategy across the territory and resisted any calls for the decentralization of party structures (PCE 1975: 69-75). The PCE's enthusiasm for the self-determination of minority nationalities and for the profound reform of the state's territorial structures thus co-existed with a mission to defend the interests of the social segment it represented.

The PSOE's endorsement of territorial autonomy reflected a compromise between its main centralist and federalist ideological traditions. In its manifesto, the PSOE recognized the existence of linguistic and cultural diversity in Spain. It supported the right of regions and nationalities to obtain their own institutions and proposed an open and flexible Constitution, complemented by regional Statutes of Autonomy, that could adapt to Spain's territorial diversity. This position was however balanced by a pledge to defend the unity of the Spanish state and a commitment to establish the political and economic institutions necessary for ensuring the equal provision of basic social and economic rights for all citizens (PSOE 1977). The principles of autonomy and solidarity formed the core of the PSOE understanding of democracy:

"the process of decentralization and the empowerment of the autonomies is perfectly coherent with the essence of Socialism, since it supposes a deepening of democracy, an objective that is part of Socialism's identity." (Gonzales and Guerra 1977: 38).

The PSOE's willingness simultaneously to endorse territorial autonomy and solidarity reflected its attempt to overcome existing divisions within the socialist camp and to moderate its attitude towards the democratic transition. The party's different traditions on territorial autonomy coincided with existing internal divisions within the Socialist camp.

The PSOE-*historicos*- the members of the party in exile- tended towards the right of the party; they rejected any collaboration with the PCE and sought to forge an election alliance with social democratic parties. As a moderate political force, it was in favour of limited reforms of territorial structures. In contrast, the PSOE-*renovadores*- the members that operated in the Spanish interior- were much more radical in outlook. During its congress of 1974 and 1976, it resurrected its commitment to a Spanish federation in which each Iberian 'nationality' would freely choose its relationship with the rest of the people's in the Spanish state; it was committed to securing a *ruptura democratica* and opposed any continuation of the Franquist regime; it declared itself to be a Marxist party whose principal objective was the overcoming of the capitalist system and the socialization of the means of production (Gillespie 1989b: 301-12).

However, in order to compete against the PSOE-*historicos,* to monopolise political supply on the left and present itself as moderate political alternative, the PSOE-*renovadores* gradually softened its position both on the territorial and left-right dimension and moderated its attitudes towards the transition. In the 1975-1977 period, with rising popular support for the liberalization reforms of the Suárez government and the realization that it sorely lacked the organizational wherewithal to force a democratic rupture, the PSOE accepted the case for a gradual *ruptura negociada.* Thus, the divisions within the Socialist camp and the prospect of electoral competition compelled the party to downplay the most doctrinal aspects of its platform, such as the radical plans for nationalization, to shift the focus on more concrete problems such as inequality and unemployment and to highlight the charisma of its leader, Felipe Gonzales (Gunther et al. 1986: 75). Accordingly, the PSOE-*historicos* tempered its enthusiasm for the restructuring of the Spanish state. Recognising the difficulties inherent in transforming the Franquist regime, Gonzales admitted that decentralization needed to be slow and firm for political and bureaucratic reasons (Blas Guerrero 1978: 168). Ambiguously, it continued to defend a people's the right to self-determination within a system of autonomies and stated that the constitution emanated from the sovereignty of the Spanish people. Finally, the PSOE qualified the degree of territorial autonomy that it envisaged by advancing a conception of the federal state as the development of solidarity between developed and disadvantaged regions, a process that would comprise the transfer of wealth between regions (Gonzales and Guerra 1977: 77). The idea of a federation of Iberian peoples was thus replaced by a more conscientious appreciation of the limits of decentralization in a newly democratized state and of the importance of the socialist ideal of solidarity.

At the centre, the moderate forces that had initiated the dismantling of the authoritarian regime were cautious in their approach to political decentralization. In its manifesto the *Unión del Centro Democratico* (UCD) recognized the prominence of the regional dimension in the political organization of Spain and the need to establish a regional tier of government:

"UCD recognizes the peculiarities of the peoples of Spain and their need for autonomy. The institutionalisation of regions in the form established by the Cortes and in accordance with sovereign will of the Spanish people is the fundamental task of the UCD."(UCD 1977b).

The UCD declared itself in favour of a unitary decentralized state, but also emphasized a commitment to the unity of Spain, to the maintenance of inter-regional solidarity and to the generalization of the right to territorial autonomy. The UCD was a loose electoral alliance of members of the 'moderate' opposition and former members of the Franquist regime and its ambiguous position reflected a compromise between the various ideological currents existing within its fold. The party's assorted strands included the centralist Christian Democratic group led by Gil Robles, former leader of the Catholic CEDA and a number of regionalist parties, most notably, the *Partido Social Liberal Andaluz* (PSLA) party which had an important presence in the region's principal cities, expressed an interest in territorial autonomy, and upon whose support the UCD depended for drawing-up of the party's electoral lists in the region (Hopkin 1999: 67).

The moderation of the UCD's position on decentralization coincided moreover with the consociational attitudes- guided by the spirit of proportionality and consensus- that it adopted in the representation of its internal ideological currents and in its attitude towards the transition. The UCD never attempted to produce a precise ideological programme, emerging as an 'omnibus party' that catered to the Christian Democratic, Liberal and Socialist ideological currents by emphasizing the ethic and tradition of Christianity, praising individual freedoms, committing itself to a mixed economy, and striving for a just equilibrium between liberty and equality (UCD 1977a). The weight assigned to consensus was also imparted by Suárez, who joined the party in Spring 1977. As Prime Minister, he deployed a 'consociational' approach to the transition, most notably by legalizing the PCE and reaching out to the opposition in order to negotiate the parameters of the electoral system (Huneeus 1985: 116-23). The UCD appreciated that the national question was a salient issue, and its commitment to decentralization, motivated by pragmatic and ideological considerations, was consistent with its other moderate attitudes towards pluralism and reform.

On the right, the forces of '*conservadurismo*' were incarnated in 1976 in the *Alianza Popular* (AP), a party lead by Manuel Fraga and six former Ministers of the Franquist regime that positioned itself in favour of a limited degree of decentralization towards provinces within the framework of a unitary state (AP 1977). The AP's ideology was influenced by its composition. Despite Fraga's attempt to build a reformist centre-right party along the lines of the British Conservative party, he was unable to win the support of moderate members of the regime, and in a drive to secure financial resources and to establish the party's presence across the country, he established alliances with prominent right-wing *Franquistas,* including the former Prime Minister Arias Navarro, who had displayed very little appetite for democratic reform (Story 1977). This association with the Franquist regime reinforced the party's conservative and authoritarian attitudes. The party was constructed on the basis of personal ties of prominent individuals, perpetuating the clientelistic structures widespread in the Franquist public administration; the leader of one group attempted to resurrect the Falange and established contacts with extreme right-wing parties, another, proposed to make the Senate into a corporatist chamber (Gunther et al. 1986: 87; Lopez-Nieto 1988). Drawing its roots in the Franquist regime, the AP inherited the nationalist ideology of *integrismo* articulated by its conservative predecessors, and a resolute devotion to the unity and sovereignty of the Spanish nation.

The management of the territorial cleavage emerged as one of the most salient and divisive issues of the democratic transition. In the Basque country, it was veritably explosive. ETA's terrorist campaign, alongside the strikes organized by the combative Labour movements, acted as one prime societal movers of the transition. The nationalist movement was more peaceful in Catalonia but no less potent since political and cultural Catalanism was shared by virtually every significant political force. The directional and proximity theories of party competition offer partial explanations of the variety of different electoral strategies adopted by mainstream political parties. While no party dismissed the issue as irrelevant, the AP came out broadly opposed to institutional reforms: it remained attached to the preservation of the centralist Franquist system; it was deeply hostile to the political articulation of regional nationalism and to the decentralization of authority towards regions. Other parties deployed broadly accommodating strategies by supporting territorial autonomy, but did so to different degrees, in function of the openness of their ideology. The UCD accepted decentralization largely for pragmatic reasons: the leadership recognized that it was a necessary component of the legitimation of the democratic regime and it was in strong

demand with certain strands of the party. In spite of this however, the UCD staid true to its identity as a moderate centrist party and remained strictly committed to a unitary state. The PCE and PSOE adopted a more accommodating strategy that reflected their common opposition to a centralist regime, their need to compete against nationalist parties in regions in which they had historically drawn significant electoral strength and in which the working-class and labour movements had become increasingly nationalist in outlook, the availability of ideological traditions that were sympathetic to territorial autonomy and that would render their position credible. However, PCE and PSOE stance reflected a compromise between different ideological traditions. Promoting a fully-fledged federal state in which Spain's nationalities and regions would simultaneously achieve autonomy and maintain solidarity enabled them to boast both their nationalist and socialist credentials. Thus, territorial autonomy emerged clearly as a 'positional' issue in the party system, engendering a highly polarized pattern of competition. However, a common commitment to democracy nevertheless enabled a consensus to emerge.

Setting the Agenda of the Transition (1977)

The founding elections presented the Basque and Catalan nationalist parties a critical opportunity to shape the political agenda of the UCD government and to give a decisive direction to the process of democratic reform. In the Basque Country, the PNV emerged as the principal champion of Basque region. It was the leading party of the region obtaining 29.3 percent of the vote, principally in the provinces of Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya, and returned eight deputies to the Congress. The nationalist left in the EE was much smaller, winning only 6 percent of the vote and one seat. The nationalist option in Catalonia was weaker and more fragmented. The coalition *Pacte Democratic per Catalunya* (PDPC) obtained only 16.9 percent of the vote and 11 seats, arriving second behind the PSC-PSOE. The other two nationalist parties, the centrist *Union del Centre* (UDC) and the left-wing coalition *Coalicion Electoral Esquerra de Catalunya* (CE) were smaller; the UDC won 5.7 percent of the vote and two seats and EC won 4.8 percent of the vote and one seat, all which came from Barcelona. [50]The strength of the regional nationalist parties in the new assembly was in absolute terms fairly modest; put together they had won six percent of the total Spanish vote and 22 seats. The significance of their presence was however amplified by the overall result of the election.

---

[50] The functioning of the electoral system played in favour principally of the largest regional nationalist parties the PNV and PDPC which benefited form a seats-to-votes ratio of 1.4.

The UCD was the winner of the election with 34.5 percent of the national vote, obtaining significant support across the territory and emerging as the leading party in 39 provinces. In Catalonia, it was neck-and-neck with the PDPC with 16.9 percent of the vote, while in the Basque country it came third with 12.8 percent of the vote. In spite of this nation-wide victory, the party only managed to win 166 seats (47 percent), ten seats short of a parliamentary majority. The most striking feature of the election was thus the establishment of a high degree of electoral and parliamentary competitiveness: the UCD lead the PSOE by five percent of votes and 48 seats (13 percent), and obtained 53 percent of the two-party vote. The Socialists performed well, emerging as the hegemonic party of the left, winning 29.3 percent of the vote and 118 seats, against 9.3 percent and 19 seats for the PCE, not a negligible feat for a party that was afflicted with relative organizational weakness. The PSOE also emerged as the leading mainstream party of the nationalist periphery. It was the winning party in Catalonia where it obtained 28.6 percent of the vote and 15 seats and the largest party of opposition in the Basque country, where it obtained 26.5 percent of the vote and seven seats. In the rest of the country, it emerged the leading party in Asturias, Valencia and Andalusia and arrived a close second in Madrid.

The high degree of electoral competitiveness between the PSOE and UCD was due primarily to the moderate ideological orientation of the electorate. The wealth of individual-level survey research on ideological orientation carried out before and after the founding election found that the Spanish electorate's self-placement on a ten-point left-right scale is moderately centre-left, dropping from a mean of 5.4 in 1976 to a mean of 4.4 in 1977. Overall, 23 percent of respondents positioned themselves at point 5 of the scale and 17 percent at points 3-4, while on the right 18 percent positioned themselves at point 6 and 15 percent around points 7-8 (Linz et al. 1981: 264). The distribution of the electorate clearly favoured the PSOE, whom the Spanish electorate placed at 3.8 on the ideological, closer to the Spanish mean than the UCD, whom the electorate placed at 5.9 (Linz 1980: 131). However, the UCD was able to win the election for two reasons. Firstly, the UCD won a greater share of votes than the PSOE because it dominated a space that spanned the centre, centre-right and the right, whereas the axis of support for the PSOE weighed heavily on the centre-left.[51] Secondly, the UCD was able to win a greater share of seats than votes because of the exaggerating effects of the electoral system- generated by the electoral formula and the low district magnitude- and the significant degree of

---

[51] However, the relatively equal distribution of the electorate in the centre-left and centre (around 40 percent each) and the unimportant share of the electorate supporting the centre-right and right meant that the two parties were not separated by a great number of votes (Maravall 1982)

malapportionement in favour of conservative rural districts. The over-representation of the UCD was nevertheless insufficient to furnish the party with the parliamentary majority that it required to pass the vote of investiture.

The formal institution regulating executive-legislative relation played a crucial function at this stage because it allowed regional nationalist parties to exercise 'coalition potential' by lending their parliamentary support to the UCD. Their bargaining power was also bolstered by the absence of numerically feasible or politically acceptable coalitions. The unilateral coalition between the UCD and AP appeared illegitimate in view of the AP's questionable democratic credentials and a grand coalition including all parties was rejected by the PSOE and UCD, as it was feared that such a combination would deprive the system of the possibility of a genuine alternation of power at the next election and would strengthen the extremes of the party system. In spite of the insignificant support for these political options, the PSOE and UCD were still concerned to protect their electoral flanks, given that the party system was far from consolidated (Maravall 1982: 79). Rather than establish a formal agreement with supportive parties in parliament, Suárez instead chose to make strategic use of its centrist position to form a minority government and to make *ad hoc* transactions with parties to its left and right during the legislative process, shifting alliances across different issue-areas according to the intensity of its own preferences (Maravall and Santamaria 1986: 66). However, in order to obtain the support of the opposition parties during the investiture vote, the government needed to open the scope of participation in the negotiations of the constituent assembly to the Socialist, Communist and regional nationalist parties.

The agenda-setting power of the opposition parties was immediately visible in the direction of the democratic transition: while the UCD had only envisaged a simple democratic overture in which the elected government would initiate modest institutional reforms and maintain sole responsibility for the elaboration of a new constitutional text, it was forced to cooperate with the opposition.[52] In continuity with the 'consociational' approach to the transition that preceded the election- the *ruptura pactada-* the decision augured the extension and renovation of a style of decision-making oriented towards the resolution of common problems and the maintenance of collective solidarity, and facilitated the instauration of consensual relations between the government and opposition parties (Scharpf 1989). In spite of the fact that 'consensus' was a concept and

---

[52] The Spanish transition quickly became the paradigmatic case of a successful transition by pact which O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986: 37) define as an "explicit but not always publicly explicated or justified, agreement among select set of actors which seeks to define (or, better, to redefine) rules governing the exercise of power on the basis of mutual guarantees for the vital interests of those entering into it."

practice largely absent in Spanish political culture and was not a technical prescription for the drafting process (organic laws only required an absolute majority), the creation of a cross-partisan consensus on the constitutional framework was nevertheless conjured by Suarez. This was due first and foremost to the inability of any single partisan to impose his own preferred alternative on the course of action to follow. It was also induced by the uncertainty surrounding the trajectory of the democratization process and by the perceived need to widen partisan participation in order to enhance the legitimacy of the constitution and the prospects for democratic consolidation. At the basis of this apprehension were the twin pressures exercised by the armed forces and the escalating threat of Basque terrorism, as well as the collective memory of the experiences of the 1930s and the Civil War, which taught actors to avoid majoritarian principles in reaching decisions about constitutional arrangements. Striking an evocative note, the communist deputy Solé Tura (1985: 84) stated:

"when I am asked what other constitutional models we had in mind to elaborate the constitutional project, I always answer that the first thing to take into account was our own political and constitutional history. The consensus was the response to the lessons of that history, an attempt to overcome the tendency of exclusive institutions and to resolve peacefully some of the worst disputes of our history"

The principal consequence of the consensual relations was a modification of the decision-rule for the elaboration of the draft Constitution, which was to be sanctioned by a majority of the members represented in the constitutional committees.[53] This had two major implications. The first was that it provided nationalist parties with the opportunity to leave their imprint on the design of Spain's constitution; the second was that their influence would be circumscribed by the preferences of other parties represented in the parliamentary committees. Consensus empowered the nationalist parties but also meant that the approval of at least one or two other parties would be a necessary condition for the ratification of the draft during the different stages. The government had agreed to broaden the scope of participation in the constituent assembly in order to strengthen the legitimacy of new democratic order, but as Suárez's chief of cabinet Alberto Aza (2000: 33) stated that moving towards a decentralized state was "like being pushed and pulled by several currents flowing in different directions", and the committees confronted the difficult task of creating a harmonious confluence between them.

---

[53] There were four technical phases to the process, each characterized by the prominent role of a particular committee: the congressional subcommittee, the congressional committee, the senate committee and the joint committee. The first subcommittee was the most decisive since it set the agenda of issues to be discussed in the committees of the congress. The congress and senate constitutional affairs committee had the power to amend preliminary drafts while the joint committee had the power to decide which text would prevail in case of substantive conflict.

Forging the State of Autonomies (1977-1978)

The relative clout of each regional nationalist party in shaping the constitutional document varied according to its numerical presence in each phase of the drafting process, its capacity to place its demands at the heart of a zone of acceptability bounded by the ideologies of mainstream parties- in particular the PSOE and UCD, and its willingness to accept the quid pro quos inevitable in such difficult negotiations. The contrast in the influence of the Catalan and Basque nationalist party was that the CDC representative, Miquel Roca, was present in all four decision-making bodies, including the congressional sub-committee, and was thus given the opportunity to influence the process in each of its critical phases (Bonime-Blanc 1987: 48). Due to its smaller parliamentary representation, the PNV was present only the Congressional and Senate committees, and delegated the defense of its interests in the congressional sub-committee to Miquel Roca. Moreover, whereas the Catalan parties were willing to negotiate with the mainstream- in particular the PCE and PSOE, the PNV was marginalized during the discussions because of its adamant refusal to accept the latter's main demands. The CDC's capacity to revive the Catalanist tradition of contributing constructively to Spanish politics and to awaken the association between the left and the nationalists built during the period of authoritarian rule were critical ingredients to its success.

The Catalan delegate shaped the tone of the deliberations from the outset, suggesting that they be carried out in full secrecy to avoid external interference and pressures, an initiative which allowed the committee to produce a first draft relatively quickly (Gunther 1992: 58). Once negotiations were under way, Roca pushed for the term 'nationality' to be included in Art. 2, as it would offer symbolic recognition of the distinctiveness of the historic nationalities of Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia and establish the plurinational identity of the new democratic state. The initiative received significant backing from the Catalan PCE-PSUC delegate Jordi Solé Tura, as well as from the PSOE delegate, Peces-Barba, who was also attentive to the importance of distinguishing nationalities from regions and underlining each entity's right to territorial autonomy, thus setting the stage for the generalization of the autonomic process (Peces-Barba 1978: 12; Sole-Tura 1985: 93). However, the parties of the left faced vociferous opposition from the AP delegate Manuel Fraga who stated unequivocally:

" we reject the word nationality as incorrect and filled with dangers for the future, we oppose the control of competences by regions that are not congruent with the principle of the National State, which break the solidarity between regions and open the door to nationalisms and separatism."

When the sub-committee's draft was eventually submitted to the Congress and released to the wider public, the term 'nationality' was subjected to a high number of attempted amendment on behalf of the deputies and was depicted by the conservative commentariat as a concession to separatism. As the numerically largest party and the lynchpin of the negotiations, the UCD could not accept removing the term, lest it alienate Catalans and Basques from the process and be interpreted as a sign that the UCD had willfully burned its bridges with the left (Colomer 1995: 95). Thus, modifications were sent from the President's Palace in which the term nationality became surrounded by other phrases that diminished its symbolism, such as the addition of the "indissoluble unity of the Spanish nation" and "common and indivisible Fatherland." The founding article thus recognized both the plurinational and indivisible character of Spain, giving satisfaction to both regional nationalists and the centralists.[54]

On the question of the territorial organization of the state, the CDC delegate emphasized the importance of providing a maximum degree of autonomy to the historic nationalities of Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia, in recognition of the *hecho diferencial,* the set of cultural, linguistic and historic differences that distinguished historic and non historic regions. It was not however hostile to the PCE and PSOE's federalist perspective which entailed a generalization of the autonomous institutions across the Spanish territory. Each of these mainstream parties was in turn committed to respecting the views of their Catalan branch. The AP maintained a hard line against the process of territorial decentralization towards regions and was progressively sidelined from the negotiations. The UCD held an ambiguous line that reflected its internal ideological heterogeneity. The party had signaled its willingness to acknowledge he distinctiveness of historic nationalities, allowing the return of the exiled Republican leader of the Generalitat, Josep Tarradellas. However, the Andalusian Minister of Regions, Manuel Clavaro committed the government to the generalization of institutions by encouraging the formation of 'pre-autonomies' in other regions in order to prevent the nationalities from obtaining preferential treatment.[55] A creative compromise on the territorial organization of the state could be forged around the positions of the CDC, PCE, PSOE and UCD. The Catalan delegate astutely played upon the volatile relations between PSOE and UCD. In the constitutional sub-committee, he went along with Miguel Herrero's

---

[54] It is important nevertheless not to underestimate the principle of unity emanating from Article 1.1 according to which 'national sovereignty resides in the Spanish people'. Constituent power thus remains clearly unitary.

[55] Interview with Gabriel Cisneros (UCD)

strategy of isolating the Peces-Barba, supporting the UCD on a number of issues pertaining to education, in return for the latter's acceptance of the term 'nationality' in Art. 2. After the near breakdown of the consensus, following the polarization of positions on the issue of state and religious education, the CDC supported the re-establishment of a compromise agreement between the PSOE and UCD in May 1978 (Gallego-Diaz and De La Cuarda 1989: 37). The final elaboration of Title VIII was handed to a group comprising a majority of Catalans- Roca, Solé Tura, Eduardo Toval of the PSC and Luis Meilan of the UCD. The core of the compromise involved the CDC's approval of the generalized decentralisation of authority promoted by the PCE, PSOE and factions of the UCD in exchange for their acceptance that the historic nationalities would be granted a faster access to a more important degree of autonomy than other regions. This led to the creation of a hybrid territorial formula drawing from unitary and federal models, with elements of temporal and geographical asymmetry, that may be categorised as that of a quasi-federal *regionalisable state*.[56] It was a clear reflection of the compromise between the different preferences and ideological positions established by the most relevant and moderate parties in the constituent assembly. As Miquel Roca (2000: 78) states:

> "the constitution was not the result of an academic endeavour, on the contrary all our work solemnly expressed the values that the democratic transition brought to the fore… the 1978 Constitution *could not have been any different*."

The PNV viewed the constituent process as an opportunity to secure its main objective: the constitutionalisation of the Foral Pact. This demand would present Basque autonomy as a historic pact between the Spanish state and the Basque country, provide juridical recognition of the Basque country's original sovereignty and allow the PNV's to maintain its ambiguous stance regarding its ultimate political intentions (PNV 1979). The PNV realized that the goal of self-determination would be impossible to achieve in the uncertain context of the transition and thus sought to the re-integration of Foral Rights as a route to self-government.[57] However, the PNV was unsuccessful in its endeavour. The PNV was a marginal political force in the constitutional debate from the start because of

---

[56] This was achieved by outlining two processes by which two different degrees of autonomy could be attained by different types of constituent units. The historic nationalities would follow the route specified in Art.151. To establish their statute of autonomy, they would require the approval of three quarters of the municipalities of each province and an absolute majority by means of referendum. Once this is achieved, they can get immediate access to the list of competences in Art.148, which all Autonomous Communities (ACs) can assume, as well as those listed in Art.149, which lists three types of competences- reserved matters for the state, concurrent competences and shared competences for which the AC are responsible for execution only. In contrast, ordinary regions would follow the route specified in Art 143. The initiative for the autonomous process in these regions belongs to two-thirds of the municipalities whose population represents at least the majority of the electorate of each province. These regions must wait a minimum of five years before they can demand for competences listed under Art 149.

[57] Interview with Inaki Anasgasti (PNV)

its numerical weakness in the different congressional committees and because it could not rely on Miquel Roca to defend its distinct nationalist perspective, the Catalan delegate being less concerned with abstract questions of original rights. In addition, the PNV's behaviour was uncongenial to the forging of an agreement because of its intransigent attitude towards the generalization of the autonomic process, evident in the a package of amendments that it issued criticising the complex process elaborated in Art 151 and the central government's capacity to harmonise the competencies assigned to ACs specified in Art. 139 (PNV 1979: 15-23) . More important was the fact that recognizing Basque sovereignty was utterly unpalatable to the mainstream parties, including the staunchly unitarist AP, the centralist UCD and the federalist PSOE, all three of which shared a comparably Jacobin conception of the Spanish state as based on the indivisible sovereignty of the Spanish people. Compounded by the intensification of the terrorist campaign conducted by ETA, this claim triggered the disquiet of the hitherto docile armed forces and raised the haunting spectre of a possible coup against the nascent democratic regime. Mainstream parties felt that the recognition of the Basque country's historic rights had been satisfied with the creation of a dual path to autonomy as well as through the financial system which distinguished between the Foral and the common system (Gallego-Diaz and De La Cuarda 1989 : 148-50).[58]

Thus, in contrast to the CDC, which was able to develop alliances with the mainstream parties, the Foral Pact was rejected by all mainstream political parties, transforming a partisan dispute into a conflict between the Basque nation and the Spanish state. The PNV inserted an amendment on the recognition of Foral Pact in the Senate, but the Senate's draft text was defeated in the joint committee and the claims of the PNV were reduced to an additional disposition at the end of the constitution which states that the "actualisation of the foral system would be carried out within the framework of the Constitution."(CE 1978). This was unacceptable to the PNV which took the view that the *fueros* were historic rights that took precedence over the constitution. As the party leader Xavier Arzallus stated at a rally:

"Ancient Basques lived in an ensemble of kingdoms that were later called Spain…and as a guarantee that its way of life would be respected, the right to secession was always reserved…be it or not in the constitution." (cited in Gunther 1992: 85)

---

[58] The former was granted to the three provinces of the Basque Country and the Navarre AC in recognition of their Foral rights and entailed a maximum level of taxation autonomy, meaning that the ACs have the powers to pass legislation on the main taxes of the Spanish fiscal system, and that the central state is entitled to receive a *cupo* (quota) in payment for some of the public services that it provides in certain areas of national interest. The remaining ACs are financed through the common system, which entails very limited taxation powers, resulting in greater financial dependence upon the state, which provides most of their revenues in the form of conditional transfers

The ideology of mainstream political parties is thus the crucial variable for defining the zone of the politically acceptable reforms to the territorial structures of the Spanish state and for explaining the divergent accommodation of Catalan and Basque nationalist claims. While the UCD, PSOE and PCE could agree to a degree of temporal asymmetry in the development of the State of Autonomies in order to integrate Catalan nationalism in the consensus and maintain its support in the resolution of the regional question, they rejected the sovereignty claims of the Basque nationalists, even at the cost of narrowing the scope of the partisan support for the new constitution. Embittered by its exclusion from the constitutional sub-committee and its failure to constitutionalise the Foral Pact, the PNV abstained during the vote in Congress and campaigned in favour of abstention during the referendum. The EE deputy went further, voting against the constitution and calling for its rejection in the referendum, re-asserting the Basque nation's democratic right to self-determination, its demand for the re-unification of the Basque Country and Navarre, and defending its interpretation of the Spanish state as a free association of different peoples.[59] As a result, the Spanish constitution received an unconvincing endorsement in the Basque country; a majority abstained from voting and only 30 percent of the electorate voted in its favour. In contrast, the constitution was ratified by 68 percent of the Catalan electorate and 88 percent of the Spanish electorate. The constitution's weak legitimacy in the Basque country would foment objection, dissent and internal divisions in the region, but the constitution would also provide the institutional capsule in which these grievances could be channeled and settled.

The establishment of the State of Autonomies constituted a 'critical juncture' in the territorial restructuring of Spain: it was a concentrated period of time characterized by frenetic political activity that was highly sensitive to the contingencies of the time, and that eventually produced a set of decisions that were to have a decisive impact on the trajectory of institutional change (Mahoney 2001; Capoccia and Kelemen 2007). Although the new constitutional framework had entrenched the principle of territorial autonomy and had put into motion the procedures for its realisation, it was an open-ended settlement that had not provided a definitive direction to the process of decentralisation (Moreno 1997). This framework would provoke a 'reactive sequence' in which the preferences of mainstream and regional nationalist parties would be defined by, the provisions of the new institutional status quo, the discrete decisions of the party in government, and considerations of electoral expediency.

---

[59] Interview Francisco Letamendáa (EE)

Stabilising the State of Autonomies I (1980-1981)

The transition from authoritarian rule produced a profound reconfiguration of the structures of the Spanish state, bringing into being a creative territorial formula that reconciled the demands of regional nationalist and mainstream political parties. The principal duty of the central government in this new setting was to fulfill the provisions of the new constitutional framework and engage in bilateral negotiations with provincial and municipal representatives of different regions over the drafting of their Statute of Autonomy- the constitutional charter of the ACs.[60] The first mission that the government embarked upon was the negotiation of the Basque and Catalan Statutes of Autonomy which had been drawn up by regional representatives in 1978 and submitted to the central government shortly after the constitution's approval. The rapid submission and enactment of these statutes was due to the decision of the UCD to allow the formation of interim regional governments which drew up the Statutes of Autonomy whilst the constitutional debate was taking place (Diaz-Lopez 1981; Tomas y Valiente 1993). In addition, the leverage of regional nationalist parties was enhanced by the fact that the UCD had failed to obtain a parliamentary majority in the general elections of March 1979 and depended on their parliamentary support during the investiture vote Finally, the escalation of terrorist violence in the Basque country strengthened the PNV's claim that only the restoration of autonomy would restore calm to the rebellious region.

Negotiations over the Basque Statute of Guernica were predictably tense and were resolved in private talks between Suárez and the PNV president, Carlos Garaicoetxa, which reached a final agreement in July 1979. Negotiations over the Catalan Statute de Sau were less difficult and were undertaken in bilateral relations between government ministers and high-ranking UCD and CiU officials, which concluded the talks in August 1979.[61] In both cases, the disputes during the negotiations centred on the exclusive or concurrent nature of the Art 149. competences contained in the Statutes of Autonomy. While the Basque and Catalan delegates wanted no limit placed on their legislative autonomy, except in the reserved matters of 'high' politics and monetary policy, the central government wanted to ensure that it would continue to issue framework legislation in concurrent areas such as social services and economic development (Brasslof 1989; Montreal 1986). Keeping with the spirit of the constituent process a compromise was

---

[60] One of the defining features of the territorial formula adopted in the Constitution was the reluctance to 'close' the final model, that is, to establish a definitive map of the constituent units, leaving this outcome to the accumulated effect of the various initiatives taken by provincial and municipal representatives in the different regions.

[61] Convergencia i Unió (Ciu) was the new Catalan centre-right nationalist party, a federation of the CDC and UDC which formed in September 1978.

nevertheless reached and the statutes received the emphatic support of 88 percent of Catalan voters and 90 percent of Basque voters, on a turnout of 60 percent in both regions. Nevertheless, the difficulty of the negotiations left a bitter aftertaste for UCD government officials which grew wary that the accommodation of the assertive Basque and Catalan nationalists, ran the risk of degenerating into the disintegration of the state.

The UCD's anxiety was reinforced by the unexpected demand of the city councils of Andalusia to follow the fast route to autonomy, in spite of not being considered by many as a historical nationality. The support for this 'ethnoterritorial mimetism' (Moreno 1997: 79) was mobilised by the Andalusian elites, in particular the agrarian associations and the Catholic church which denounced the economic dominance of the North over the South and warned of Andalusia's relegation as a second-class region were it obtain its Statute of Autonomy via Art.143. In addition, the newly formed regionalist party *Partido Socialista Andaluz,* (PSA) defended the existence of a national conscience among the Andalusian people. The UCD maintained its position that the autonomic process needed to be slowed down and that all remaining ACs needed to follow the path specified in Art. 143. In spite of its opposition however, the assembly of local elites won an absolute majority in 97 percent of municipalities and in all provinces except Almería and won the endorsement of the electorate in the referendum of 28th February 1980 (Genieys 1996: 659). The notable aspect of the movement for rapid autonomy in Andalusia was that it received the full endorsement of the Socialist party.

The PSOE's willingness to deploy an accommodating strategy towards the Andalusian movement and to subvert the steady unfolding of the State of Autonomies envisaged by the UCD can be explained by analyzing the relationship between the party's electoral incentives and its ideology on the question of territorial autonomy. The electoral motivations for adopting this position were clear on two different fronts. In Andalusia, the PSOE had suffered an important loss to the PSA in March 1979, losing 5 percent of the regional vote and 3 seats; in spite of winning a plurality of the vote, the PSOE lost control of Spain's largest region to the UCD, due to the concentration of its vote in the urban districts. The PSOE thus needed to emphasize Andaluz demands for autonomy in order to undercut support for the PSA and regain its hegemonic position in the region. Competition with the UCD had also intensified in the historic regions. In Catalonia, the UCD replaced the CDC as the second party, winning 19.3 percent of the vote and 12 seats, narrowing the distance between itself and the PSC-PSOE, which obtained 29.6 percent of the vote and 17 seats. In the Basque country, the UCD increased its support by

6 percent, winning 16.8 percent of the vote and 5 seats, while the PSE suffered a defeat, losing 7 percent of the vote and two seats. The PSOE thus had the incentive to adopt an electoral strategy that would enable it to recoup the electoral losses it had suffered in some of its traditional strongholds. This policy would also enable the PSOE better to compete against the UCD. The general election of March 1979 had reproduced a high degree of electoral and parliamentary competitiveness; the two leading mainstream parties modestly increased their overall share of votes and seats, but the UCD had failed to increase its lead over the PSOE or to obtain the parliamentary majority (Ministry of the Interior). Thus, any increase in support could help the PSOE to dislodge the UCD from government. Lastly, by raising the salience of the issue of territorial autonomy, the PSOE was cunningly exploiting an issue that was highly divisive for the UCD. Certain Andaluz deputies of the UCD was strongly supportive of autonomy for their region, a stance that jarred with the position of the party leadership that wished to put a halt to the 'stampede for autonomy'. This division produced a drop in party cohesiveness during the vote on the Andaluz Statute of Autonomy and to the resignation of the Minister for the Regions, Manuel Clavero Arevalo which campaigned against the abstention policy advocated by the government (Hopkin 1999: 147). In abandoning the existing mainstream consensus on the autonomic process and raising the salience of the issue of territorial autonomy in its campaign against the government, the PSOE made very effective use of the issue to mobilize mass support in Andalusia and to deal a near fatal blow to its opponent.

The PSOE's policy was a plausible one for the party to adopt. The policy was in direct contrast to the profile of its mainstream rival, which remained rooted in the centralist ethos of the Franquist regime, and it allowed the party to offer to the regional electorates the image of a sympathetic but decisive government alternative. In attacking the UCD's position on the question of territorial autonomy, the PSOE was moreover following the centripetal direction of competition and was being consistent with the overall strategy that it had deployed in its bid for power, which included the moderation of its position on the left-right direction towards a social democratic platform. Opposing the position of the UCD was thus made to appear entirely consistent with the rest of the PSOE's strategy for winning office. In addition, the policy harked back to the PSOE's federalist tradition and its former endorsement of a federation of 'Iberian nationalities' and it was consistent with the party's existing position on the issue of territorial autonomy, which endorsed a federal constitutional framework, implying a generalization of the right to autonomy across the regions of Spain. The fact that Andalusia was not a

historic region or a nationality was a less troubling issue for the PSOE than for many residual centralists in the UCD, because the process would simply promote the equalization of autonomy which was at the heart of the PSOE's federal vision. Internally, the PSOE could adopt the policy because the issue did not coincide with the main fault-lines within the party between the moderates and the ultra-leftist *críticos*, which had been marginalized following the consolidation of the leadership of Felipe Gonzáles and his lieutenant Alfonso Guerra. The party leaders were irritated by the appearance of a specifically Andalusian party, but they could appeal to their own origins as Sevillian socialists and to the existing support for pursuing Art 151 within the Andaluz branch of the PSOE, lead by prominent members of the party that identified with the Andaluz nation, to project their autonomic policy as a genuine internal initiative rather than one prompted by external electoral pressures

The ratification of the Andaluz Statute, the progressive disintegration of the UCD government, and the escalation of violence in the Basque country fostered the perception in the military establishment that the autonomic process was now fully out of control and would lead to the dismemberment of Spain. Discontented officers began to conspire against the regime, leading to an attempted coup against the democratic regime in February 1981. This was a deeply alarming event for the UCD and PSOE which immediately sought to preserve the stability of the regime by obliging other regions to pursue autonomy under the terms of Art.143 and by rationalizing the process of decentralization through the enactment of the *Ley Orgánica de Armonización del Processo Autonómico* (LOAPA) in July 1981, which sought to claw back some of the powers assigned to ACs, to establish the superiority of national legislation in case of legislative conflicts and to harmonize many institutional features of ACs. In stark contrast to the politics of consensus of the constituent period, this initiative was formulated and driven through parliament exclusively by the PSOE and UCD, against the vehement opposition of the Basque and Catalan nationalist parties which regarded its provisions as breaching the rights provided for in their Statue of Autonomy.[62] In campaign to the 1982 general elections both parties would emerged committed to the stabilization of State of Autonomies. And chose to emphasise their policies for resolving the economic crisis. Concerned about the fragility of the new democratic regime, the mainstream parties removed the issue of territorial autonomy from electoral contests (Santamaria 1984)

---

[62] Although Basque and Catalan nationalists were unable to prevent the law's enactment, they invoked a constitutional provision and delay its implementation until a test before the Constitutional Tribunal which reached its verdict in 1983.

Symmetry from the Centre (1982-1993)

The ratification of the constitution gave way a decade-long period of relative political stability that witnessed the steady unfolding of the State of Autonomies under the aegis of a powerful Socialist central government. It was a period in which the advent of a dominant party system, reduced to naught the influence of regional nationalist parties on the political agenda. The PSOE implemented the provisions of the constitution regarding the decentralization of authority towards ACs, but the party steered the autonomic process in a direction that reflected the resurrection of its centralist tradition. The access to office, the extension of the party's electoral support across the Spanish territory and its strengthening electoral ties to the working-class and rural proletariat of the South compelled the party to execute policies that required strong centralized control over policy-making. The party's capacity to execute its programme was buttressed by its large parliamentary majority and its strong internal discipline, by its strong performance in the cycle of national and regional elections and by the bilateral nature of inter-governmental relations. The PSOE's tenure in office during this decade revealed the party's instincts for uniformity and centralized rule, as it led to the loathful transfer of competences to ACs, the curtailment of territorial autonomy through the promulgation of basic and framework laws in areas of shared competences, the symmetric decentralization towards ACs, and a important discrepancy between legislative autonomy and fiscal capacity.

The Centre Sets the Agenda

The most immediate consequence of the early institutionalisation of the State of Autonomies was that the foundation of an infrastructure that shaped the demands of regional nationalist parties and created a new political environment for party competition. In Catalonia, CiU emerged as the hegemonic nationalist party. The party's popularity was due in large part to the high standing of its charismatic leader Jordi Pujol, a man that enjoyed prominence in Catalan politics and society for having been imprisoned during the Franquist regime and taken an active part in the negotiations on the Catalan Statute of Autonomy. Moreover, Pujol's populist style- impersonating a blend of confident nationalism and Catholic paternalism- endeared him to many Catalans and enabled them to identify with his party's message. At a programmatic level, CiU inserted its long-held objective to *fer país* within the structures of State of Autonomies. In its manifestos, it re-affirmed its dual ambitions of modernizing the Spanish state while securing the full development of the State of Autonomies. The two goals were intimately tied together:

"to establish confidence in our future, it is necessary for the Catalans to offer the message of modernity, reform and liberty to the whole of Spain, as a point of reference in which the national reality of Catalonia will find full recognition." (CiU 1982)

Concerning the autonomic process, competences and money were at the top of CiU's agenda. The party demanded the full transfer of the competences listed in the Statute de Sau and warned against any attempts by mainstream parties to limit or reverse this process through the enactment of the LOAPA law; it called for a new method for valuing the cost of the public services devolved to ACs and a new regulation of the inter-territorial compensation fund that accounted for the fiscal effort of every region (CiU 1982). It re-iterated these demands at the subsequent election, calling for the transfer of pending competences and a reform of the administration of central government. CiU also issued a clearly centre-right programme of economic reforms, proposing to lift Spain's out of its unemployment crisis by reducing public spending, slimming the public sector, encouraging savings and investment, and promoting new investments in energy infrastructure and industrial renovation (CiU 1986).

The PNV also inserted its nation-building ambitions in the framework of the State of Autonomies. It called for the deepening of the autonomic process and condemned attempts by mainstream parties to impose restrictions on this development through the LOAPA law. It explicitly linked territorial autonomy to the resolution of the unemployment crisis by demanding the transfer of competences in sectors tied to the supply side of the economy such as labour market policies, universities, research and technology, and institutions of public credit. The PNV's proposal for resolving the crisis were of a distinct centre-right flavour- the party called for cuts in public spending and the rationalization of public administration, and demanded that expenditure be redirected towards greater investment in industrial renovation, new technologies and systems of communication and transportation (PNV 1982; 1986). On the matters that were particular to the Basque country, the PNV demanded a re-evaluation of the *cupo,* the financial transfer allocated to the central treasury for the provisions of central government services, and a reduction in the size of its participation in the inter-territorial compensation fund. While it continued to condemn the terrorist violence, the PNV also warned that the behaviour of the state's armed forces had not contributed to eliminating the climate of polarization (PNV 1982). In spite of their best efforts to adapt their nationalist claims to the new territorial structures of the state, the fragmentation of the regional party system and the shifting axis of competition conditioned the capacity of CiU and PNV to exert electoral pressures on their principal mainstream rival, the PSOE.

In Catalonia, CiU and PSC-PSOE were not in immediate competition in the general election of 1982 as both parties increased their share of electoral support by picking up the votes of former UCD voters. CiU increased its share of the vote from 16.4 to 22.5 percent and its number of seats from 8 to 12. The PSC-PSOE also strengthened its presence by winning the support of former PSUC-PCE voters, increasing its share of the vote from 29.6 to 45.8 percent and its number of seats from 17 to 25. In 1986, the competition between the two parties intensified. CiU experienced a significant rise in support, obtaining 32.3 percent of the vote and 18 seats. For the first time at a general election, CiU became the leading party in the provinces of Lleida and Girona and increased its share of support in the PSC-PSOE strongholds of Barcelona and Taragona. The PSC-PSOE's share of the Catalan vote consequently fell to 41 percent and its number of seats dropped to 21.The distance between the two leading parties of the region narrowed considerably from 23.4 percent of the vote and 13 seats to 9 percent and 3 seats. The competition was intensified by the fact that CiU was steadily monopolizing the representation of *Catalanisme*. In 1979, ERC won five percent of the vote and a seat in Barcelona, but it steadily lost votes thereafter, falling to 3 percent in 1986 (Ministry of the Interior). CiU's capacity to exert increasing electoral pressures on the PSC-PSOE was a stark contrast to the ineffectual experience of the PNV.

The PNV's incapacity to monopolise the Basque nationalist option meant that it found itself increasingly in competition against other Basque nationalist parties, rather than against the principal mainstream party in the region, the PSE-PSOE. The internecine feuding in ETA over whether to accept the new institutional status quo lead to the creation of *Herri Batasuna* (Unity of Basque People, HB) in 1979, a separatist and anti-system party. The PNV then experienced a split in 1984 over the controversial *Ley de los Territorios Historicos* (LTH) producing a fourth nationalist force- *Eusko Alkartasuna* (Basque Solidarity, EA) (Llera 1993).[63] The fragmentation of the Basque party system on the nationalist dimension led to an intensification of competition between nationalist parties. Like in Catalonia, the PNV and PSE-PSOE were not in immediate competition in 1982 as both parties won the support of former UCD voters. The PNV's share of support increased from 27.6 to 31.7 percent and its number of seats rose from 7 to 8. The PSE-PSOE also collected the support of former PCE supporters and increased its share of the

---

[63] The LTH regulated the allocation of competences between the AC of the Basque Country and the foral provinces, While the PNV favoured an institutional model for the Basque country that was decentralized along the lines of the historic territories, the EA viewed that such a model should be centralized. There were additional differences between the EA's explicit defence of the right to self-determination as the modern approach to sovereignty and the PNV's conception of sovereignty as based on historic rights

vote from 19.1 to 29.2 percent and its number of seats from 5 to 8, on par with the PNV. However, in the general election of 1986, the PNV's share of support fell back to 27.8 percent and six seats, as a result of losing votes to rival nationalist parties- HB increased its support from 14.7 to 17.7 percent and the EE from 7.7 to 9.1 percent-. The PSE-PSOE's support also fell to 26.3 percent, but it nevertheless emerged as the leading party of the region with seven seats (Ministry of the Interior). Thus, in contrast to Catalonia where the axis of competition enabled CiU to exert pressures on the PSC-PSOE, the intense rivalry between the PNV and the *abertzale* left, meant that it was not in the capacity to compete against the PSE-PSOE to the same degree.

The variable capacity of CiU and PNV to embody the will of their respective nations did not however translate into a variable influence on the position of the PSOE. The changing landscape of party competition following the 'cataclysmic' election of 1982- marked by the collapse of UCD and predominance of the PSOE- meant that the CiU and PNV were incapable of exercising any significant electoral and parliamentary pressures on the Socialist party (Caciagli 1986). The PSOE won an astonishing victory, increasing its share of the vote to 48.1 percent. Its triumph was mirrored in each constituency of the territory. In 1982, it was the winning party in all ACs, except for the Basque Country and Galicia, it was the most voted party in 44 of Spain's 52 districts and achieved an absolute majority in 18 of them. In 1986, the PSOE's total share of support fell to 44.1 percent, but it retained the lead in every AC except Galicia, it was the most voted party in 37 provinces and achieved an absolute majority in 12 of them (Ministry of the Interior). Thus, the notable improvement in the performance of CiU and PNV in 1982 and the intensification of competition between CiU and PSC-PSOE in 1986 was obviated by the massive flow of support towards the PSOE both in the historic regions and in the rest of the country. The PSOE's invulnerability to nationalist pressures was moreover, buttressed by the predominant position that it assumed in the party system.

The election of 1982 produced a dramatic change in electoral alignments, destroying the existing balance between the forces of left and right. Indicating their overwhelming support for a change in government, 40 percent of voters changed their choice of party between 1979 and 1982 (Linz and Montero 1986). However, in spite of Spanish voter's high degree of availability, the ideological anchorage of the electorate meant that the bulk of the electoral interchange took place within the two blocs. The UCD's share of the vote fell from 34.6 to 6.7 percent and its number of deputies dropped from 168 to 12. It had become a humble shadow of the party that had delivered

democracy to Spain. Three quarters of UCD voters went over to the AP, which experienced the only 'sub-triumph' of the election, increasing its share of the vote from 8.4 to 26.4 percent and its representation from 9 to 107 seats (Montero 1986). On the left, the PCE suffered the repercussions of an internal crisis and failed electoral strategy and lost over half its electorate to the PSOE, witnessing its share of support drop from 9.3 to 4.1 percent and its number of seats from 20 to 4. As a result, the PSOE's predominance was unassailable- it lead the AP by 22 percent of the vote and nearly one hundred parliamentary seats. In a sign that the Spanish party system was slowly stabilizing, total volatility dropped to 6.2 percent in 1986. The PSOE lost 4 percent of its vote, mainly to the successor of the UCD created by Suárez, the *Centro Democrático y Social* (CDS), which obtained 9.2 percent of the vote and 19 seats. However, the Socialist party maintained its predominance in the party system, leading the AP by 18.2 percent and 79 seats. Finally, the PSOE's immunity to electoral pressures from nationalist parties was reinforced by the security of its position in government. The electoral realignment of 1982 and the distortive effects of the strong electoral system helped to produce the new regime's first government with a parliamentary majority; the PSOE controlled 202 seats and stood safely above the majority threshold by 26 seats. In 1986, the PSOE's parliamentary majority fell to 9 seats, but the party was nevertheless able to govern with a secure hold on power. Thus, the democratic regime's first alternation of power gave rise to two successive Socialist governments with absolute parliamentary majorities, capable of exercising full control over the political agenda.

Constructing the State of Autonomies (1982-1989)

The construction of the State of Autonomies during the 1980s was decisively shaped by the ideology of the Socialist party. The PSOE remained committed to the democratic transformation of the Spanish state and the decentralization of political authority, but in order to re-assert its socialist credentials and its attachment to a generalized federal framework, the party resurrected its centralist tradition, exercising a close control over the pace and magnitude of the autonomic process. The PSOE's autonomic policy in this period revealed an increasing emphasis on the principle of 'solidarity' rather than 'autonomy'. The party viewed itself as an agent of social change and progress that would bring about greater social justice and solidarity, and saw the State of Autonomies as one of the instruments available for achieving this mission. The PSOE clearly spelled out its ambitions in its electoral manifesto:

"the affirmation and guarantee of the principle of solidarity constitutes the principle objective of Socialist autonomist policy." (PSOE 1982).

The PSOE's decision to assert its socialist orientation and to resurrect its centralist tradition was pushed by two factors: the absence of any immediate electoral incentives for accommodating the particularistic claims of regional nationalist parties and the sensitivity to the party's evolving social and territorial bases of electoral support. In 1979, the distribution of electoral support for Spanish parties across different occupational groups was rather mixed. The PSOE did better among the manual than among the professional classes; 44.9 percent of the manual workers and 33.7 percent of the white-collar workers expressed a preference for the PSOE. The UCD on the other hand, received the support of 31.1 percent of manual workers and 36.2 percent of white-collar workers. Among rural workers, 41.9 percent of agricultural laborers lent their support to the PSOE and 28.9 to the UCD, while 30.3 percent of small landowners supported the PSOE and 57.6 percent the UCD. (Linz 1980: 158; Gunther et al. 1986: 190-5, 231-2; Maravall 1985: 151). The relationship between occupational group and partisanship was thus not complete, a fact that highlighted the cross-cutting character of the clerical-secular cleavage, the success of the mainstream parties' 'catch-all' strategies, and the weak organizational ties of mainstream parties with specific social sub-cultures.

Following the collapse of support for the UCD and the PCE, the PSOE's captured the support of voters that placed themselves at the left and the centre of the left-right scale. The DATA electoral survey conducted between 1979 and 1982 shows that the PSOE increased its support among the respondents that placed themselves at left from 40 to 71 percent, at the centre-left from 73 to 93 percent, and at the centre from 20 to 52 percent (Linz and Montero 1999: 62). As a result, the PSOE took over a large swathe of the UCD's and the PCE's moderate electoral support base. Of the PSOE's support among skilled manual workers and white-collar workers, 34 percent were transferred from the UCD and 26 from the PCE, among the unskilled manual workers and agricultural workers, 24 percent were transferred from the UCD and 19 percent from the PCE. The tectonic shifts in the social bases of electoral support in the general election of 1982 reinforced the working-class basis of the Socialist party's support. The proportion of unskilled manual workers and agricultural workers in the PSOE's electorate increased from 53 to 63 percent, while the proportion of non-manual workers decreased correspondingly from 47 to 36 percent. Similar findings emerge from the subjective class identification of the PSOE's electoral support base (Puhle 1986: 302-8).

The transformation of the Socialist party's electoral base also took on a distinct geographical incidence. Although the PSOE had obtained a broad base of support, since it won a seat in every single one of Spain's electoral districts, its performance in the southern, rural regions of the country was remarkable. Compared with a nation-wide increase in support of 17.9 percent and an average of 48.1 percent of the vote, the party increased its share of the vote in Andalusia by 27.3 percent, obtaining 60.5 percent of the regional vote; in Extremadura it increased its share of the vote by 17.8 percent, obtaining 55.4 percent of the regional vote; in Castilla-La Mancha it increased its support by 14.7 percent, obtaining 49.2 percent of the regional vote (Caciagli 1984: 105-8). This reinforced the party's electoral ties to these parts, in particular, the populated region of Andalusia, from which the PSOE obtained over a million additional votes in 1982.[64] The Socialist party's affinity with the rural areas of the south was mirrored in the importance of this territory in the different branches of the party's organization. The party's executive was based on a tight group of former young socialist students from the University of Sevilla; while Felipe Gonzales promoted the party's public image, the control of the party was left to his loyal lieutenant, Alfonso Guerra. In addition, the Andalusian regional federation had an important numerical weight in the party's congress, and its support for the party executive was continuously secured by Guerra's command over the regional delegations (Gillespie 1989a: 69). Thus, although the PSOE had appealed to a heterogeneous ensemble of the electorate in 1982, the strengthening electoral ties to the working-class and rural proletariat of Spain's agricultural regions and the vocal representation of these interests within the party organization, compelled the Socialist party to emphasize its egalitarian socialist values, to accentuate its commitment to ensuring the equal adequacy of public services and to use its access to the levers of power in central government to undertake a programme of income redistribution between individuals and regions.

The PSOE's capacity to pursue these reforms was buttressed by strong hierarchical leadership and internal party discipline. The Sevillians controlled the party apparatus with an iron hand. The pre-occupation with avoiding the UCD's calamitous experience pushed the party executive to develop an obsession with party cohesion and to suppress any public expression of intramural dissent. The party needed to be 'hard as a rock', as Gonzales put it, in order to be politically strong. Underlying the PSOE's discipline was the popularity and unassailable leadership of the Gonzales, who delivered

---

[64] In addition, the votes of these rural voters from the South was crucial to the PSOE's parliamentary strength given the over-representation off rural districts in the Congress; while they provide about 28.5 percent of the party's total share of the vote, they supplied 34.5 percent of the party's total share of seats

electoral success to the party in return for unconditional loyalty. In addition, Guerra's hand in the management of the party's affairs was bolstered by a number of institutional features. Representation to the Congress was determined by majoritarian rules which reduced the number of factions and curtailed internal pluralism (Lopez Guerra 1984). The electoral system's provision for closed and blocked electoral lists also empowered party leaders to determine the placement of candidates on electoral lists, to shape their career trajectory and to command their obedience. Lastly, although the PSOE had a nominally federal structure, this was limited to the 'self-rule' of regional branches during regional elections, in developing their own programmes, drawing up electoral lists deciding upon pre- and post-electoral coalitions. The influence of regional leaders in the running of the state-wide party was rather weak, as they had no control over the drafting of the manifesto or the placement of candidates on electorate list, and only exercised an informal influence on the decisions of the party executive (Mendez-Lago 2000). This strong centralization of power enabled the PSOE's executive to exercise significant discretion in steering the autonomic process.

The Socialist party's main priorities when it entered office were to demonstrate its commitment to the decentralization of democratic Spain by concluding the process of autonomy and proceeding with the transfer of legislative competences, administrative and financial resources to Autonomous Communities (Marvall 19991). The configuration of Spain's autonomous map was rapidly completed and by the end of February 1983, Statutes of Autonomy were negotiated and enacted for the seventeen different regions. The central government then moved to the complex task of negotiating the transfer of individual legislative and administrative competences with each AC.[65] The PSOE's job was facilitated by its victory in the first round of regional elections in 1983 in which it won office in twelve ACs, enabling it to exercise an important degree of discretion in determining the pace and order in which different functions were transferred From 1985 onwards, the Socialist party oversaw a steady transfer of powers to ACs which became the principal actors involved in the legislation and administration of public services. In 1981, the central government passed about 70 percent of laws and 80 percent of decrees, but after all the ACs were enabled in 1983, the levels of law and decree which they produced steadily increased and by the early 1990s, they were responsible for 85 percent of laws and 70 percent of decrees (Agranoff and Gallarin 1997: 18)

---

[65] The negotiations on the transfer of competences took place through the substantive ministry between the central and AC government and centred on the maintenance of programme standards and the maintenance of national regulations, and the transfer of personnel and property and the level of financing for each function and information and reporting requirements. See Agranoff (1993)

In spite of this rapid transfer of legislative competences, the PSOE maintained a very cautious approach to decentralization, infusing the construction of the State of Autonomies with a strong degree of symmetry and steering the process in a direction that ensured that the party would meet its objective of providing a minimal quality standard of public service across the territory.[66] One of the Socialist government's first initiatives was to suspend the transfer of competences to Catalonia and the Basque country between 1982 and 1985 and to speed up the process in other ordinary ACs. For instance, with enactment of the *Leyes Orgánicas de Transferencias* (LET) in 1982, the government granted a degree of autonomy to Valencia and the Canary Islands similar to that assigned to ACs following the 'fast' route, providing them with access to competences listed under Art. 149.1, decisively putting to an end the distinction between historic and non-historic communities (Brasslof 1989; Montilla Martos 1996).[67] A second method for ensuring the equal development of ACs was the issuing of national standards and regulations through basic legislation in areas of shared and exclusive competences, in particular in matters that were deemed vital to the general interests, such as education, health, economic development.[68] The most notable example here was the *Ley Organica por el Desarollo de la Educacion* (LODE), which established state-wide criteria for public school funding and admission conditions for publicly-funded schools, even though education was an exclusive competence of the ACs (Bonal 1998).

A second source of central government control over the activities of AC governments stemmed from the maintenance of the national administrative corps in the regional territories. The reticence to dismantle the central administration is clear from personnel figures. In the period in which the ACs eventually became responsible for over 70 percent of total legislation, the number of AC public servants grew represented only 30 percent of public employees (Banon and Tamayo 1997). The national government maintained a formal presence in the ACs through the prefectural *delegado del gobierno,* which continued to supervise provincial governors and to coordinate the activity of officials from the central government and the ACs The commanding position of the central

---

[66] The central government's hand was strengthened by a number of Constitutional provisions that assigned the central government with the power to introduce organic laws that affected the powers of subnational governments (Art. 150.2), to issue 'mandating' or national regulation establishing the principles necessary for harmonizing the basic norms of ACs legislation (Art. 150.3) and to supervise devolved competences even under exclusive jurisdiction of ACs (Art. 153).

[67] Although these competences were included in their Statutes of Autonomy, theses regions had been prevented by the LOAPA from accessing them immediately due to the temporal limitation imposed on ACs following the 'slow' route

[68] The central government's position was strengthened by the Constitutional Tribunal's ruling on the LOAPA law (STC 75/183). Basing its decisions on Art.137, the Constitutional Tribunal interpreted autonomy as the possibility of making the final decision in relation to a given competence and upheld that the AC statures were higher laws that could not be limited by ordinary statute laws. However the CT also underlined the central government's responsibility in promoting the general interest and its power to oversee, supervise or intervene in AC affairs.

administration was reinforced in 1985 with the enactment of the *Ley Reguladora de las Bases del Regimen Local* (LBRL) which established provincial councils as the basic institutions for the implementation of national and regional policies, allowing the central government to establish alliances with the provincial councils, by-passing the regional tier (Valles and Fox 1988). The most significant method for keeping AC governments in check was the strong oversight that national administrators maintained over the execution of regional and national programmes: the national administration also created rival 'watchdog' units above their AC counterpart ministries in areas of exclusive competence to monitor compliance with national standards and regulations (Donaghty and Newton 1989).

A similar pattern of centralism is found in financial arrangements. Although regional governments became responsible for the management of an increasing share of total public expenditure- the size of intergovernmental transfers grew from one to 16 percent of GDP between 1981 and 1991- finance for common regime ACs remained centralized. In 1987, 77 percent of the revenue structure of high-level ACs was derived from tax-sharing grants, while 23 percent was derived from their own tax revenue; for low-level ACs, the figures were 72 and 28 percent.[69] Moreover, ACs had little discretion over how the tax-sharing grants were allocated: only 30 percent was unconditional, while the rest was earmarked either for health, education and social services in the case of superior-level ACs, or for capital expenditure in the case of inferior-level ACs (Banon and Carillo 1993: 207). In addition, the criteria by which tax-sharing grants were allocated were driven increasingly by a concern for redistribution between richer and poorer regions. Between 1981 and 1986, the volume of transfers for each region were determined within the framework of the *Ley Orgánica de Financiación de las Communidades Autonomas* (LOFCA), and calculated according to the effective cost of expenditure responsibilities transferred to ACs. When the law was rewritten in November 1986, an agreement was reached by the fifteen common regime ACs and the central government for the implementation of a new formula, where the share of national tax revenue was no longer directly related to the cost of devolved responsibilities but to a formula related to population, geographic size, personal income, fiscal effort, the number of provinces and the distance from Madrid. The main consequence of this shift in criteria from function to need has been, according to Sole Vilanova (1990), not simply the erosion of fiscal autonomy but the introduction of a form of 'consumption federalism' in which the poorer territories are subsidized for the low cost functions they undertake and resist undertaking higher cost function.

---

[69] Higher-level ACs assumed competences in the costlier policy areas of health, education and social security

The resurrection of the party's centralist attitudes were facilitated by several factors. Firstly, it was consistent with the party's earlier support for the LOAPA, which sought to standardize the policy jurisdictions of ACs and assert the superiority of national legislation. The switch from supporting greater autonomy for different regions towards harnessing the autonomic process had taken place following the attempted coup, and once in office, the PSOE could plausibly continue along this path. Secondly, the Socialist party's centralist and egalitarian ethos resonated with an older tradition, first manifested during its spell in government in the Second Republic, when the PSOE and the UGCT imposed nation-wide regulations in areas that were considered critical for advancing the interests of the working-class. Thirdly, the equalizing principles underlying the PSOE's autonomic policy were compatible with other facets the party's programme. From 1982 onwards, the party undertook a sharp u-turn in its socio-economic platform from socialism to supply-side economics, entailing the abandonment of its counter-cyclical policies in favour of tight monetary policies and the thorough industrial restructuring in declining sectors (Share 1989; Gunther 1996). To offset the deleterious effects of these adjustment policies on the 'bloc' of classes comprising its electoral coalition- the PSOE passed a number of redistributive policies, such as compensatory and social assistance programmes, the universalisation of the pension and health care system and the instauration of a progressive taxation system (Hamann 2000-41).[70]

Finally, the rehabilitation of the Socialist party's centralist tradition was due to the absence of internal challenges to the party executive's vision. It is important to appreciate that Guerra's interpretation of socialism was deeply imbued with class conscience and statist beliefs; the state offered the tools for achieving the socialist ideals of justice and solidarity (Guerra 1985: 17). Guerra's grip on power was the party's main binding force. His Guerrista faction master-minded the party's electoral strategy and organized its election campaigns; it had developed a vast network that infiltrated the president's palace, the PSOE executive and parliamentary group, regional governments as well as universities (Gillespie 1994: 56). The main challenge to this influence was the growing importance of the regional arena in the party's structures. The decentralisation of power during the 1980s and the PSOE's electoral success at regional elections had empowered regional 'barons'- the leaders of regional party federations and regional government- by giving them control over votes and patronage at the regional level. Although regionalism was a significant variable affecting intra-party conflict, regional leaders initially lost out. Their

---

[70] The government also channeled public funds and investment incentives to the least developed regions through the creation of 'zones of urgent re-industrialisation' (ZURs) in order to stimulate job creation.

interests on the party's economic and autonomic policy often diverged because of pronounced interregional differences in wealth, population, economic structure, political orientation, degree of autonomy (Montero and Torcal 1990). The central party apparatus successfully exploited these divisions to subordinate the barons that attempted to assert their autonomy, such as Rafael Escuredo or José Rodriguez de la Borbolla, which were deprived of their general secretaryship and replaced as regional presidents of Andalusia. Even the independent Catalan federation, the Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya (PSC), which established a federal relation with the PSOE in 1978, failed to assert its demands for the development of the State of Autonomies towards a fully-fledged federation and for greater autonomy within the PSOE (Colome 1991). Thus, although there was a strengthening territorial cleavage that could have resuscitated the PSOE's autonomist tradition and challenged the government's centralism, it was too disunited a force to prevent the party executive from effectively muting all internal calls for autonomy.

Stabilising the State of Autonomies II (1989-1992)

The PSOE's autonomic policy during the 1980s provided a potential target for the mainstream party in opposition. The government had followed the letter of the Constitution in transferring functions to ACs but hampered the effective use of this autonomy; presenting a contrasting electoral profile that was sympathetic to a significant deepening of territorial autonomy would enable the *Partido Popular* (PP), as it was now called, to re-establish itself as a credible political alternative. From the mid-1980s, the PP gradually adopted a position on the issue of territorial autonomy that combined an acceptance of the State of Autonomies with the defence of the Spanish nation and constitution. The emergence of the regionalist variant in the PP's beliefs was driven primarily by electoral expediency. After years of disarray in opposition, the party transformed itself by purging its greatest electoral liability- its association with Franquist authoritarianism and centralism- which had prevented it from creating the *Gran Derecha* and rebuilding its attractiveness to the centrist electorate (Gunther 1989; Montero 1987). It remodelled its image as being both tied to the traditional values of the past and modern in outlook, and experienced a process of generational turnover, with the resignation of Manuel Fraga and the election of a youthful José Maria Aznar as president. It also incorporated former leaders of the UCD, AP and CDS, giving credence to its aim of becoming a moderate force of the centre-right (Lopez Nieto 1997).

Accordingly, the PP adjusted its attitudes towards the development of the State of Autonomies. In the early 1980s, the AP had given voice primarily to those in its fold that were nostalgic of the Franquist regime, and maintained a strongly rightist and centralist policy orientation, calling for the respect of the constitutional principles that guaranteed national and state unity, a common cultural identity and inter-territorial solidarity (AP 1982) As part of its strategy for re-conquering the centre and appealing to the 'natural majority' of Spaniards, the party gradually moderated its tone on the question of territorial autonomy. Aznar was given responsibility for the party's autonomic policy; he abandoned the party's aggressive centralism, urging it to "adapt to the reality of the State of Autonomies" (Aznar 1994: 23). The party recognised the importance of the principles of unity and autonomy in ensuring the 'vertrebration' of Spain and called for the consolidation of the State of Autonomies (CP 1986). By the time it was 'refounded' in 1989, the PP had definitively come to terms with the structures of the Spanish state. It had built a regional power base in Galicia, Castilla-Leon, Cantabria, and the Balearic Islands, but the most revealing indicator of all was the mobility of its leadership across tiers of government: Aznar rose to the party's presidency from his previous role as President of Castilla-León while Fraga was parachuted to the presidency of the Xunta of Galicia. However, the regionalist variant of the party's territorial policy was driven primarily by pragmatic re-adjustment and co-existed with the party's much older ideological tradition of Spanish nationalism (Nunez-Seixas 2005). The party maintained its devotion to the indivisible and sovereign Spanish nation and rejected the claims of nationalities to self-determination. Manuel Fraga's (1993) vision of a 'single administration' was designed to improve in the efficiency of the state, by eliminating the overlap between the central and regional governments' spheres of competence, and to the freeze any demands for further self-government among the regional nationalists.

However, the PP did not raise the salience of the issue of territorial autonomy in its battles with the PSOE. Although the PP had softened its stance, it could not adjust its position sufficiently to exploit the issue of territorial autonomy for partisan advantage by attacking the PSOE as a centralist party. It had already effected a momentous shift from a rabidly centralist party to a moderate party that accepted the institutional status quo, any further repositioning on the territorial dimension would have appeared utterly implausible given that the party lacked any prior policy commitment or ideological tradition that encouraged decentralisation. After all, the party's lineage could be traced back to the reactionary Catholic and Falangista parties of the Second Republic, while in the

contemporary epoch, four of its delegates in the constituent assembly had voted against the Spanish constitution because of its provisions on territorial autonomy. In addition, adopting an accommodating electoral strategy would simply have harmed the PP's electoral fortunes. In spite its re-branding, the PP was still widely perceived by many to be a centralist party, with strong ties to the authoritarian values of the Franquist era (Montero 1988: 157). In a contest on the question of territorial autonomy, the PSOE would always emerge in a more favourable light. Thus, the PP party did little to attack the PSOE's autonomic policy. Instead, it chose to emphasise its distinctive profile by issuing manifestos that offered a mix of economic neo-liberalism and an appeal to the traditional values of order, family and nation (Robinson 1987; PP 1989). Unlike the PSOE, which exploited the issue of territorial autonomy in its opposition to the UCD, the PP's scope for competing against the PSOE on the territorial dimension was limited by the ineffaceable Franquist stigma and the lack of tradition sympathetic to decentralisation.

The PP's adaptation to the reality of the State of Autonomies was evident during regional elections, where the variation in the configuration of regional party systems and the emergence of patterns of dual-voting compelled it to deploy differentiated electoral strategies (Pallarés and Keating 2003; Hamann 1999). The PP's experience in Galicia was a defining moment in the development of its territorial policy. Having defeated the UCD in the first elections of 1981, the party realised that regional elections were a useful platform from which to embarrass the government and to project itself as viable party for national office. Moreover, as a conservative historic nationality, Galicia was also a region where the PP could safely experiment with its attempt to combine a defence of regional identity and territorial autonomy, with Spanish constitutional loyalty (Gilmour 1989: 18). The PP pursued a similar strategy in Catalonia, appealing to conservative *Catalnisme* in the hope of breaking into CiU's support base. The CiU's emphatic victory in 1984 had pushed the centre of gravity in the regional party system towards the autonomist pole, compelling both mainstream parties to seek a more regionalist position. In spite of its formal autonomy, the PSC experienced difficulties developing its Catalanist profile because of the centralist impulse of its colleagues in government in Madrid (Roller and Van Houten 2003). The PP candidate Miguel Plana campaigned in Catalan and gave assurances that he would promote linguistic rights in Catalonia (Pallares and Font: 1994: 225) In the Basque country, the AP took on a more hostile attitude towards the multitudinous semi-loyal nationalist parties, and as a result, it remained tarnished with the image of an anti-Basque authoritarian party.

It was in the ordinary ACs that the PP honed its autonomist profile. Following the regional elections of 1991, the PP held absolute majorities in Galicia, Cantabria, and Castilla-Leon; in the Balearic Islands it established electoral pacts with *Union Mallorquina*; in Aragon, it supported the *Partido Aragonés;* in Navarra, it supported the *Union del Pueblo Navarro*.[71] In Asturias, Madrid, La Rioja, and the Canary Islands, the PSOE was in a minority government or depended on the support of regionalist parties. Thus, the PP was at the threshold of becoming the dominant political force at the regional level. At the same time, ten ACs- six of which were controlled by the PSOE- were due to seek a revision of their Statutes of Autonomy, with the elapsing of the five year limitation imposed by Art.148.2 Within the PSOE there was great resistance to the initiative. Alfonso Guerra remained ideologically opposed to further decentralisation, arguing that the ACs would be incapable of assuming new competences and that the strengthening of intergovernmental relations and the system of administration were higher priorities, while the Minister of Public Administration, Joaquín Almunia insited on the need to improve the functioning of the State of Autonomies, the governing of which had become complicated by the existence of two different levels of autonomy.[72] In contrast, the PP came out in strong support of this initiative, re-iterating its commitment to the *via estatutaria* and to the maintenance of the constitution:

"We must not touch the Constitution, but approve to a maximum the possibilities offered by the Statutes of Autonomy. The strategy of the PP is to arrive at a regionalised and flexible organisation, and to support the qualitative development of the Constitution and the State of Autonomies." (cited in Gilmour 1989: 21)

In addition, Aznar expressed his conviction that the central government should take responsibility for the simultaneous amplification of powers across ACs, rather than proceed on the basis of bilateral renegotiations for every statute, thus infusing the State of Autonomies with a degree of uniformity. The opportunity for realising this objective arose following a radical reconfiguration of power within the PSOE. In 1991, Alfonso Guerra, the praetorian of the centralist tendency was dismissed as vice-president following his implication in a party financing scandal and was replaced by the Catalan Narcís Serra, former Mayor of Barcelona and *conseller* of the Catalan Generalitat, that did not share his political opinions on the centralist role and policies of the PSOE. Guerra's departure

---

[71] These were centre-right regionalist parties that had flourished during regional elections, occupying the space created by the UCD's disappearance (Pallares et al 1997: 167-8)

[72] The initiative was justified on the grounds that the application of the *principio dispositivo* to the lower-level regions raised the difficulty for the central government of enacting framework laws in a system characterised by the unequal distribution of competences across constitent units. Interview Joaquín Almunia PSOE.

allowed the regional barons of the Socialist party, the leaders of regional federations, to exercise greater influence over the party's policy orientation and to demand that the ACs in which they governed be given the right to revise their Statutes of Autonomy. The two Spanish mainstream parties governed in the eight low-level regions where there was vocal demand for greater autonomy: the PSOE was in government in Madrid, Asturias, La Rioja and Murcia and the PP in the Balearic Islands, Aragon, Cantabria and Castilla y Leon. Only in the poorer regions of the South, in particular Extremadura and Castilla-La Mancha, was there some resistance to the idea of taking up more competences (Aja 1995; Hollyman 1995). The vehement demand for a constitutional reform in the majority of slow-track ACs set the stage for collaboration between the PSOE and the PP.

In the aftermath of the 1989 general election, the PSOE's parliamentary majority was reduced to one seat, and it needed to obtain support from the opposition to pass the organic laws which would enable it to decentralise competences to ACs. In February 1992, the PSOE and PP collaborated in forging the *Pactos Autonomicos*, which aimed to complete the development of Title VIII and to improve the efficiency of the State of Autonomies, by "endowing it with the mechanisms, and instruments that render possible an increasing efficiency of the distinct public administrations at the service of the citizen." The amplification of competences was carried out in 1994, in accordance with Art 150.2, by means of the LET (*Ley Organica de Transferencias)* which revised the Statutes of Autonomy of the ten inferior-level ACs, endowing them with range of exclusive, concurrent and divided competences falling under Art.149.[73] The LET infused the State of Autonomies with a significant symmetrical impulse as the amplification of competences to the inferior-level ACs standardized the arrangement across territorial units. The process of harmonisation was defended in terms of improving the efficiency and rationality of the system. But the laws reflected the control of the centre over the political agenda, as it was initiated and decided by consensus between the two mainstream parties, rather than following the demands presented by ACs. The support of the PP was necessary due to the PSOE's wafer thin majorities in parliament, but the agreement was feasible above all because the convergence of the views of the two political parties towards a federal-uninational model of the state, in which a uninational perspective of the state's political collective would be maintained and where federal arrangements would be developed symmetrically (Requejo 2001).

---

[73] There were special conditions applied to the area of education, which remained subjected to national controls in order to ensure the equal performance and efficacy of the service; the area of social assistance in heath matters was indefinitely deferred (Munoz Machado 1992)

Going to the Heart of Spain (1993-2000)

The steady development of the State of Autonomies during the 1980s exposed the Socialist party's deeply-held preference for the centralized steering of the autonomic process and a symmetrical format of decentralisation. This trend was offset in the following decade with the return of regional nationalist parties at the heart of Spanish politics. Although the dynamics of party competition in this period precluded them from influencing the position of mainstream parties, the increase in competitiveness, their pivotal position in the party system, and the requirements of an investiture vote enabled them to set the political agenda of the Spanish government. Although their influence would vary according to their bargaining power, the type of parliamentary pact that was forged and the identity of the mainstream party in office, the CiU and the PNV were able to extract policy concessions on matters of territorial autonomy from the PSOE and PP in exchange for their parliamentary support. Their decisive role in stabilising the Spanish government during this period engendered a deepening of territorial autonomy, through the strengthening of the bureaucratic and financial capacity of ACs, and prompted a resurrection of the institutional recognition of the *hecho diferencial,* through the asymmetric decentralisation of certain policy domains.

The Resilience of Left and Right

The institutionalisation of the State of Autonomies through the elaboration of the Statutes of Autonomy, the transfer of power towards ACs and the holding of four round of regional elections had set in stone the quasi-federal nature of the Spanish state and given institutional life to the national and territorial pluralism of Spain. In the Basque Country and Catalonia, the structures of self-government provided the PNV and CiU with a platform from which to put into action their nation-building projects. However, the profound evolution of the State of Autonomies did not entail that the goals of regional nationalist parties had been fully satisfied. In the early 1990s, the demands of nationalist parties were shaped in direct reaction to the characteristics of decentralisation under the Socialist government. Their immediate goals were firstly to acquire the competences and resources necessary for strengthening their region and secondly to re-introduce a degree of asymmetry in the format of territorial autonomy. Nationalist claims to distinction through faster and deeper autonomy engendered a process of 'ethno-territorial concurrence' (Moreno 1997), as the more ambitious ACs have demanded the same powers as the historic regions, to avoid discrimination and relegation as second-class

constituent entities which, in turn, fuelled demands on the behalf of nationalities for further autonomy, in virtue of their distinct culture, language and traditions of self-government. By harmonising competences across ACs, the LET had reduced the special status of Catalonia and the Basque country; re-establishing the recognition of the *hecho diferencial* was a core element of nationalist claims.

These were most vocally expressed by CiU, whose main goals were the transfer of pending competences, the adaptation of the system of public administration and the revision of financial arrangements for common regime ACs. On the last question, the principal demand was an increase in central government transfers to fund the delivery of the costly policies, such as education, health and social security, which the Catalan AC had acquired over the course of the previous decade, as well as a revision of the system of financing to introduce an element of greater fiscal co-responsibility between ACs, entailing the transfer of shared taxes in proportion with the region's fiscal effort and a greater autonomy over the setting of tax rates and base (CiU 1993, 1996). The CiU deputy Carles Campuzano confirmed the immediate desire to eliminate the constrictions of the existing system as well as the greater, more symbolic purpose of autonomy.

"our priority was to lift the economic asphyxiation of the Generalitat and to change a system that constrained the fiscal effort of Catalonia. With such measures we would attain our full potential as national entity, preserve and strengthen our differential identity within the collective of Spain"

The PNV's demands appeared less exigent, given that the Basque AC already exercised a high degree of autonomy. The PNV demanded that the central government complete the transfer of competences contained in the Basque statute of autonomy, which it had hitherto been loath to undertake and to end the deterioration of regional autonomy that had occurred with the passage of framework legislation. The other task was to obtain more policy autonomy over job creation and training, and to obtain a greater share of total public investment, to help the region overcome its structural unemployment. Lastly, the PNV sought to protect the *concierto economico* and to adjust the size of the *cupo* transferred to Madrid (PNV 1993). Policy autonomy, material well-being and symbolic politics were all at stake in the eyes of the PNV. Deploying powerful rhetoric, the parliamentary spokesperson of the PNV, Iñaki Anasagasti, declared:

"we had a country beset by a serious industrial crisis. But the national construction of a country needs infrastructures, communications, an exporting capacity. National construction is done day by day, and no only by voting for the right to self-determination. We wanted to strengthen this country."

In spite of their unrelenting efforts to shape the structures of the state in their own nationalist interpretation, the regional nationalist parties did not exercise sufficiently strong electoral pressures on mainstream political parties to compel any shift in their position on the territorial dimension. In Catalonia, there was little competition between PSC-PSOE and CiU, indicating the weakness of the national cleavage in general elections. In 1989, the PSC-PSOE's share of support fell in from 41.3 percent to 35.6 percent but this reflected a generalised loss of support to the Communist party, the *Izquierda Unida* (United Left, IU) rather than losses to the CiU, whose performance remained stable at 32 percent and 18 seats. As result of the distortive effects of the electoral system, the PSC-PSOE's electoral loss translated into the loss of only one seat. The PP on the other hand was still the third electoral force in the region with about 10 percent of the vote. The main change in 1993 was an increase in support for the PP- reflecting again a generalised trend- which won 17.8 percent and 8 seats, mainly by taking over former supporters of the now defunct CDS, in particular in Barcelona and Taragona, but also by taking over a small share of former voters of the CiU and PSOE, which both lost a seat (Ministry of the Interior). Thus, neither the PSOE nor the PP were under immediate electoral pressure by the CiU; the bulk of the electoral interchange was taking place on the left-right dimension, either within the left bloc in 1989 or, to a lesser extent, between the two blocs in 1993. Moreover, in spite of the gradual erosion of its support, the PSC-PSOE remained the leading party of Catalonia in general elections.

Party competition in the Basque country was more complex, reflecting the stronger anchoring of the national cleavage and the simultaneity of competition on both the left-right and territorial dimension (Llera 1993; 1999). In 1989, the contest pitted the PSE-PSOE and PNV against the social democratic party EA, to whom the two leading parties lost 5 percent of the vote and a seat. Thus, although the PSE-PSOE was under pressure from the EA on the left-right dimension, the PNV was a weakened political force, which had lost all hope of incarnating the Basque nation; it obtained 22.7 percent of the vote and five seats, while the PSE-PSOE obtained 21.1 percent of the vote and six seats. Meanwhile, the PP lagged as the fourth party of the region with ten percent of the vote and 2 seats. As in the rest of Spain, the 1993 election witnessed an increase in support for the PP which moved to third place with 14.7 percent of the vote and 4 seats. The electoral flux in this election was complex. The PP improved its performance mainly by making inroads into the PNV's support base, in the rural areas of Alava as well as in Vizcaya, while the latter increased its overall share of support by re-establishing its leading

position on the territorial dimension, winning back the support from former voters of the EA and HB which lost one and two seats respectively. The PNV thus modestly improved its performance, obtaining 24.1 percent and 5 seats. Meanwhile on the left, the PSE-PSOE had absorbed the EE, augmenting its share of support to 24.5 percent and 7 seven seats, maintaining its leading position in the region (Ministry of the Interior). Thus, neither mainstream parties were under any electoral pressures by the PNV. The PNV and PSOE were in close competition for the title of leading party, but on the left, the PSOE was competing with the EA, while on the right the PP had actually improved its performance at the PNV's expense. Thus, as in Catalonia, the resilience of the left-right cleavage in party competition during general elections prevented the PNV from exerting electoral pressure on the PSOE and PP.

The PSOE and PP therefore had few immediate electoral incentives for accommodating the demands of CiU and the PNV. In addition, both mainstream parties retained powerful ties to their traditional bases of support in other parts of the country. The PSOE maintained a strong presence in its stronghold in the poorer regions of Spain, especially Andalucía, from which it garnered around a fifth of its votes and seats. As a result of a generally depressed electoral performance in 1989, nearly one quarter of the PSOE's seats were from districts in Andalucía. Thus, the PSOE's primary objective was not to address the grievances of nationalist parties but to satisfy the interests of the most important territorial groups included in the electoral coalition it had constructed during 1980s. The PP on the other hand was extending its support across the country in its bid for winning office. In 1989, it re-conquered its central Castilian heartlands, becoming the leading party of Castilla-y-León and Madrid; it also won a majority of support in the Balearic Islands, La Rioja and Navarra and maintained its dominant position in Galicia. In 1993, it consolidated its position in these regions and defeated the PSOE in Valencia and Murcia; in 1996, it continued its nation-wide advance, establishing itself as the leading party in former socialist strongholds of Asturias, Castilla-La Mancha, Aragon and Cantabria. As a result, the PP was highly dependent on the support it received outside Catalonia and the Basque country; in 1993, around 48 percent of its votes and seats emanated from Galicia, Castilla-y-León, Valencia and Madrid, in 1996, the figures diminished to around 45 percent Thus, much like for the PSOE, the anchoring of the PP's electoral support in the centre and certain territories of the periphery entailed that there were few incentives for the party to deploy an accommodating electoral strategy that addressed the claims of the regional nationalist parties.

The weakness of regional nationalist parties in the electoral arena was also due to the strength of the class cleavage. The distributive economic policies that the PSOE has deployed during the 1980s, targeting the worst-off and financed largely out of an increase in general taxation, had estranged a large segment of middle-class constituents. As a result, the distribution of electoral support across occupational groups became more clearly divided along class lines. While the socialists retained stable support among the less well-skilled strata of the urban working-class, and increased their support among the rural proletariat, there was a massive drain of support from the white-collar workers and skilled workers (Puhle 2001: 140-2; Castillo and Delgado 1994) Moreover, social class became an increasingly significant determinant of the vote, relative to leadership evaluation and ideological disposition. Chhibber and Torcal (1997: 35-44) find that, controlling for attitudinal factors and leadership effects, social status and subjective class identification exercised a stronger and more significant effect on vote for the PSOE and PP.

The increasing relevance of the class cleavage was mirrored in the salience of the left-right dimension in Spanish politics. By the late 1980s, the PSOE was increasingly alert to the fact that its economic reforms had failed to generate sustained economic growth and to create jobs, and that a decline in public receipts constrained its capacity to provide further handouts to the vulnerable segments of its electoral base through social welfare benefits. This produced what Gillespie (1990) called the 'break-up of the socialist family': relations with the UGT leader Nicolás Redondo became increasingly acrimonious and growing industrial unrest culminated in a general strike organised by the UGT in December 1988. The tension with the unions fed into the fissures within the party; relations between the *Guerrista* faction and the *Renovadores,* lead by Felipe Gonzales and Minister of Economics Carlos Solchaga, soured over the Guerra's opposition to the government's liberal economies policies which would harm the party's traditional support base and vast clientelistic network in the South. However, the *Guerrista* faction was dominant in the party apparatus and Guerra played an instrumental role in formulating the PSOE's long-term economic strategy *Programma 2000,* which bore a distinct anti-technocratic and leftist tinge. The confrontation with the PP during the 1990s revealed the high salience of the left-right dimension. In the 1989 election, the PSOE emphasised its continued commitment to distributive policies, such as extending unemployment coverage, introducing a minimum wage and raising pension benefits (PSOE 1989). In contrast, the PP offered a distinct neo-liberal programme that proposed cuts in public spending and income taxes, the privatisation of public companies and labour market

flexibility (PP 1989). In the early 1990s, the *Guerristas* were marginalised and the PSOE was able to re-direct its programme towards the centre. In compliance with Maastricht Treaty's convergence criteria for European and Monetary Union (EMU), the PSOE returned to a supply-side economic programme that focused on the reduction of the fiscal deficit and inflation, the creation of wealth through a rejuvenated industrial policy, improvement in human capital, investment in science, technology, transport and communication (PSOE 1993, 1996). The PP continued to advance its neo-liberal programme (PP 1993, 1996). Though the degree of decidability between the two mainstream parties diminished in 1990s, the emphasis was exclusively on economic issues; there was little competition on the territorial dimension, a feature that reflected the absence of immediate electoral pressures exerted by nationalist parties in the electoral arena. Although the PP proposed the introduction of greater fiscal co-responsibility in the common regime financing system, in contrast to the PSOE which maintained that territorial cohesion was the unavoidable complement to social cohesion, the differences in the positions of the two parties did not emerge as salient during electoral campaigns. The fight between the mainstream parties was over the centre of the ideological spectrum, and the specific concerns of the nationalist periphery were dismissed.

Nationalist Parties in the Driver's Seat

In spite of the fact that nationalist parties were unable to compel mainstream parties to deploy accommodating electoral strategies and compete on the territorial dimension, the high competitiveness of general elections provided them with the opportunity to exercise a direct influence on the agenda of the PSOE and PP governments. The competitiveness of elections during the 1990s reflected the consolidation of the 'imperfect' two-party system around the PSOE and the PP. The 1993 election was a watershed in Spanish electoral history, witnessing a deep realignment of the electorate brought about principally by the incorporation of more than four million new voters into the electoral register and by the evolving social bases of party competition (Linz and Montero 1999: 32). There was a massive surge in electoral volatility to 11.5 percent, with 8 percent taking place within the left and right blocs. Although the PSOE won its fourth consecutive victory and improved its overall performance by one million votes, it suffered a loss of two percent of the vote and 16 seats, losing its parliamentary majority for the first time. The euphoria of the Barcelona Olympic games and the Sevilla Universal Exhbition was punctured by the revelation of corruption scandals implicating

high-ranking government officials, including the interior Minister José Barrionuevo. The PSOE was suffering from internal disunity and electoral fatigue, and the halo around Felipe Gonzales had finally lost its shine, bringing to an end the period of Socialist pre-dominance. The PP on the other hand increased its share of the vote to 35 percent and won 141 seats, shattering through its electoral 'ceiling' by rebranding its image, absorbing the CDS and winning over its supporters, and overcoming the perception that there was no acceptable alternative to PSOE. The PP successfully captured the support of the large segment of the population that placed itself at the centre of the left-right scale, increasing its share from 21 to 41 percent, a trend that was parallel by the retreat of the PSOE (CIS 1996). As a result, the electoral balance between left and right had been re-established, the PSOE enjoyed a lead over the PP of 4 percent and 18 seats.

The signs of impending change in the Spanish party system could be seen in the regional elections of 1995 in which the PP seized power from the PSOE in seven ACs, becoming the governing party in thirteen out of seventeen ACs. The 1996 elections were the most competitive elections ever held in Spain, producing, in the words of Felipe Gonzales, a 'sweat defeat' for the PSOE and a 'bitter victory' for the PP (Balfour 1996). Electoral volatility decreased to 4.1 in 1996 and bloc volatility remained low at 1.8, indicating that the party system had found a new equilibrium. Winning 38.8 percent of the vote and 156 seats, the PP collected one percent of the vote and 15 seats more than the PSOE, but failed to secure a parliamentary majority. While the PP maintained a steady course in its odyssey to office, the incumbent was undermined by an economic recession, the continuing allegations of its involvement in party financing corruption scandals, and the revelations that it had authorised an illegal anti-terrorist campaign by a para-military group. The high degree of competitiveness and the incidence of a hung parliament in 1993 and 1996 provide the CiU and the PNV with the opportunity of playing a decisive role in stabilising the Spanish government.

The bargaining power of regional nationalist parties was underpinned by the fact that their parliamentary support would enable the PSOE and PP to establish minimum-connected-winning coalitions, to maintain the majoritarian model of government and to minimise the transaction costs of formulating policy (Axelrod 1970; De Swaan 1973). The vote of investiture required that the government win the support of an absolute majority in parliament before taking office. In 1993, the PSOE was 17 seats short of a majority and needed CiU's 17 seats; in 1996, the PP was 20 seats short of a majority and needed CiU's 16 seats and the PNV's 5 seats. The logic of parliamentary arithmetic dictated that the

regional nationalist parties were the minimal necessary partners for the PSOE and PP, if the latter wished to form a government. In addition, the parliamentary support of regional nationalist parties offered the most ideologically compact coalition.

The PSOE and PP were deprived of any partners on their left and right flanks to whom they could turn for support. In 1993, the PSOE could not turn to the IU for support because of the vast ideological differences between the two parties. The IU leader, Julio Anguita, had taken his party to the far left, repudiating the moderate 'euro-communist' policies of his predecessor and affirming the party's strong commitment to orthodox communism. He opposed European integration, rejected the monarchy, and advocated the abolishment of capitalism (IU 1993). The zone of possible agreement with the Socialist party was non-existent, in particular given that the PSOE vowed to enter EMU and accepted the monetarist economic regime that defined the conditions for entry. In addition, the IU had not been predisposed to forging coalitions with the PSOE at the municipal and regional level, when the latter had obtained a plurality of votes, leading to the formation of conservative governments (Ramiro 2002). Similarly, the PP had no options on the right. By 1996, it had fully absorbed the CDS and completed monopolised the political supply on the right. A grand coalition comprising the PSOE and PP was unpalatable to both parties. In spite of sharing a comparable programme of economic reform, the two parties saw each other as rival political alternatives. By 1993, the PP had become a viable governing alternative and did not wish to jeopardise its prospects by making policy compromises with a Socialist party whose image was tarnished by allegations of malfeasance and a record of poor economic performance. The spirit of consensus that had guided party collaboration during the transition had definitively evaporated, leaving in place, a strongly majoritarian political system that discouraged the two mainstream parties forming any kind of alliance (Field 2005).

Finally, there were little options at the centre. During the 1980s, it appeared that the CDS could have developed as a typical centrist hinge party, by placing itself between the two mainstream parties and forming post-election coalitions with either of them when necessary. However, the hegemonic rule of the Socialist party during the 1980s meant that it never had the chance of properly establishing itself as a pivotal party. Moreover, internal disunity and strategic mistakes committed during local and regional elections, meant that voters were distrustful of its purpose and intentions (Wert 1994: 643-4). The CDS began its electoral decline in 1989, but was obliterated by the PP in 1993, leaving the centre open for the regional nationalist parties to monopolise.

The regional nationalist parties were thus in a position to offer the smallest and most ideologically compact alliance. However, there were three different avenues open to the CiU and PNV for supporting the mainstream party in government, each entailing a different degree of commitment and flexibility for all parties involved. They could either entre a coalition government and assume ministerial portfolios; they could provide external support to a minority government by forging a governmental pact containing an explicit agreement on the conditions and areas of collaboration; they could support the government during the investiture vote and establish *ad hoc* coalitions during the parliamentary term on an issue-by-issue basis. The CiU and PNV hesitated about which of these paths to opt for, but ultimately both parties opted to remain outside the government. This decision can be explained as a rational cost-benefit calculation (Reniu Vilamala 2002; Strom 1990; Bergman 1993). The lure of office at the state level is low for regional nationalist parties for three reasons. Firstly, because they can influence the policy orientation of the government through its support during the investiture vote, without needing to be at the controls of a particular ministry; secondly because the anticipated electoral costs of governing at the centre for a party with a regional base of support are potentially much higher than they are for mainstream parties; thirdly, because the regional tier of government provides the arena in which regional nationalist parties can satisfy their office-seeking motivations. By staying out of the state-level executive, nationalist parties can influence government policy but do not need to bear the future electoral costs of sharing responsibility for the government's actions.

Legislative Support for the PSOE (1993-1996)

The negotiations between the PSOE and the regional nationalist parties started off as hesitant exchanges that served to clarify the type of accord that would be set up and to identify the areas of potential collaboration during the parliamentary term. In the first phase, Gonzales approached the nationalist party leaders about the prospects of entering a coalition government. CiU was internally divided on this question. Miquel Roca saw this as an opportunity and stated clearly his intention of participating in government. However, the leaders of the CDC and UDC, Jordi Pujol and Josep Duran, imposed the decision not to assume office, citing both strategic and ideological motives. Pujol refused to be constrained by a coalition agreement, stating in an interview:

"the principle of stability has always been very important for CiU… but we could assure the stability of the government, the continuity of economic and social policy and advance the f autonomy for Catalonia without participating in the government.."

Staying outside the executive would enable the party to set the government's agenda but also to continue criticising and scrutinising its activities from the opposition. Entering a coalition was also impeded by a more symbolic tension. Josep Duran argued that entering government would have implied that the 'national question' had been resolved for CiU and that the desired degree of autonomy had been achieved; it would have been contradictory to claim autonomy from a central government of which it was part (Aguilera de Prat 2001: 102). The PNV leadership expressed a comparable reluctance to enter a coalition, preferring to maintain the type of makeshift arrangement that had been established between the PNV government and the PSE in the Basque government. However, he was nevertheless prepared to give the PSOE its support on an impromptu basis. Arzallus declared:

 "we are not obsessed with holding government portfolios...until now we have governed and we have helped with the governability of Spain with ad hoc pacts, negotiating point by point." (*El Pais* 26th June 1993).

The prospects of a coalition government forming thus disappeared. However, the two nationalist parties hinted at the possibility of establishing a governmental pact with the PSOE. Pujol suggested that CiU would not be able to support the investiture of Gonzáles if he ignored their demands for self-government, while Anasagasti stated that participation in a coalition government would represent only the end of a process, which needed to be preceded by a clear pact between the Socialists and nationalists (Reniu Vilamala 2002: 231-2). The CiU's main demand was the ceding of 15 percent of individual income tax (*Impuesto Sobre la Renta de las Personas Fisicas,* IRPF), which would augment the fiscal co-responsibility of ACs in the generation of their resources and enable Catalonia to receive transfers from shared taxes that were commensurate with its fiscal effort. The PNV claimed the transfer of pending competences and greater control over resources for job creation and training. An explicit commitment on behalf of the PSOE to the transfer power to the ACs was the *sine qua non* of the investiture vote. The collaboration between nationalists and Socialists was facilitated by the proximity of their positions on the left-right dimension. The PSOE was committed to implementing the reforms imposed by EMU membership, while the CiU and PNV, as the representatives of the business classes of their regions, emphasized the reduction of the public deficit, the support of small and medium-sized enterprises through tax and interest rates cuts, and labour market flexibility (CiU 1993; PNV 1993). Thus, the nationalist parties obtained their primary political objective of greater regional authority in exchange for which the PSOE enacted its

priority for economic policy (Heller 2002). The successful outcome of the negotiations allowed PSOE to take up its fourth term in office.[74]

The preparedness of the Socialist party to make concessions to CiU's principal demand for greater fiscal capacity must be interpreted in light of two factors: the PSOE's existing policy on financial arrangements for common regime ACs and the changing distribution of power within the party. The purpose of agreeing to the cession of the IRPF was to secure the support of the nationalists during the vote of investiture and to enter government; it was therefore driven purely by the logic of expediency. However, there emerged in 1991, in the context of the reform of the financing system for common regime ACs, a debate about the desirability of introducing greater fiscal co-responsibility, which would enable ACs to meet their expenditure requirements and allow the tax-payers to identify a closer link between taxation and expenditure decisions. However, the government stalled on this initiative because of its concern over the effects of the measure on the central state's budget deficit, which would be particularly problematic given the PSOE's efforts to meet the Maastricht convergence criteria.[75] The initiative was eclipsed, and the party concentrated on reducing the debt level incurred by ACs. Thus, CiU's influence on the agenda amounted to giving impulse to a policy that had already been presented and debated within the party and to affect the timing at which it was adopted

The space for this tradition to emerge was created with the marginalization of the *Guerrista* faction and the reining-in of the centralist tendency within the party. The coincidence of factionalism within the Socialist party along the left-right and territorial dimension, allowed the *Renovadores* to forge an alliance with several of the regional barons, notably from Valencia and Catalonia, in an effort to reduce the power the left-wing centralist *Guerrista* factio (Puhle 2001). Already wounded from the dismissal of their boss, the *Guerristas* were gradually eclipsed in the party; they were excluded from the government in 1993 and a number of them were replaced as regional leaders in the party's congress in 1994. The barons on the other hand became increasingly assertive within the party, through the abolition of the bloc vote and through enhanced territorial representation in the central executive, laying the foundations of a new institutionalization of influence within the party (Mendez-Lago 2000: Chp 4). Thus, the weakening of the centralist tendency within the party and the decentralisation of authority towards regional

---

[74] Although it was feasible for the PSOE to form an alliance with CiU alone, this would have been politically undesirable as dealing only with the Catalans would also have made the PSOE's policies vulnerable to accusations of favouritism. However, given that its support was neither necessary nor sufficient for the government to enact legislation., the PNV faired less in its negotiations, failing to obtain the transfer of pending competences.
[75] Interview with Joaquín Almunia

leaders enabled the resurrection of the federalist tradition within the PSOE and enabled the party to accommodate the demands of the nationalist parties. However, in spite of this shift, a residual centralism continued to colour the Socialist party's vision. The ceding of the IRPF was a short-term indulgence motivated by the party's need to secure the support of nationalist in the vote of investiture. In spite of his tactical alliance with the regional barons, Gonzáles remained essentially centralist in outlook, a disposition that had been hardened by the decade-long period of Socialist rule. In addition, the evolving social bases of partisan support in the 1990s enhanced the Socialist party's electoral ties to the working-class and preserved its strong connection to the South; although the *Guerristas* had been eclipsed, the set of interests that they represented- the working-class, the traditional labour unions and the poorer regions of the country- now constituted the core of the party's support. Under these circumstances, it would be difficult for the party to eschew entirely its socialist principles of social and territorial cohesion which required a centralized form of government. Finally, although their presence and autonomy in the party had been greatly strengthened, regional barons were not a unified group, and there were considerable differences between the preferences of the Socialist presidents of the richer regions of Valencia or Madrid, and the poorer region of Andalucía, the latter vehemently opposed the changes in the financing system, arguing that they would worsen the problem of regional economic inequality (Montero and Torcal 1990). The resilience of the centralist current of thought, was evident in the PSOE's behaviour once in office, as it proved loath to honour its end of the agreement. Rather than make the 15 percent cession on IRPF a permanent feature of the common financing system, it was passed as an ordinary law with the 1994 tax budget and was set to expire in 1996. The CiU withdrew its legislative support for the 1995 budget, advising the government to call a new election.

Pact of Governability with the PP (1996-2000)

The regional nationalist parties drew a valuable lesson from their experience with the Socialists and vowed to ensure that their partner in government would make good on its pledges. In 1996, the CiU and PNV once again signalled their willingness to provide parliamentary support to the government but to remain outside the executive. In line with its pactist tradition, CiU was united in its objective of ensuring the governability of Spain. In its electoral manifestos 'Let's make Catalonia key' (1996), the party revealed an awareness of its potentially pivotal role in Spanish politics and re-asserted its long-standing commitment to 'catalanise' Spain, by influencing the government at the national

level and securing Catalan interests. Pacting with the PP was an opportunity to demonstrate that the political project of CiU had not altered with the identity of the mainstream party with which it negotiated. In both cases, the destiny of Catalan nationalism continued to be, according to Josep Duran, "going to the heart of the state, to defend the interests of Catalonia" (Aguilera de Prat 2001:102) CiU's opportunistic detachment from Spanish party politics was evident in Pujol's statement:

"We always wanted to formulate positive contributions, because that has always been our style…we did not wish to be constrained by one or the other of the Spanish parties, we wished to remain at the margin of the partisan struggle between the PSOE and PP, and remain always available for whatever option was available."

Neither did the PNV manifest any disquiet at the fact that the satisfaction of its demand would entail entering an alliance with a centre-right party. Arzallus was one of the first to declare its future negotiating position by announcing its respect for the electoral outcome. For the PNV, the identity of the state-wide party in need of legislative support was immaterial. Anasagasti stated in an interview:

"Felipe Gonzales y J.M Aznar are the same, they are Jacobins, they hold very strong Spanish concepts.. what interests us is only that the Spanish parties do not hold absolute majorities…because that is the best situation for us politically"

The negotiation strategy taken up by the nationalist parties differed from the previous period in one crucial respect. Rather than reach a private agreement with the government, the CiU and PNV established separate bilateral agreements with PP, enshrined in a 'Pact of Investiture and Governability', which committed the nationalist parties to support the PP throughout the entire legislative period, in exchange for concessions on matters of territorial autonomy (Morata 1997: 137-40).[76] As a result, the outcome of negotiation with the PP was more fruitful. For common regime ACs, CiU obtained a cession of 30 percent of the IRPF, the authority to control the collection and management of other shared taxes, the right to participate in the national revenue agency, and increased central transfers for health care and penitentiaries. The PP also undertook to reform the presence of the central state administration by eliminating the post of the *delegado del gobierno* and creating a more administrative position, the *subdelegado provincial.* The pact also infused decentralisation with a degree of asymmetry, as Catalonia obtained competences in the management of ports, traffic policing, employment policy and labour market regulation. The PNV renegotiated the LCE (*Ley del Concierto Economico*) which

---

[76] The Pact conforms to the criteria for external support set out by Strom (1990:97) who states that they must be explicit, comprehensive in policy terms, and more than short-term in duration.

included special 'sin' taxes (alcohol, tobacco and hydrocarbons) within the calculation of the *concierto economico*, considerably augmenting the volume of their revenues. In addition, the PP accepted that the treasury of the Basque country exercise a normative capacity over the IRPF and could collect this tax from non-residents of the Basque country.

The PP had made some highly symbolic gestures of accommodation towards the nationalist parties. It was the first time since 1714 that the Catalan parliament could legislate on fiscal maters, the final vestiges of the Napoleonic bureaucratic state had been removed, and the distinctiveness of historic regions was recognised through the asymmetric format of decentralisation. This was a historic shift in attitude for the PP that requires deeper investigation. Much like the PSOE, the PP's choices were driven by expediency: the *populares* found themselves at the threshold of office for the first time and their appetite for power overcame any reservations they might have had about dealing with what were once seen as subversive agents of disunity.[77] Though dictated primarily by necessity, the PP's dramatic accommodating strategy could nevertheless appear as a plausible one for the party to adopt, as it coincided with the evolution of the party's attitudes on the territorial dimension that was favourable to decentralisation. In its conquest of the centre, the PP gradually adjusted its stance and accepted the reality of the State of Autonomies. It had accepted the national particularities of historic regions such as Galicia and advocated the transfer of competences to low-level regions during the late 1980s. Although it did not raise the salience of the territorial issue in its electoral contests against the PSOE, it nevertheless maintained a distinct position by emphasising the need for greater administrative and fiscal capacity at the regional level.[78] In addition, with its adaptation to the State of Autonomies, the PP had forged electoral and governmental pacts with centre-right regionalist parties in Navarra, Aragon, the Balearics and Valencia, and following the Catalan autonomous elections of 1995, its regional branch was lending parliamentary support to CiU. There existed a precedent of negotiating with territorial parties that legitimated its accommodating disposition towards the nationalist parties. Thus, the lack of parliamentary majority actually provided the 'refounded' PP with an opportunity to distance itself further form the Franquist past and to confirm its standing as a moderate conservative party.

---

[77] The party's leverage was seriously weakened by its criticism of the PSOE's collaboration with the nationalists, since the latter would have to demonstrate to their regional support base that it had received unprecedented benefits from their collaboration with a former foe (Linz and Montero 2001).

[78] The extent to which this repositioning was a new way for the party to define itself, in light of the absence of any tradition of support for regionalism, or whether it was purely determined by the need to compete in a new multi-level electoral setting is a matter for debate. What is important is that the PP had an existing policy commitment to decentralisation that facilitated its capacity to accommodate the nationalist parties.

However, the ideology of Spanish nationalism co-existed with the pragmatic regional variant put on display during negotiations for the Pact of Governability. This tradition was rejuvenated during the late 1990s with the re-assertion of regional nationalism, especially in the Basque country. The pressures of party competition on the nationalist dimension in the Basque country drove the PNV to adopt a fundamentalist form of nationalism that questioned the validity of the Spanish constitution. Following the regional elections of 1998, the PNV formed a minority government with EA, and the successor of HB, thus ending the tradition of coalescing with Spanish state-wide parties in regional government. The sharp polarisation in the regional party system was reinforced when all the nationalist parties signed the Pact de Estalla which proposed a reform of the Basque statute of autonomy that recognised Basque sovereignty. The claims of the Basque nationalist found resonance in the Declaration of Barcelona in July 1998, signed by the PNV, CiU and the *Bloque Nactionalista de Galicia* (Nationalist Bloc of Galicia, BNG), which re-affirmed the sovereignty of their respective communities and demanded the recognition of the plurinational character of Spain (*El Pais* 23rd July 2008)

In reaction to these forceful claims, the PP began to characterize regional nationalism as a reactionary form of nationalism, to re-emphasise the absolute and unchangeable nature of the 1978 constitution, and to suggest that the confederal ideas advanced by CiU would lead to the disintegration of the state (*El Pais* 20th July 1998). The Conservatives defined Spain as a single though multicultural and decentralised nation but refused to undertake any further institutional reforms that would give institutional recognition of the country's national diversity. The ideology of Spanish nationalism was fully resurrected when the PP returned to government with an absolute majority in 2000. Free of the constraints of parliamentary pacts, the party's intellectual elites developed in the party's Fourteenth Congress in 2002 a programme of 'Constitutional Patriotism', designed to be a "political updating of a form of loyalty to Spain—that integrating and plural Spain of 1978 Constitution- with deep roots in our history" (cited in Nunez-Seixas 2005: 133). The 1978 Constitution was thus assigned a deep symbolic value, as a historical achievement of the entire community that needed to be preserved in its original form, rather than an imperfect document that reflected compromise between the confluence of political forces present at the time of the transition. This shift in emphasis signaled the re-assertion of the sovereignty of the Spanish people and the hegemony of the Spanish state, and the refusal to consider the demands for the renegotiations of the Statutes of Autonomy voiced by the Catalan and Basque nationalist parties.

To conclude, what can be said of the influence of regional nationalist parties of the Basque Country and Catalonia on the evolution of Spain's territorial structures from the democratic transition to the late 1990? If it was to be summarised succinctly: shaping the constitutional architecture and then giving impulse to the deepening of territory autonomy. It was shown that the institutional arrangements bequeathed by the Franquist regime provide the regional nationalist parties with two avenues from which to set the agenda. In the electoral arena, their influence on the attitudes of mainstream parties was limited to influencing the positions of centre-left parties, the PCE and PSOE, during the founding elections. These mainstream parties had drawn electoral strength in Catalonia and the Basque Country, made common cause with the nationalist against the Franquist regime, displayed a tradition of support for federalism and anticipated the strong demands for territorial autonomy voiced by the electorates of these regions. However, beyond this period, nationalist parties ceased exerting important electoral pressures: during the 1980s, CiU grew at the expense of the fallen centrist party the UCD and the radical nationalist ERC, while the PNV was competing principally against the horde of other nationalist parties burgeoning in the Basque party system; a similar pattern was reproduced in the 1990s, in spite of the increasing competitiveness of elections at the regional level, the nationalist and mainstream parties never found themselves in direct competition.

The presence of a territorial cleavage however did create important opportunities for the PSOE to manipulate the territorial dimension of competition in its interactions against the UCD government, illustrated in its support for the fast-track route to autonomy for Andalusia. The association with the Franquist regime with its strong nationalist overtones, the absence of any tradition of support for the accommodation of nationalism meant that this opportunity was not available to the PP, even while it moderate its stance towards State of Autonomies in its conquest of the centre in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The inability of the nationalist parties to sway the attitudes of mainstream parties, and the crucial effect that electoral factors exercise in determining a party's policy, was clearly illustrated during the 1980s. The PSOE presided over the unfolding of the State of Autonomies in a manner that reflected how the access to office, the expansion of its territorial base of electoral support, and the strengthening of its ties with the urban working-class and rural proletariat engendered the resurrection of its centralist tradition. The Socialist party's massive parliamentary majority, strict party discipline and the central government's dominant position in the system of inter-governmental relations only facilitated the execution of the PSOE's programme.

The influence of the CiU and PNV in the parliamentary arena was more notable. The democratisation process offered an unprecedented opportunity for the nationalist parties to give shape to the constitutional arrangements of the Spanish polity. Their bargaining power- determined by the advent of a hung parliament, the investiture requirements stipulated by the LPR, and the absence of alternative feasible coalitions- enabled them to alter the course of the democratic transition and to participate in the constituent assembly. The establishment of power-sharing devices, conjured out of pragmatic and historical reasons by a prudent leader, provided them with the opportunity to influence the draft of the constitution, and in particular, the symbolic recognition of Spain's plurinationalism and the territorial organisation of the state. A similar set of electoral, institutional and ideological conditions underpinned their bargaining power during the 1990s, but political experience encouraged them to forge an explicit pact with the PP, rather than rely on informal arrangements.

The outcome of the negotiations between nationalist and mainstream parties reflected their bargaining power and the acceptability of nationalist claims. In this respect, the Catalan nationalists always emerged as a more successful party. During the transition, the CDC was a larger party and enjoyed enhanced representation in the congressional subcommittee, from which the PNV was absent; in the informal parliamentary accord established with the PSOE, the CiU was a necessary ally while the PNV was a superfluous partner; however, during the formulation of the Pact of Governability, PNV's support was essential to the PP's enthronement and it obtained satisfaction with regard to its demands for a revision of fiscal relations. But parliamentary strength is not the only factor that explains outcomes, moderation pays off as well. The reason why the PNV was unable achieve its objectives during the democratic transition was that the recognition of Basque sovereignty in the Spanish constitution was utterly unpalatable to mainstream parties, who all maintained a strong commitment to the indivisible sovereignty of the Spanish nation, irrespective of their differences on the territorial organisation of the state. The CDC on the other hand proved to be far more nimble in creating support for its demands for the symbolic recognition of nationalities and a asymmetric degree of territorial autonomy, and its influence lies at the heart of the 1978 compromise. The ideology of mainstream parties is thus a key factor in delimiting the domain of demands that are accepted and acted upon. A similar conclusion can be drawn by examining the reluctance of the PSOE to make the cession of the IRPF a permanent feature of the common financing system and the hostility of the PP towards the federal vision expressed in Declaration of Barcelona.

CHAPTER SIX

Belgium

The question of how to accommodate the uneasy relations between the two linguistic communities that make-up Belgium gained prominence during the 1960s, and has since never been far off the agendas of the successive government which have had the courage and resilience to address it. The transformation of the Belgian unitary state into a decentralised federation stands out as one of the most ingenuous instances of institutional crafting and as a remarkable achievement in the management of community conflict. The difficulties of accommodating the demands of the linguistic communities have been due to the attempt to give simultaneous institutional expression to the territorial and nationality principles- a problem that emerges most sharply in Brussels and its environs- and to assign autonomy to regions and communities on both a territorial and non-territorial basis. This task was aggravated by the division of the party system along linguistic lines over the course of the 1970s, which encouraged parties on either side of the language barrier to put forth widely contrasting visions of the format of Belgian federalism. But the constraints of working in a consensus-based institutional setting meant that, even if the absence of state-wide parties defending the centre, these parties would nevertheless need to compromise on their goals, a fact that which eventually gave rise to the complex asymmetric federal formula that was established in 1993.

The goal of this chapter is to assess the influence exercised by regional nationalist parties from Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels the over this protracted process of territorial restructuring. The first section provides a brief history of the linguistic cleavage in the development of the party system and an account of the different nationalist and autonomist claims voiced by the VU, RW and FDF. The second section offers an outline of how the institutional arrangements of the consensus political system and the attitudes and traditions of mainstream parties are likely to condition the agenda-setting powers of regional nationalist parties in the electoral, parliamentary and governmental arenas. The remainder of the chapter looks at three distinct episodes in the construction of federalism in Belgium. In the first period, spanning the decade of the 1960s, mainstream parties sought to diffuse the increasing tensions between linguistic communities by reviving the existing method for managing linguistic tensions- the reforming of the linguistic regime- and by providing linguistic communities with greater autonomy. When the electoral threat

posed by the nationalist parties proved to great to ignore, they responded by changing their policy and imposing a consociational constitutional settlement. In the second period, spanning the 1970s, regional nationalist parties exerted pressures on mainstream parties, encouraged the gradual bifurcation of the party system along linguistic and territorial lines, and induced a shift in the policy of mainstream parties on the issue of constitutional reform. In addition, the fragmentation of the party system and the presence of power-sharing institutions furnished regional nationalist parties with the bargaining power necessary to enter government and play a critical role in advancing the process of regionalization. In the third period, spanning the 1980s, regional nationalist parties lost their electoral prominence and surrendered control of the political agenda to mainstream parties which had all become by then territorial parties. Formulating their preferences in response to the competitive pressures of the regionalized party system and to the inadequacy of the existing regionalization laws, the mainstream parties took charge of completing the edifice of Belgian federalism.

Flemish and Francophone Nationalism

In spite of the existence of a centuries-old linguistic frontier dividing the Flemish from the Francophone, the linguistic cleavage did not achieve a prominent place in Belgian politics for much of the country's life. When Belgium seceded from the Dutch Republic in 1830, the state was superimposed on a bi-communal territory whose populace had little social ties other than a shared Catholic faith. It inherited the unitary administrative structures from the prior period under French occupation and was dominated by French language and culture. The disregard for linguistic differences was reflected in the institutionalization of social divisions in the party system. The time lag separating the introduction of the parliamentary regime and the extension of the franchise meant that although language was an important mark of identity for the bulk of the population, the major political fault lines were those dividing Belgian cultural tendencies and social classes, embodied in the pattern of opposition between Catholicism, Liberalism and Socialism. From the late 19th century onwards, there simmered under the surface of nationalised party politics, intermittent bursts of social agitation, most notably in Flanders, consecrated to reviving the linguistic status and cultural identity of the country's constituent communities. This early activism would in time give way to more explicitly political nationalism devoted to defending their sense of nationhood and their right to territorial autonomy.

Flemish nationalism has been the primary political force driving institutional change. Building on the hesitant revival of Flemish identity in the aftermath of the Second World War, the *Volskunie* (Union of People, VU) emerged as the first political party willing protect and develop Flemish identity and struggle for political autonomy through democratic political means. The VU's primary ambition was the transformation of Belgium from a unitary into a federal state. Underlying the party's ideology was the vision of federalism based on the two nations comprising the Belgian territory, where devolved units of government would exercise responsibility over the individuals belonging to the two linguistic communities. In addition, the party also hoped to bring a wind of change to Belgian political culture and put an end to the evils of 'partitocracy'- the cartel-based political practices and the attendant 'waffle-iron' politics, in which public spoils were shared between the major political parties. In its electoral programmes during the 1960s, the party's demands for autonomy revealed the defensive nature of Flemish nationalism.

"The VU wishes Belgian to become a Belgian state, in which the Flemins can solve as many of their problems as possible, and to protect the language, culture and territory against the imperialism of the French" (VU 1965)

The VU supported the existence of the Belgian state but there nevertheless appeared, in many of its statements, an echo of the anti-Belgian attitudes that were voiced by the party's predecessors. The loyalty of the Flemish movement to the Belgian state was first put in question during the First World War, when many activists responded favourably to the German occupant's *Flamenpolitik*, which sought to give preferential treatment to the Flemish language. The aggressor's accommodating predisposition contrasted with the dismissive attitudes of the haughty Francophone Belgian establishment which had thwarted the movement's demands for the creation of a bilingual state only a decade earlier. Many Flemish came to believe that the war-time circumstances provided a unique opportunity for advancing their aims and came to associate the strength of the Flemish movement with the weakness of French predominance (Herremans 1962). This period witnessed the creation of a schism in the nationalist movement between a current that strove to achieve regional mono-lingualism by working through the political institutions of the Belgian state, and a radical current with strong anti-parliamentarist inclinations, that sought the establishment of separate Flemish state. The latter was particularly active during the inter-war period, with the appearance of Flemish nationalist parties, such as the *Vlaamsch National Verbond* (Flemish National League, VNV), which exhibited the strongly authoritarian and *volkisch* traits found in

fascist movements elsewhere. When a dissident group from the Flemish Catholic party established the *Vlaamse Concentratie* in 1949, it still possessed conservative trappings, but after enlarging its organisation and electoral bases and changing its name to the VU, it was transformed into a broad church with the tendencies that reflected the dual heritage of Flemish nationalism. The progressive nationalist wing offered a centrist programme that appealed to the rising new occupational sectors of Flemish society; it was committed to gradual federalisation and was willing to participate in government and negotiate with mainstream parties in order to attain its objective. The neo-traditional wing offered a more conservative and religiously inspired discourse that appealed to the agrarian workers and to the lower middle-classes. It was more ambitious in its objectives, and was unwilling to make compromise by being associated with governmental power.

There has never been a Walloon consciousness to match that of the Flemish; as long as Wallonia prospered and the Francophones ran the country, there was no 'Walloon problem'. However, the acute economic decline suffered by Wallonia during the 1950s and the sight of a demographically superior, increasingly confident and economically burgeoning Flanders prompted Walloons to adopt a 'reactive' type of nationalism. The *Rassemblement Wallon* (Walloon Rally, RW) was created in 1968 following the amalgamation of a number of Walloon autonomist movements under the charismatic leadership of Francois Perin. The party's main objective- greater autonomy for Wallonia within a Belgian federal state- was motivated not by a demand for cultural recognition but by a demand for the correction of growing economic disparities between the two regions; while Flanders was developing a dynamic tertiary sector during the golden sixties, Wallonia's economy was afflicted with the closure of coal mines and steel plants, with only the mournful slagheaps left to remind its inhabitants of their former might. But the RW shared the VU's distrust of the centre and there was a strong hint of reproach against the Belgian establishment and a suspicion of its motivations. The RW perceived it to be dominated by the Flemish and Francophone bourgeoisie, which were condemned for not having undertaken the proper measures to offset the region's economic decline (Perin 1960, 1962). Territorial autonomy in economic matters offered the only means for protecting the region from the negligent Belgian state, undertaking the region's economic restructuring and creating the conditions for its development in a socialist direction. While the Walloon movement had always been somewhat reactive to developments in Flanders, it was initially associated with the defence of the Belgian state and national identity, and the defence of the status quo. When it became a genuinely autonomist movement in the

inter-war period, it was an inter-class in character: the first *Congres National Wallon* set up in 1946 brought together the Walloon wings of different political parties. However, the movement's institutional project for a federal state was submitted as a private member's bill by a Socialist deputy, and from then on the movement took on a predominantly Socialist character (Kestlekoot 1993). The great strikes of the winter of 1960-61, prompted by the 'Loi Unique'- a law that proposed economic restructuring and financial recovery but entailed ruinous social consequences for Wallonia- began as a nation-wide labour protest but acquired a distinct Walloon dimension when it was captured by the prominent syndicalist from Liège, André Renard. After the Socialist party moderated the tone of its opposition to the Loi Unique and muffled any projects for constitutional reform, Renard created the *Mouvement Populaire Wallon* ('Popular Walloon Movement', MPW), a party that saw federalism as the basis upon which to regenerate the regional economy. The regional identity of Wallonia was thus strongly anchored in an economic conscience of social class, and the RW's early supporters emanated for the working-class.

If there was little sense of identity in Wallonia, there was even less of it in Brussels. The creation of the *Front Démocratique des Francophone* (FDF) in 1964 was a purely defensive and 'knee-jerk' liberal reaction to the language laws of 1963 that placed a boundary around Brussels, preventing the creation of French-speaking communes in the city's periphery, and that forbid heads of families from sending their children to school of their choice, rather than of their native language (CRISP 1965). Brussels was the epicentre of the community conflict. For the Flemish, it was the historical *terra irredenta,* the oil stain in Flanders which needed to be reclaimed as the region's capital; for the Francophones, it symbolised a struggle for protecting the rights of individuals to establish themselves in a place of their choosing and to receive adequate public services in their own language. The FDF was composed of leaders from different ideological backgrounds, who were unified in their aversion to the language legislation that strengthened the use of Dutch in national and municipal administration in Brussels. Its support base was principally in the Francophone white-collar salariat which feared the loss of public sector job opportunities that would follow the instauration of a bilingual regime in the capital (Buelens and Van Dyck 1998). Initially the party opposed the transformation of the unitary state into a federal state, where it feared the position of the Flemish would be strengthened. It shifted its position in 1968 when it forged an electoral alliance with the RW. The RW and FDF came to share a common vision of federalism based on the decentralisation of authority towards the three regions of Belgium: Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels.

Setting the Agenda in the Belgian Political System

The appearance of regional nationalist parties on the Belgian political scenery portended important consequences for the structures of the state. Although autonomist movements had erupted in both linguistic communities at various times since the late 19th century, the political debate at the national level had chiefly focused upon the type of language regime in place across the country and in the two regions. For the first time did there appear political parties on both sides of the linguistic border issuing demands for territorial autonomy. Their capacity to set the political agenda of the government is conditioned by their electoral strength, the consensual institutional arrangements of the Belgian political system and the political ideologies of mainstream parties. In the electoral arena, the 'feeble' form of PR imposes a low threshold that allows the regional nationalist parties to exercise blackmail potential by exerting electoral pressures one mainstream parties, forcing them to adjust their position and to compete on the territorial dimension. In the parliamentary and governmental arenas, the existence of a multiparty system and post-electoral coalition governments allow nationalist parties to exercise 'coalition potential' and to bargain for concessions on matters of territorial autonomy during negotiations preceding the formation of coalition government.

In the electoral arena, the indirect influence of regional nationalist parties on the political agenda is determined by their own electoral strength, the threshold of the electoral system, the geographical distribution of electoral support for mainstream parties. The electoral system is the first decisive contextual variable, since it conditions the ability of regional nationalist parties to win seats and threaten mainstream parties, by affecting their parliamentary strength and governmental power. In operation between 1919 and 1995, the electoral system was a 'feeble' proportional representation (PR) system, which exercised slightly reductive effects on the party system format.[79] The way votes were turned into seats is complicated. Districts at the lower level (*arrondissement*) are used for the initial allocation of seats, based on the LR-Hare system, but the final allocation takes place at the higher level (*province*) on the basis of the d'Hondt formula, allowing parties to conclude apparentementsor cartel lists at the provincial level (Viddick 1967; Hill 1974). The mechanism has furnished Belgium with a moderately proportional system- the average district magnitude is 7.1 and the effective threshold is 4.8 (Lijphart 1994). The low

---

[79] The main characteristics of the electoral system were e i) a list-PR system that follows the d'Hondt highest average formula, ii) an open ballot structure in which the voter can cast a vote for the party list or cast a preference vote for a candidate in the list, iii)a quorum at the district level equal to sixty six percent of the electoral divisor. The electoral divisor is the total number of votes divided by the number of seats in the district (Viddick 1967).

threshold puts the nationalist parties of Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels in a strong position to exert electoral pressure and to threaten mainstream parties (adopting the strategy of the 'whipping party') and to compel them to adjust their position on the territorial dimension of competition. Although the parties of the three 'spiritual' families are predominantly unitarist in outlook in the aftermath of the Second World War, the Christian Democratic and Socialist parties are more likely to adopt an accommodating stance than the Liberal party, due to their electoral strength in Flanders and Wallonia and the openness of their ideological beliefs towards the accommodation of regional nationalism and the decentralisation of political authority.

The *Christelijke Volkspartij-Parti Social Chrétien* (Christian People's Party-Christian Social Party, CVP-PSC) was unitarist party that opposed any federalist project. Historically, this position could be traced to the suspicions of the Catholic Church authorities towards the agitation of the Flemish nationalist movement and its implications for the unity of the Catholic pillar and the catholic nation of Belgium (Simon 1962). In the contemporary epoch, the position reflected a preference for conducting politics at the centre, where the party enjoyed an inordinate amount of power. The CVP-PSC was the largest political force in the country, the core of all post-war coalition governments and the habitual supplier of prime ministers. Although it was divided into two linguistic wings, the preferences of the two branches were largely concurrent: from the CVP's perspective, it allowed the party to make use of the demographic superiority of Flanders to occupy a permanent place in government, while from the PSC's perspective, it allowed the party to win office in spite of its comparatively weak electoral presence in the francophone parts of the country. The CVP-PSC's ideology was nevertheless open to accommodating the demands of the nationalist parties. Catholic social theory had developed the principle of subsidiarity- according to which authority should be devolved at the lowest possible leveling order to establish a role for private institutions such as the Church in the provision of social services. The application of the federal principle was evident in the organization of the Catholic Union (the CVP-PSC's immediate predecessor) around different professional *standen* ('estates'): the Federation of Catholic Circles and Associations, the League of Christian Workers, the Flemish Farmer's Association and the League of Middles Classes. The CVP-PSC had strong electoral ties in Flanders due the Catholic party's historic decision to enter politics by supporting the formation of an anti-socialist Catholic worker's movement and to use linguistic nationalism to convert Flemish workers to their cause (Erk 2005). The *Algemeen Christelijk Wekersverbond/Ligue Nationale des*

Travailleurs Chrétiens (National League of Christian Workers, ACW-LNTC) was instrumental in articulating nationalist demands, conceiving the social, economic and cultural emancipation of Flemish workers as part of a single political struggle. The ACW developed an alliance with the *Katholieke Vlaamse Landsbond* (Catholic Flemish National League) lead by Frans Van Cauwelaert, supported his 'minimum programme' of linguistic reforms, which sought the establishment of a monolingual regime in Flanders in the fields of education, administration and justice, and pushed the Catholic Union to carry out this programme during the 1930s, leading most notably to the 'flamandisation' of the University of Ghent in 1932 (Gerard 1998). Adjusting to the appearance of the VNV, the party splintered into a loose parliamentary coalition of parties known as the Catholic Bloc in 1936, comprising the *Flemish Katholieke Vlaamse Volkspartij* (KVPP) and the Walloon *Parti Social Catholique* (PSC). Thus, although the Christian Democratic party was a unitarist party during the 1960s, this position co-existed with an older tradition of support for the federal principle and the accommodation of nationalism.

The *Parti Socialiste Belge* (Belgian Socialist Party, PSB-BSP) was also a unitarist party. Formed in 1885, it was a worker's party in social recruitment, in electoral support and in programmatic emphasis. Underlying the party's position was the conviction that the linguistic issue was a source of division for the Belgian working-class that would only undermine its struggle for emancipation and social justice. The party was the most national of the Belgian parties in structure and support. It received a more geographically balanced membership and electoral following than its Catholic party rival, making it possible for the party to present a national vocation (Mabille and Lorwin 1977: 396). Since the 1930s, the party's programme of action was guided by the 'Plan du Travail', imagined by its intellectual light, Emile Vandervelde, which had shifted the party's economic strategy from the reform of productive structures to the redistribution of wealth, to be executed within the framework of centralised Belgian state (Abs 1979: 55). However, the Socialist party also displayed a rival tradition. This duality was clearly evident in the party's founding doctrinal programme, the *Charte de Quaregnon*, drawn up in 1893. It advocated an ambitious programme of social and economic reforms, such as the nationalization of inustry, the state-wide regulation of working conditions and the creation of social security schemes that entailed an important concentration of power in the hands of the central government. On the other hand, it also committed the party to the democratic transformation of the state through the decentralization of powers to local authorities, encouraged the cooperation between municipalities and communes in the provision of

public services. The party was also profoundly influenced by the ideas of the French utopian socialist thinker St-Simon and his vision of a society run by industrialists, and the party promoted a functional form of federalism, in which productive sectors would become self-regulated (PSB 1980). The federalist principle was also reflected in the party's organization: in its early years, the socialist movement was built upon corporatist guilds, trade unions and workers' cooperatives, and the leadership had to manage the internal tensions between the moderate Flemish and Brabant Socialists and the anarchist Walloon Socialists (Pierson 1953). The party was sharply aware of Belgium's linguistic problems and had been active in its accommodation. In a famous letter, considered to be the first public expression of Walloon specificity, the socialist politician Jules Destrée announced to King Albert I that he reigned over two separate nations; he was later to play a prominent role in a number of Walloon autonomist movement (Destree 1916). In 1925, the Socialist party formed a coalition with the Catholic Union on a joint programme of economic and linguistic reforms and although the government was short-lived, its project laid the foundation for subsequent initiatives. The Socialist party thus exhibited different ideological traditions on the accommodation of nationalism and the decentralisation of authority, which enabled it to adjust its position on the territorial dimension when faced with the rising salience of the community problem.

The Liberal party was the most staunchly unitarist and 'Belgicist' party. It was the party of the bourgeoisie which had been historically French-speaking in Brussels, Wallonia, as well as Flanders, where they drew the support of the *Fransquillons*. The Liberals saw the French language as a vehicle for national unification and centralization and maintained a strongly national mind-set. The Liberal party' strong anti-clericalism made it a particularly unappealing force in Flanders; it had cooperated with the Catholic party during the revolution of 1830 and the subsequent period of Unionisme, but the two came into bitter conflict in the late 1870s over the role of the state in public life, notably in education and welfare work. Though the party's radical current advanced the cause of social reform, the Flemish nationalist movement depicted the Liberal party as the instrument of Francophone godlessness that threatened a pious Flanders (Lorwin 1966: 160).The Liberal party's outlook was reinforced by the distribution of its electoral support; the victim of equal suffrage, it became the predominant party in French-speaking Brussels but was a medium-size political force in Flanders and Wallonia. There was little tradition of supporting or accommodating nationalist movements. Although it was a member of the government that passed language laws during the 1930s, its participation was due to the

fact that Catholics and Socialists were too far apart ideologically to establish a stable coalition; it had little role in initiating the reforms. In spite of the fact that it saw itself as a national political force, the party was an old cadre-party built upon local notables, and its strength was primarily localized in the district and regional organizations, which also wielded the greatest influence on the formation of party policy (De Winter 2000). Thus, the party found itself in the paradoxical situation of being strongly oriented towards the centre but not possessing the organizational power to contain the responses of its branches to the sudden rise of regional nationalism.

Turning to the parliamentary and governmental arenas, the direct influence of regional nationalist parties on the political agenda is conditioned by the existence of a moderate multiparty system and the formation of post-electoral coalition governments, as well as by the prevalence of a consensual decision-style in the resolution of divisive political issues. Since the introduction of proportional representation in 1919, Belgian governments have always been formed on the basis of post-electoral inter-party coalitions dominated by the three 'spiritual' families, with the Christian Democratic party constituting the lynchpin of coalitions on the centre-left and centre-right (De Winter and Dumont 1999). The capacity of nationalist parties to set the agenda from this arena is related to the significant grip that political parties hold over the process of cabinet formation and over the formulation of the governmental programme. The party presidents lead negotiations, starting with King's appointment of an informateur and formateur, who are charged with investigating the potential for an agreement according to different party combinations and with forming a government.[80] The policy agenda of the government is the focal item of the negotiations and results in the publication of lengthy agreements referred to as the 'coalition bible' (De Winter et al. 2000). If regional nationalist parties have the numerical weight and the necessary ideological compatibility with mainstream parties across a number of issue-dimension to exercise coalition potential and to be associated with majority power, then they can expect to impose their demands for territorial autonomy on the content of the government's policy agenda. The coalition potential of regional nationalist parties is enhanced if the government wishes to amend the constitution.[81] The mainstream parties in government will seek to sculpt the

---

[80] A mediateur may also be called upon in case a political situation is exceptionally difficult, and is charged with conducting deeper conversations than a normal information mission and with composing working groups drafting solutions likely to be part of a coalition agreement.

[81] Art. 195 of the Constitution stipulates that the government must indicate its aim of revising the constitution, and must then dissolve both chambers and call new elections. The new constituent legislature must decide on the points to be submitted for revisions, and may adopt a change only if it secures at least two thirds of the total votes cast.

qualified majority required for approving constitutional amendments either by seeking the parliamentary support of parties in opposition or by incorporating parties into government, paving the way for the formation of oversized coalitions(Strom et al. 1994; Volden and Carrubba 2004). This institutional constraint is a critical component of the bargaining power of regional nationalist parties, and presents them with an additional channel for giving impulse to institutional change and influencing the timing of its enactment by lending their support from the parliamentary arena, or giving shape to the content of constitutional reforms by participating in government.

The spirit of proportionality underlying this institution is enmeshed with the prevalence of consensual style of decision-making, in which the prudent leaders of the 'pillarised' subcultures have deployed traditional consociational techniques of conflict management to establish broad partisan agreements on divisive political issues (Lorwin 1974; Lijphart 1981). Consociational procedures are not however a permanent feature of the political system but rather, have been adopted in waves to pacify one problem at a time (Deschouwer 1999: 79). The religious cleavage was pacified with the 'Schools Pact' of 1958, which granted segmental autonomy to the catholic and secular subcultures and granted public and private school systems with equal financial resources, and the class cleavage was pacified with the 'Social Solidarity Pact' of 1961, a neo-corporatist consensus on which the post-war social security system was founded (Meynaud et al. 1965: 150-176). The value attached to consensus in Belgian political culture creates an important opportunity for regional nationalist parties to advance their political objectives by raising the salience of the linguistic issue during party competition and taking part in the collective partisan efforts of parties to solve the community problem. The scope of participation in the partisan consensus is however also subject to political decision. The functioning of a consociational democracy conjures the image of 'cartel' of elites negotiating political agreements behind closed doors and Belgian political elites have been no exception, traditionally agreeing to exclude antisystem parties from cabinet participation, such as the Belgian Worker's Party before World War I or the Flemish nationalist party and Rex party during the inter-war period (Dewachter 1987: 299). The capacity of nationalist parties to break through into the ranks of the Belgian political elite is therefore not a given, and will depend on a number of circumstantial factors: the longevity and legitimacy of their presence on the political scenery, their electoral and parliamentary strength, the necessity of their political support, the acceptability of their demands and the quality of relations between mainstream parties.

Decision-Making Process

If regional nationalist parties are able to place their demands onto the political agenda, the ability of the government to enact its policy on the reform of territorial structures will depend primarily on the distance separating the partisan actors in the coalition government. In view of the executive's moderate degree of agenda-control, any obstruction to its policy is likely to emerge from within the cabinet rather than from parliament. Given its complexity and fragility, the 'coalition bible' crafted by party leaders during the negotiations cannot be questioned by deputies, since the cabinet has to muster support from the majority parties on every single initiative included in the programme. Alternative, 'flexible' majorities that might exist on specific issues cannot be created since this would lead to the breakdown of the coalition. Members of the majority must therefore endorse the government and its programme. There is room for them to amend individual bills during the legislative process, as the parliament does feature a strong committee structure, but party leaders nevertheless wield an inordinate influence in forging and enforcing the programme on the legislature (De Winter et al. 1996; De Winter 2003). However, the existence of a multiparty system, the 'ridigity' of the constitution and the prevalence of a consensual decision-style mean that there are a high number of partisan actors involved in the elaboration of the agenda that must find a zone of acceptable agreement between their different positions. Any divergence or any change in position on their behalf is likely to provoke either a protracted coalition negotiation or the fall of the government. This perennial search for a compromise entails that the political system has a low capacity for 'policy change' and that the process of accommodation is characterized by an incremental adjustments (Dierickx 1978).

To sum up, the VU, FDF, RW can set the political agenda through two routes. Firstly, they can exert electoral pressures on mainstream parties in the electoral arena and compel them to adjust their position on the territorial dimension. Given their tradition of support to federalist ideas and to the accommodation of nationalism, the Christian Democratic and Socialists parties are likely to be more receptive to nationalist claims. Secondly, they can exert influence from the parliamentary and governmental arenas, by asserting their demands during coalition negotiations, an opportunity that is enhanced by the legislative threshold for constitutional reform and the existence of a consensual political culture. Turning to an analysis of the three distinct periods which have marked the construction of the Belgian federal state will reveals the conditions under which these different avenues have been used.

Consociational Accommodation (1961-1970)

The reform of the Belgian unitary state began in earnest in 1970, when the Eyskens government reformed the constitutional to pacify the increasingly acrimonious relations between the country's linguistic communities. The 1960s witnessed an important shift in the approach of mainstream parties to the community problem from a neutralizing to an accommodating strategy. The shift can be explained by the increasing electoral threat posed by regional nationalist parties following the critical election of 1965, and by the capacity of mainstream parties to adopt on unified stance on their strategy of accommodation, resulting either from an organizational split in the case of the Christian Democratic party, or a convergence of positions between regional branches in the case of the Socialist party. This episode offers a telling illustration of the relevance of past practices of accommodation for settling the linguistic conflicts in influencing the strategy of mainstream parties, and of the importance of the decision-rule regulating institutional change in allowing opposition parties to exercise a modicum of influence on the substance of constitutional reforms.

Diffusing the Community Problem (1961-1968)

The management of tensions between Belgium's two linguistic communities in the aftermath of the Second World War had very little to do with quelling the electoral pressures exerted by regional nationalist parties. In Flanders, the VU had broken into the party system in 1954 but was still a negligible political force; in Wallonia and Brussels, there were no territorial parties clamouring for regional autonomy. The distinguishing feature of Belgian politics in this period was that the patterns of political opposition across a range of issues crystallized around the territorial and linguistic cleavages. The proximate causes of these tensions can be traced to the war-time experience of the two regions under the German occupation, during which there were instances of collaboration and resistance on the two sides of the border, but a more systematic discrimination against the Walloon population. The bitter resentment this generated was carried over into the post-war period with recriminations between the two communities over the conviction of collaborators. The most passionate and divisive debates arose with the 'Royal Question' and the return of Leopold III to the throne after his refusal to join the government in exile. The issue opposed the Christian Democrats, partisan of the King's return and the Liberals and Socialists, which called for his abdication. In 1950, a Christian Democratic-Liberal coalition carried through an advisory referendum and while a national

majority of 58 percent endorsed the King's return, the linguistic cleavage was evident in the results: there was a clear majority of 72 percent in favour of Leopold in Flanders and a clear majority of 58 and 52 percent against him in Wallonia and Brussels. The sovereign's return to Laeken in July 1950 was met with strikes, mass demonstrations and violent confrontations, in particular in the industrial centres of Wallonia, forcing him to abdicate (Arango 1963). Public opinion was also divided over the issue of the census. The results of the census carried out in 1947 caused disquiet among the Flemish population, for they revealed the growth of the francophone population around the city of Brussels, which presented the threatening prospects of the growing use of French on Flemish territory. The census was no longer a simple tool of administrative rationality, it had become a political instrument in a demographic battle around the capital city. When the census was carried out in 1960, a large number of Flemish organizations promoted its boycott among Flemish local authorities, which returned the forms empty, announcing their refusal to collaborate as long as the census contained questions on linguistic identity (Levy 1960).

The polarization between the two communities was exacerbated by the reversal of patterns of economic development between Flanders and Wallonia in the post-war period. Wallonia's coal and steel industries were rapidly declining, while Flanders benefited from the modernization and extension of the port of Antwerp and the implantation of multinationals from the United States (Frognier et al. 1982). It was against this backdrop that the Christian Democratic-Liberal coalition passed the 'Loi Unique' in 1960, an austerity package elaborated by a government pre-occupied with deteriorating public finances and under pressure from foreign financial interests to curb public spending. In opposition, the Socialist party was able to mobilize the widespread resentment against this law, in particular in its electoral stronghold in Wallonia, where its social consequences would be most gravely felt. The Socialist party president, Léon Collard launched a 'Campagne de Vérité', and the syndicalist leader André Renard, called for the committee of the F.G.T.B (Fédérations Générale du Travail de Belgique) to organize a national strike. The actions of the Walloon federation of the Socialist party were not however limited to agitation against a piece of legislation, they were inspired by the more fundamental objective of reforming the country's institutions. The project of creating a federal state based on two regional entities and a federal capital city had been developed by the Walloon National Congress in the late 1940s and was now being promoted by Renard. With the momentum of the strike receding, Renard created the MPW in the spring of 1961 to give the autonomist cause a new life. A resolution of its congress declared:

"realizing that a centralist policy accentuates more and more the profound malaise and economic deterioration of Wallonia, it is urgent to guarantee for this entity the right to determine for itself the path of its economic, social and cultural flourishing within the framework of Belgium" (PSB 1961)

Specifically, the Walloon Socialists demanded the transfer of economic powers, in particular related to regional economic planning and industrial restructuring, social security and taxation (Destree and Dehousse 1963). However, their goals were met with a wall of inertia from their colleagues in Flanders and Brussels. The linguistic divisions within the labour camp appeared when the Flemish branch of the F.G.T.B, feeling less aghast about the content of the 'Loi Unique', refused to call for a general strike. Within the party, the Flemish branch was reticent to endorse any federalist policy that might exacerbate its minority status in Flanders, it expressed resentment at the Walloon federation's attempt to impose its agenda, and refused to organize as a separate congress, as the party president had exhorted, preferring to maintain the unitary structure of the national congress. The Brussels federation expressed similar reservations. The Socialist party and the F.G.T.B thus faced an acute internal crisis on an issue on which it should have appeared as a cohesive political force. Alarmed about the implications of for the unity of the labour movement and of the country, the president of the party stated:

"the economic situation in Wallonia has created an anguish that has not ceased to grow. The anguish that this could be expressed through political movements that could imperil the unity of Belgium." (cited in Meynaud et al. 1965: 103)

The different views of its regional branches made it difficult for the Socialist party to adopt a cohesive stance in its opposition to the Christian Democratic-Liberal Coalition. The Socialist party had been designed to defend working-class interests across the country and to integrate the working-class sub-culture of the two linguistic communities into the political system. The party leadership was concerned that the creation of autonomist movements would undermine the unity of the Socialist pillar and that decentralisation would compromise its function in the consociational bargaining process. In view of these considerations, the party sought to deploy a strategy that would neutralize linguistic differences and diffuse the community problem (PSB 1961). The opportunity for acting on this strategy arose in 1961, with the formation of the Lefèvre-Spaak government (PSC-PSB) on a programme of linguistic, institutional and constitutional reform.

The Flemish wing of the Christian Democratic party was also under the growing pressure of the Flemish nationalist movement which had established cultural committees and pressure groups such as the *Vlaamse Volskbeweging* (VVB) and the *Vlaams Aktiekomitee*

voor Brussel, (VAK), as well as its own party, the VU, which taken 6 percent of the Flemish vote and two seats from the PSC in the election of 1961(Herremans 1962). For many amongst the new generation of Flemish Christian Democratic deputies, the unitary state was associated with Francophone dominance, and needed to be replaced with a territorial structure that would provide Flanders with greater cultural autonomy. However, this demand conflicted with the party's offical policy. Following its organizational renewal in 1945, the PSC had proclaimed itself an 'inter-class party, whose main objective was to achieve social and economic justice in a united, democratic Belgium' (Irving 1979: 172). It opted for centralized, unitary organizational structure and rejected federalism as a dangerous dualism that would endanger the country. It did accept however, a form of cultural regionalism, a degree of local autonomy through administrative deconcentration and the 'just equality' of the two language communities in central government (PSC 1945).

Confronted with external electoral pressures and internal discord regarding the party's position on the constitutional form of the state, the Socialist and Christian Democratic parties thus shared a common interest in trying to stifle linguistic nationalism. Picking up the existing precedent for the management of linguistic tensions- the language legislation of the 1930s- the government passed a series of laws between 1961 and 1963 which were designed to settled the problem "for a generation" (CRISP 1962). One law permanently fixed the linguistic frontier and established unilingual regimes in Flanders and Wallonia and a bilingual regime in Brussels; another was designed to provide better educational and cultural facilities for the Flemish minority in Brussels and to halt the 'frenchification' of Flemings by preventing parents sending their children to French schools; a third imposed an 'iron collar' around Brussels to prevent its further expansion; a fourth created French language facilities in some districts outside Brussels. These initiatives were accompanied by the administrative and budgetary separation of the most linguistically sensitive policy sectors, such as education, cultural affairs and regional planning.[82] Finally, the government established a parliamentary commission charged with investigating a possible federal reform of the state.[83] (Mabille 2000: 333).

The significance of these reforms is worth probing a bit further. In an effort to cool down linguistic tensions within their parties and stave off the external pressures of regional nationalist parties, what the coalition government had undertaken with this

---

[82] Heisler reports that as a result of this measure, forty to fifty percent of the central government's expenditure were appropriated for functional tasks administered in a regionally distinguished manner

[83] The commission's work was handed to the presidents of the three mainstream parties in 1963 in order to explore the possibility of an accord on the articles to revise in the constituent assembly established after the election

programme was a archetypal consociational strategy of accommodation. It had pacified the most threatening regional nationalist party and the most vocal Flemish grievances through the well-tried method of linguistic legislation; the bureaucratic separation depoliticized the specific claims for autonomy in cultural and economic matters by converting politically loaded issues into technically treatable manner at the centre; the establishment of a commission for constitutional reform postponed any real genuine decentralisation of authority by entrusting it to a committee of experts.

This strategic choice can be explained by three factors. Firstly, in accordance with the directional theory of competition, mainstream parties were pushed by the logic of electoral expediency to adjust their policy in order to prevent the creation (in the case of the MPW) or the further growth (in the case of the VU) of the regional nationalist parties. Secondly, contrary to the proximity theory of competition, they were unable to fully converge to the position of their regionalist competitors, due to the constraint imposed by the absence of an existing policy commitment or tradition of support for territorial autonomy. The decision to maintain power at the centre rather than embrace a federal reform of the state was due to the fact that past practices of accommodation always dealt with the use of language in the public sphere. In the absence of any tradition of regionalism in political and constitutional theory and practice, it was difficult for the mainstream parties to make a plausible leap in policy from defending a unitary state to a promoting a regionalized or federal state. Their unitary ideology was a difficult one for them to eschew, and the prevalence (and relative success) of consociational methods for pacifying divisive conflicts continued to colour their perception of the best course of action to take. Thirdly, mainstream parties did not wish to incorporate the federalist agenda into their policy platform because it was a source of division within their organization: the Francophone wing of the PSC and Flemish wing of the PS both feared that federal reforms would bring about an accentuation of their minority status in their respective region. The preferred method was thus to keep the issue off the agenda altgether and to make minimal 'output' concessions to neutralize nationalist sentiment.

Consociational techniques applied at the level of the political system were, moreover, compatible with the second aspect of the mainstream party's response to the appearance of regional nationalist parties: the creation of separate linguistic wings in the party's structures. The Christian Democratic party had institutionalized the duality of the country's composition during its organizational renewal in 1945, with the establishment separate linguistic groups in the party's congress and executive committee. However the

party remained centralized through the presence of a single president that oversaw the activities of the National Committee (Mughan 1982: 169). In 1965, the two wings of the party became more autonomous and elected their own executive, with the president acting as a coordinator of the two. Thus, rather than co-opt the programmatic demands of the linguistic groups, the mainstream parties wished to continue acting as agents of the two groups by providing them with autonomy within the party. Much like the 'output' concessions, these policy responses were designed to keep power tightly at the centre. In 1963, the Socialist party amended its internal statutes on the election of Bureau members, half of which needed to be elected separately by the Flemish, Walloon and Brussels constituency. The decision to establish internal representation on the basis of three territorial entities, in contrast to the Christian Democratic party's choice to offer internal recognition to the two linguistic groups reflected the relative strength of the two parties in the Flemish and Francophone parts of the country, and the strong position of the Socialist party in Brussels (Deschouwer 1992; Deschouwer 1994: 85). This choice was to exercise a decisive influence on their different visions of Belgian federalism.

While the Christian Democratic and Socialist parties were busy undertaking modifications to the country's institutions, the Liberal party struck a distinctively anti-federalist pose. The motivations underlying this choice of policy are simple- as a bourgeois party with a strongly national orientation, it had always been opposed to any form of decentralisation, and the party was not under any immediate threat from the nationalist newcomers to deviate from this policy. In 1961, the Liberal party was very much the 'half' in the two-and-half multiparty system. However in the 'critical' election of 1965, it joined the regional nationalist parties in riding the wave of public resentment against the Lefèvre-Spaak government's linguistic laws.[84] The Liberal party's re-branding as the *Parti pour la Liberté et le Progrès* (PLP), the abandonment of its anti-clericalist ideology and the overhaul of its organization, orchestrated by the leader Omer Vanaudenhove in the late 1950s paid off, as it was able to appeal to Catholic and Socialist voters (CRISP 1961). The party's success was facilitated by a rupture in traditional voting alignments.

The election of 1965 is widely seen as a 'critical' election because it witnessed a profound weakening in the hold of the religious cleavage over voter choice. A survey investigation changes in social bases of support at the source of this dealignment found

---

[84] Instead of pacifying the situation, these laws had the unintended effect of dramatizing differences between the two communities- provoking the ire of the Flemish against the creation of French linguistic 'facilities' in the communes around Brussels and the anger of the Francophones about the imposition of an 'iron collar' around Brussels. These conflicts were particularly (Meynaud 1968: 108-28) .

that underlying the PLP sudden success was the decreasing importance of being non-practicing as a determinant of the vote for the Liberal party, and an increase in the effect of self-identification with the professional classes and localization in the Walloon region and Brussels (Delruelle et al. 1970). In Flanders, it increased its share of the vote from 11.4 percent to 15 percent. In Wallonia, it increased its share of the vote from 11.1 percent to 23.7 percent, taking votes from both the PSB, which saw its support drop from 43.9 to 32.8 percent and from the PSC, which witnessed its support fall from 29.3 to 22.8 percent. In Brussels, it replaced the Socialist party as the leading party, increasing its share of support from 14.7 to 27.3 percent, while the Socialist party fell from 36.5 to 23.7 percent (Fraeys 1966; VUB PWS 2007). This produced an important shift in the partisan distribution of power as the Liberal party almost doubled its share of the vote and obtained 48 seats. The Liberal party had thus benefited from the opening up of competition along the religious cleavage to make important advances across the country and was under no immediate pressure to shift its policy.

As a result of its triumphant victory, the party consequently maintained a strongly unitary position, declaring itself as the only genuinely national party, opposing any measure in a federalist direction that would engender the separation of linguistic communities and lead to the disintegration of the state, preferring instead the institutionalization of dialogue between communities at the centre (PLP 1965). The party's unitary ideology was evident in its influence on the actions of the coalition government that it formed with the PSC. As the Lefèvre-Spaak government had lost the two-thirds majority required to amend the constitution, their project for reform was put on the backburner. The Prime Minister Vanden Boeynants (PSC) declared a 'linguistic truce' by creating a permanent commission charged with ameliorating relations between the two communities. This strategy was clearly designed to neutralize the linguistic cleavage: the institutional status quo was upheld, progress towards constitutional revision came to a standstill and the community question was 'put on ice' so that the government could give priority to economic and financial questions. Despite the fact that the election had witnessed the emergence of regionalist parties across the country, the government shifted its energies away from the community problem. The linguistic truce was however shattered by the eruption of a crisis at the University of Leuven.

The Split of Christian Democratic Party (1968)

The salience of the community question in Belgian politics was as much driven by events as it was by electoral change. In 1968, the University of Leuven/Louvain became a site of an acute conflict between linguistic communities. At first, Flemish leaders expressed resentment at the fact that local inhabitants not affiliated with the university were sending their children to French-speaking schools, conjuring sensitive memories of the Flemish movement's struggle against the Francophone bourgeoisie. The crisis escalated in 1968 following rising pressures for the construction of Flemish facilities and the announcement of expansion plans for the Francophone section. The Flemings demanded that the Francophone sections of the university be transferred south of the linguistic barrier. To the cry of 'Wallen buiten!', the Francophone shouted 'Nous resterons à Louvain!', leading to demonstrations, clashes with the police and street brawls (Laporte 1999). The crisis tested the Christian Democratic party's unity to its limits, and the impossibility of finding an agreement on the future of the university's french section brought about the informal distancing and then the formal split of the Christian Democratic party, as well as the fall of the Vanden Boeynants government.

The division of the Christian Democratic party was a momentous development as it represented the first step in a sequence of organizational divisions that eventually engendered the bifurcation of the party system along linguistic lines. The main factor that can account for the eruption of centrifugal forces within the party is the different character and social appeal of regional nationalism and Catholicism in the two communities. In Flanders, Catholicism was a progressive and centrist political force based on a broad electoral coalition comprising workers, farm labourers and urban middle-classes.[85] The pacification of the religious cleavage following the 'Schools Pact' and the 'deconfessionalisation' of the Catholic party pushed many Catholic voters to turn to the VU which offered a similarly moderate and centrist platform, but accentuated their newly salient linguistic identity. As a result the Christian Democratic party was the principal victim of the growth of the VU. In 1965, the party had lost 5 percent of its vote and six seats to the VU, a figure that represented half its total vote and seat loss in the region (Fraeys 1966). The party's exposure to the VU's incursion was exacerbated by the fact that it drew such an important share of its total support in Flanders; in 1965, the PSC drew 60.1 percent of its votes and 66.2 percent of its seats from Flanders (VUB PWS

---

[85] These different social classes were 'encapsulated' through their participation in Catholic pillar ('Zuil') which included a high number of auxiliary organizations responsible for the provision of a wide variety of social services, such as the trade unions, farmers' associations, and middle-class professional bodies.

2007).There were thus strong electoral incentives for the party to adjust its position in an effort to co-opt the demands of the VU and re-establish its predominance in the region. In addition, given the strong support for the 'flamandisation' of the University of Leuven among the Flemish social and political elites as well as the grass-roots organizations of the Catholic pillar in Flanders, the Flemish wing of the Christian Democratic party emerged in strong support of the strict application of the linguist laws and the relocation of the French section of the university onto Francophone territory.

In the Francophone parts of the country on the other hand, Catholicism more conservative and bourgeois in character, it was a more socially-bounded political force, it had a less important presence in the Catholic pillar and its ties to auxiliary pillar organizations were much weaker (Deschouwer 1999: 84). As a result, it came under a very different kind of electoral pressure. In the francophone catholic world, there was little sign of demand for territorial autonomy. The Walloon autonomics parties had grown out of the syndicalist movement and were strongly left-wing in orientation with a working-class base of support; the FDF was a more of a centrist political option that had drawn its support primarily from middle-class former Socialist voters of the capital city. Rather, the PSC was under pressure from the Liberal party. In abandoning its anti-clerical baggage and adopting a strategy that aimed to capture the support of the entire bourgeois class of Belgium, the Liberal party had made a deliberate overture to the conservative Catholic bourgeoisie of Wallonia (Ladriere 1970). As a result, the PSC lost 8.5 percent of the vote in Wallonia and Brussels to the Liberal party (Delruelle et al. 1970).The opening up of competition along the religious cleavage with the unitarist Liberal party, therefore meant that there were strong incentives for the PSC to maintain the Christian Democratic party's unitary ideology, to hold a position that advanced the demands of the Francophone and opposed the linguistic separation of the University of Louvain.

The Rising Salience of the Linguistic Issue (1968)

The organizational and strategic adaptation of the Christian Democratic party was inextricably linked. Given the divergent positions of its linguistic wings, it was impossible for the party leadership to formulate a unified policy response to the community problem. Yet, given the party's electoral strength in Flanders and the size and density of the Flemish pillar, the demand of the Flemish wing for the formulation of an accommodating electoral strategy was difficult to ignore. So when the party split, there occurred a very evident shift in the CVP's policy on the issues of the application of the linguistic regime

and the reform of the structures of the Belgian state. In 1965, the party had put forth separate manifestos in Flanders and Wallonia, but remained highly unitary in outlook, endorsing the maintenance of authentically national organs in the formulation of national (PSC-CVP 1965) In 1968, the CVP endorsed the establishment of a unilingual Dutchspeaking university in Leuven and in Brussels, defended the imposition of the 'iron collar' around Brussels and called for the reform of the unitary state, giving greater cultural autonomy to organs representing the two linguistic communities (CVP 1968).

With the intensification of acrimony between the two linguistic communities, the division of the Christian Democratic party along linguistic lines, and the mobilization of regionalist parties in Wallonia and Brussels, it was difficult for the Socialist and Liberal parties to continue downplaying Belgium's community problem. The positions adopted by the incumbent parties-the francophone wing of the Christian Democratic party and the Liberal party- reflected a compromise between the need to respond to the growing threat of the regionalist parties in Wallonia and Brussels and their own attitudes towards constitutional reform. In the prelude to the electoral campaign, the Parti Wallon (PW) adapted its electoral strategy from a leftist to a more 'catch-all' profile, casting itself as a rally of all persuasions in Wallonia against the rising tide of Flemish nationalism, incorporating a number of candidates from Liberal and Catholic circles and diminishing the emphasis placed on social questions in favour of linguistic problems. It forced an electoral (apparentement) with the FDF, which continued to defend the expansion of Brussels and the rights of its inhabitants (RW 1968; CRISP 1971a; FDF 1968) The policy response of the PSC married the Catholic centralist tradition with the need to address the fears of the Francophones. The party pleaded for the unity of the University of Louvain, for the lifting of the 'iron collar' around capital city, and supported the protection of the Francophone minority in the Belgian state. On the issue of territorial autonomy, it put forth a vague formula in which representative bodies of the linguistic communities would be consulted during decisions on cultural matters (PSC 1968) The PLP remained staunchly unitarist. It defended its stabilizing influence on the country's institutions while in office, opposed the separation of the University of Louvain and put itself forward as the only party that could assure a unified and prosperous Belgium (PLP 1968).

The Socialist party's strategy was designed to secure three objectives: mobilizing support on the basis of its opposition to the Liberal-Christian Democratic incumbent government, thwarting the regionalist threat in its strongholds, and aligning these electoral tactics with its ideology. The threat of regional nationalism to the Socialist party erupted

in the 'critical' election of 1965, when the party lost 5 percent and two seats to the VU in Flanders, 12 percent and two seats to the RW in Wallonia and 15 percent and two seats to the FDF in Brussels (Delruelle et al. 1970; Fraeys 1966). The party needed to address this loss of support by effecting a shift in its position on the territorial dimension. The Socialist party's task was facilitated by the convergence of the positions of its different branches and the gradual revival of its federalist tradition. Following the Accords of Klemskerke-Verviers in 1967, the Flemish and Walloon federations established a common policy: a commitment to economic planning to remedy the economic deficiencies found at the national, regional and sectoral level; a will to build a new Belgium based on the recognition of Wallonia, Flanders, and Brussels (Falony 2006: 94). Thus, the Socialist party's need to win office and quell pressures from regionalist parties, and its capacity to establish a common position between its different branches allowed to effect a shift in its position in a pro-federal direction, endorsing creation of cultural and regional councils, albeit with weak advisory powers, as well as the establishment of power-sharing that would protect the French minority in the decision-making process at the centre.

The campaign for the elections of March 1968 generated a climate of polarization that Belgium had not experienced since the country was divided by the 'Royal Question' in 1950 (Coombes and Norton-Taylor 1968). This was due to acute sense of crisis precipitated by the fate of the University of Louvain but also to the divergent positions adopted by mainstream political parties on the three main points of contention- Leuven, Brussels, constitutional reform. In line with directional theory, the mainstream parties responded in a positive direction to the demands of their most immediate regionalist competitors, but took up positions and emphasized the issues that were constrained by existing attitudes and ideological beliefs. The PLP remained faithful to its unitary tradition, but in order to address the demands of its Francophone constituents, and keep the FDF at bay, it emphasised the theme that was best aligned with its francophone liberal profile- the protection of the Francophone minority in the central decision system. The PSC moved uneasily towards the creation of cultural councils, but like the PLP, preferred emphasizing the issue that fitted its centralist Catholic tradition- the protection of the Francophone minority. The CVP and the PSB were the only parties to deploy accommodating electoral strategies by advocating the reform of the state's territorial structures. However, what it notable in this campaign is that neither of them was prepared to converge completely to the position of their regionalist rivals by endorsing the introduction of genuine political federalism (De Wachter 1970). The CVP endorsed the

creation of cultural councils for the two communities, while the PSB promoted the established of institutions for the three regions. This was a plausible position for these parties to adopt given that each one displayed a tradition of accommodating regional nationalism and each had formulated a policy commitment to autonomy in cultural and economic matters. But nevertheless, their proposals emained very circumspect. Their perception of the management of the linguistic issue continued to be tinted by the legacy of their past involvement in consociational politics. Mainstream parties felt the need to address the electoral hemorrhage they had suffered, but were prepared to make only cosmetic changes to the structures of the Belgian state, in the familiar consociational style.

Consociational Constitutional Change (1970)

Following the election of 1968 it became impossible to deny the demands of regional nationalist parties for the restructuring of the Belgian state. The CVP lost 5 percent and 8 seats to the VU and its share of the Flemish vote fell from 41.3 to 36.4 percent. The VU obtained 15.7 percent and 20 seats, extending its support to the towns of Western Flanders and Limburg. The Socialist party maintained its position in Wallonia with 32.2 percent and in Flanders with 26.5 percent. In Brussels, in spite of presenting separate electoral lists, it lost 6.5 percent of the vote to the VU and the FDF, which became the third party in the capital city with 18.6 percent of the vote and 7 seats. The RW also registered gains, winning 8.5 percent of the vote and 5 seats, extending its social and territorial basis of support by taking a seat from the PSC in Namur and two from the Communist Party in Charleroi and Liège. The Liberal party reached a plateau in this election. It maintained a steady position across the country, but lost 7 percent of its support to the FDF in Brussels, where it nevertheless held on to its leading place with 26.7 percent (Delruelle et al. 1970; VUB PWS 2007)

The Christian Democratic and Socialist parties returned to the commitment they had made in 1963 to revise the constitution as the best method for pacifying the situation. While this initiative had been entrusted to a parliamentary commission, political circumstances called for its revival. During the negotiations, the formateur Vanden Boeynants (CVP) and Léon Collard (PSB) quickly established an agreement on the question of cultural autonomy for linguistic communities and the introduction of consociational devices at the national level, but diverged on the territorial basis of economic decentralization, in particular for the region of Brussels, as well as the issue of the linguistic status of the communes adjacent to the capital city (Claeys- Van

Haegendoren 1970). In June, a coalition was formed under the premiership of Gaston Eyskens, who convened a constituent assembly for constitutional reform. [86] The government established the three principal axes of agreement on community relations that constituted the core of its agenda: the guarantee of linguistic parity in government and higher administration, the cultural autonomy of linguistic groups and the regionalisation of economic planning. The coalition agreement recognized that:

"the unitary state has been outpaced by events...the communities and regions must take their place among the renovated structures of the state" (CEPESS 1971)

The principal obstacle to the implementation of the government's onstitutional programme was the lack of the requisite two-thirds parliamentary majority. his pushed the government to extend its hand to the Liberal and the regional nationalist parties in the opposition. The Liberal party was torn between its Flemish and Brussels federation which were divided on the fate of the Univeristy of Leuven, the protection of ideological minorities within the cultural councils, parental freedom in Brussels and the rights of francophone minorities in the communes adjacent to Brussels. In an attempt to preserve the party's unity, the leadership organized an extraordinary congress in which it declared its willingness to participate in government on the basis of the note issued by Vanden Boeynants, adopting a position in favour of the creation of cultural councils, in return for guarantees to the francophone minority. The VU and RW pushed for more ambitious reforms- the former opposed the special majorities protecting the francophone community, while the latter wished to see greater attention devoted to the territorial basis of federalism. The government thus needed to shift its position marginally towards the parties in opposition to obtain an agreement. (Grootaers 1972).

This provided regional nationalist parties with an opportunity to channel their political claims into the constitutional debate. After a year of deadlock in the parliamentary commissions, the government organized in late 1969 a 'last chance' conference with 28 participants from all parliamentary groups. As a result of this initiative, the question of territorial decentralisation emerged as one of the more notable innovations in the quality of the debate, a modification which was attributed to the assertive participation of the RW deputy Perin and the PLP deputy Delruelle. It was Perin in particular who 'lead the dance', providing critical intellectual leadership by establishing a distinction between two formats of decentralisation as a way of reconciling the claims of

---

[86] The declaration of intent for constitutional reform had been adopted by the previous legislature, but the proposals were still being elaborated in parliamentary working groups when they were overshadowed by the Louvain Affair. The declaration of intent remained and was adopted without modification by the two chambers in March 1968

Flemish and Walloons and finding a solution for Brussels (Grootaers 1971).[87] In contrast, the VU staunchly opposed the special protections offered to the francophone minority, a guarantee was required to secure the support of the Liberal party, and withdrew from the negotiations. Formal and informal rules regulating the decision-making process thus played an important role in facilitating the incorporation of regional nationalists' demands in the process of institutional change. The need to secure a two thirds parliamentary majority for the reform of the constitution, and the existence of a consensual decision-style, enabled the RW to shift the government's attention from the parity of linguistic communities in national institutions towards the question of territorial autonomy.

The first attempt at addressing the linguistic conflict in Belgium brought about a unique form of consociational accommodation that Leo Tindemans, characterized as 'federalisation without federalism" (Zolberg 1977: 127). The content of the reform was a clear reflection of the power differential between the mainstream political parties and the linguistic parties. In December 1970, all three mainstream parties had experienced the significant electoral challenge by all three regional nationalist parties and given this rising salience of community relations in the public debate, they needed to respond. But since together they commanded enough parliamentary seats for a constitutional revision, their preferences would shape the substance of the constitutional reform, a fact clear when the coalition parties made several deliberate overtures towards the Liberal party regarding the maintenance of special majority rules in parliament, a privileged treatment which provoked the ire of the regional nationalist parties in the opposition. As Mughan (Mughan 1983: 442) argued, the reforms "were the work of a unified established elite and were imposed, by virtue of parliamentary arithmetic, on the federalist parties."

This imposition is visible in the fact that the reforms dealt more decisively with the concern of the mainstream parties for establishing consociational devices at the national level than with creating decentralized political institutions. The PSC and PLP, which both feared minority status, obtained the institutionalization of the parity principle in the cabinet and the reinstatement of parental freedom in Brussels, while the CVP secured the maintenance of an iron collar around Brussels and the granting of parity at the level of the municipal executive in Brussels (Grootaers 1972). Other power-sharing devices were: the division of the national parliament into separate language groups which would form the basis of the Cultural Councils; the subjection of language laws and certain

---

[87] Perrin distinguished between 'personalisable' matters such as culture, language and education, provided on the basis of linguistic identity to individuals who may live in different areas and wich would fall under the jurisdiction of cultural councils, and territorial matters such as industrial policy, economic planning, housing and employment which would be provided for on a territorial basis and fall under the jurisdiction of regional councils

constitutional laws to special voting requirements- two thirds of the total votes of both houses as well as a simple majority of each linguistic group; an alarm bell procedure- if 75 percent of a language group judged a legislative proposal harmful to relations between the Dutch and French communities, the measure would be postponed and referred to the national cabinet (Senelle 1972).[88] The long-standing Flemish demand for autonomy was satisfied with recognition of cultural councils (Arts 32 and 59b), but very little effective power was actually shifted. The national legislature retained full sovereignty, and the competence of the cultural councils was assigned by special laws. Moreover, the members of the cultural and regional councils were drawn from the parliamentary arena and did not enjoy a separate democratic mandate. Progress on the question on territorial decentralisation was cosmetic, the reform did no more than outline the procedures for establishing regional institutions (Art.107d). The government delayed any final decision on the question because it had failed to reach an agreement on the final status of Brussels. As a result, territorial autonomy existed as a promise, whose form and timing was to be fulfilled by the work of future legislatures.

The 1970 constitutional reform represents an important 'critical juncture' in the territorial restructuring of the Belgian state, as it constituted a intense period of negotiations between a high number of partisan actors whose decisions lead to a decisive shift from output-based to authority-focused and territorial strategies of accommodation. The dual-track settlement that was eventually reached- recognizing community and regional entities while institutionalizing parity between communities- would set off a 'reactive sequence' that would influence the preferences of mainstream and regional nationalist parties with regards to the new institutional status quo. There were two principal legacies for this constitutional reform. The first was that it was an open-ended constitutional settlement that left a great deal of business unfinished such as the composition and powers of cultural and regional councils, the geographical contours of Brussels, the fate of communes with facilities (Dunn 1974). The structures of the Belgian state would inevitably continue to occupy a central position on the agenda of the government. The second was that the formal power-sharing framework regulating the transition from unitary to regionalized state would provide nationalist parties with a strong influence on the content of the political agenda but would also reduce the likelihood and magnitude of institutional change.

---

[88] These pertained to many of the amendments that required further legislation to put them into effect. The four areas that required special majorities were laws that modified the boundaries of the linguistic regions, laws that set up the new cultural councils, laws that set up regional bodies for economic decentralisation and any law that sets up the extra provincialisation of any territory

The Problem of Territory (1971-1981)

During the 1970s, regional nationalist parties played a decisive role in advancing the process of regionalization through their influence on the attitudes of mainstream parties and their creative participation in coalition negotiations. The pressures they exerte on mainstream parties prompted the formal organizational split of the Liberal party and a shift in the position of the formerly unitarist Francophone Liberal party in a pro-autonomist position. They also compelled the Christian Democratic and Socialist party to revive their federalist traditions and to strengthen their existing commitments to territorial autonomy. Their influence in the electoral arena was matched by the strong bargaining power that they wielded in the parliamentary and governmental arena, buttressed by the fragmentation of the party system, the formal decision-rules regulating the creation and empowerment of cultural and regional councils, and by the impossibility of forming of tripartite government because of the discordant relations between the Liberal and Socialist parties. Although the RW, VU and FDF all contributed to forging a consensus on the format of regional government, the extent of their influence was nevertheless curtailed by the ideological opposition of mainstream parties to the content of the compromises.

The Persistence of Regional Nationalism (1971-1974)

The consociational settlement of 1970 left the regional nationalist parties bitterly disappointed. Constrained by their prevailing attitudes towards the decentralization of authority, by the compromises inherent to coalition negotiations and by the need to forgethe parliamentary majority necessary for ratifying constitutional amendments, mainstream parties had only made a partial and minimal concession that fell far from the full federalization of the Belgian state the regional nationalist parties had hoped for. The VU, RW and FDF adjusted their political claims to three facets of the consociational settlement: they pushed mainstream parties to initiate the legislation that specified the composition and powers of cultural and regional council; they asserted their distinct and irreconcilable preference for the territorial basis of Belgian federalism; they pushed for genuine territorial autonomy, through the creation of directly elected cultural and regional councils. Thus, in spite of the effort undertaken to pacify the linguistic cleavage through the reform of the constitution, regional nationalist parties continued to issue demands for further decentralisation and to exercise an indirect influence on the political agenda by exerting electoral pressures on mainstream political parties, bringing about a re-adjustment of their position on the territorial dimension.

222

In Wallonia, the RW adjusted to the new political context by maintaining a 'catchall' electoral profile, citing the Catholic, Socialist and Liberal inspirations of the movement, and by re-issuing its demands for providing Wallonia with the autonomy and capacity to restructure its economic base. It renewed its call for federalism, demanding the direct election of the regional executives and the transfer of decision-making authority in economic matters and the transfer of administrative and financial resources (RW 1971, 1974). The re-centering strategy of the RW paid off remarkably well. In 1971, it obtained 21 percent of the Walloon vote and 12 seats, becoming the second largest party in the region, ahead of the PSC. This victory came at the expense of the Liberal party, which suffered a massive drop in support from 25.3 to 10.4 percent and a loss of 6 seats. The PSC also experienced a fall in support from 23 .5 to 20.3 percent and a loss of 2 seats (CRISP 1971c; VUB PWS 2007). The FDF joined the RW in demanding the establishment of a federal state based on three regions that would enjoy a maximal degree of autonomy. The establishment a distinct regional entity in Brussels was justified on a functional basis- it would help to offset the economic decline of the region, but it was also defended as reflecting the democratic will of the city's inhabitants For that reasons, the FDF continued to object to the delimitation of the territorial boundary of the Brussels agglomeration (FDF 1971, 1974). The FDF-PLP reached its historic apogee during this period attaining a new height of 34.5 percent of the city's vote and 12 seats in 1971.[89] The consolidation of the Liberal and regionalist parties around a single electoral pole enabled them to amalgamate their share of support, but there was no real expansion in their electoral base, the Socialist party remained in second place with 20.5 percent of the vote and the PSC held on to about 10 percent of the vote (CRISP 1971c; VUB PWS 2007)

The principal effect of the persistence of electoral pressures exerted by the RW and the FDF in this period was the organizational split of the PLP along linguistic lines. Relations between the linguistic groups within the party deteriorated during the parliamentary debates that preceded the 1970 constitution reforms, over a number of issues such as the University of Leuven/Louvain, the split of the electoral district of Brussels, the rights of Francophones in the city's periphery. Finally, the PLP split during a vote in the Senate, when the Flemish group voted in favour of the limitation of the Brussels region and the Walloon and Brussels group voted against. From this point, the linguistic groups went their separate ways (CRISP 1971b). The Liberal party leadership

---

[89] The FDF established an electoral alliance (*apparentement*) with the Brussels federation of the PLP.

could have attempted to stifle linguistic divisions and uphold the party's unity by reducing the salience of the linguistic issue- downplaying its importance and shifting its attention to other problems. However, in view of its historic strength in Brussels and the intensification of competition against the FDF, the Brussels branch of the Liberal party forged an electoral alliance with the FDF and the party ran a strongly 'Belgicist' and unitarist campaign in 1971, a posture that alienated the Flemish liberals (PLP 1971). After a humiliating defeat in which the party lost 6 percent of the vote and 20 seats, 6 of which to the RW, tensions could no longer be suppressed and in 1972, the Flemish wing left the party and established the *Partij voor Vrijheid en Vorruitgang* (PVV). The Liberal party thus faced the same predicament that the Christian Democratic party confronted in 1968. The difficulty of deploying a single coherent electoral strategy that could reconcile the electoral imperative of accommodating the demands of the nationalist forces in the Francophone parts of the country with the continued support of the party's Flemish wing set in a motion a centrifugal dialectic that proved impossible to contain.

The creation of two organizationally and programmatically independent Liberal parties enabled each one to present distinct a electoral profiles in their respective regions. While the PVV had defended the application of the linguistic laws on the question of the expansion of Brussels, it nevertheless upheld the unitary ideology of the Liberal family and declined to cultivate the sympathy of the Flemish nationalist voters, upholding its moniker, as the '*peste voor vlanderen*'. The PVV's leaders, Willy de Clerq and Frans Grootjans defended the existing constitutional structures and the party's electoral manifesto showed a greater concern for the preservation of the Belgian state and the enhancement of the parliament's powers of scrutiny than for the development of regional autonomy in Flanders (PVV 1974). The PLP on the other hand eschewed this tradition and deployed an accommodating electoral strategy in order to maintain its alliance with the FDF in Brussels and to compete more effectively against the RW in Wallonia. The shift is clearly evident in the party's manifesto- it abandoned its centralist tone, positioned itself in favour of federalism, and attempted to marry its liberal and autonomist positions by calling for a type of decentralization that would support initiative and enterprise (PLP 1974). It is important to note that while the timing of the re-positioning was driven by electoral expediency, there was an existing policy commitment that made the shift a plausible one. In July 1970, after the party's split in parliament on the issue of Brussels, the deputies of the Walloon provincial federations had gathered in Namur, declaring that their actions would be inspired by the defense of Walloon interests, the defense of liberal

principles, and solidarity with the Brussels PLP in cultural and linguistic matters (Hascal and Detaille 1981). Once liberated from the constraints of a state-wide party organization, from the need to incorporate the preferences of Flemish deputies and to compete for the support of the Flemish electorate, the PLP was able to seize an existing commitment, to shift its position in a pro-federalist direction and to defend the interests of the Francophone population. This electoral strategy had a positive effect on its performance, as it was able to reclaim 5 percent of the vote and one seat from the RW in 1974, while in Brussels, its alliance with the FDF enabled the two to reach a historic high of 39 percent of the capital city's vote. The formal organizational split of the PLP would have a significant bearing on the evolution of the party system and Belgium's constitutional future, for it meant that the only party with a unitarist ideology ad abandoned the defense of the Belgian state. In addition, the bifurcation of the party system along linguistic lines compelled mainstream political parties to identify increasingly with the nationalist sentiment and demands for territorial autonomy expressed in their regional strongholds.

This was certainly the case for the CVP. In 1972, the party elected Wilfried Martensa convinced Flemish nationalist and federalist- as party president. His arrival marked a strengthening of the party's nationalist identity and confirmed a significant shift in its position towards the acceptance of regionalism. Evoking the historical role of the Christian worker's organizations in articulating Flemish nationalism, Martens twinned the Christian Democratic and Flemish character of his party:

"Christian Democracy has played a decisive role in the dual process of social and Flemish emancipation and we must rediscover this role" (Martens 2006: 55)

With such a historical precedent available, the CVP could comfortably adopt the mantle of the champion of national and territorial interests. During the party's 24th Congress in 1972, it promoted the reform of the country' institutions towards 'federalism of union', passing a series of resolutions giving precision to the methods through which this objective would be achieved The federal state was to be based on two federated entities with separate executive and legislative organs exercising exclusive competences in cultural and regional matters, and generating their own financial resources necessary for undertaking their policy responsibilities. Regarding the format of the country's federal structures, the CVP did not exclude the possibility that Brussels could become a separate constituent entity, but also advanced the idea that cultural councils act as regional organs, thus allowing for the fusion of the two entities (Menu 1994). This represented an important adjustment in the party's policy. During the 1960s, the party had made

allowances for the creation of cultural councils but with only timid consultative powers. It resisted any project of regionalism, preferring to make use of its size and central position in the party system to advance Flemish economic interests. The *formateur* Vanden Boeynants had discouraged the demands of the Socialist party for the creation of regions during the coalition negotiations that lead to the reform of 1970, and the PSC President Houben had rejected the proposal advanced by Francois Perin and the Group of '69 for the recognition of regional councils with economic powers, fearing that this would open the path towards 'integral federalism', and possibly separatism (Tindemans 1973: 56).

The shift in policy undertaken in 1972 can be explained as the result of two factors. The first was the need to put a halt to the 'whipping' pressures of the VU. The CVP had suffered dramatic losses at the hand of the VU, in particular in 1965 and 1968 and, following the logic of electoral expediency, the party needed to shift its position and co-opt the demands of the VU in order to recover lost ground. In the early 1970s, the VU reiterated its vision of Belgian federalism, " a Flemish state in a Belgian federation", based on two nations with directly elected assemblies and executives that would exercise wide-ranging powers in cultural, economic and social matters and that would be able to take decisions on the redistribution of wealth generated by Flanders (VU 1971). The VU continued its electoral growth in 1971, obtaining 18.7 of the regional vote and of 20 seats. Although the party's expansion came at the expense of the BSP in Antwerp, it is important to highlight that the VU had reached a historic high and to recall that since 1968, the CVP was a territorial party that competed solely in Flanders, a fact that magnified its exposure to the potential electoral threat of the VU. The adjustment in the party's position was thus key to regaining the upper hand in its traditional stronghold. In an interview, Martens recalled the change that his election meant for the party:

"in a way I saved my party from a complex…we were no longer on the receiving end of the pressures exerted by the VU, we were more conscious, and more self-confident, we were finally the masters of our political programme."

The policy adjustment undertaken in 1972 worked remarkably well as it put an end to the VU's electoral growth-the party fell back to 16.7 percent in 1974- and allowed the CVP to restore its predominance in Flanders. While electoral expediency was the driving force underlying the adoption of a 'federalism of union', it can also be explained by the existence of a commitment to some form of regionalism. Federalist ideas had been gestating within the party's organs since the 1960s, largely as a result of Martens' own personal influence and vision. In 1967, as the president of the youth branch of the CVP,

he persuaded his followers to approve a manifesto which contained explicitly federal proposals about the creation of regions and communities with full autonomy at the heart of a revitalized Belgian union (Velaers 1996: 506). The fact that federalist ideas had been expressed and debate, even if they had not been formally adopted, allowed the party to embrace them subsequently as one of their own policies. In addition, the CVP had an existing policy commitment to regionalism as a result of the compromise it reached with the Socialist party during the negotiations on constitutional reform in 1968-1970. In order to obtain its principal objective of cultural autonomy, the CVP had agreed to the creation of regional councils, on the conditions that the transfer of competences to these regions be undertaken with 'special' majority laws, that their powers be limited to regulatory rather than legislative power, and that they be subjected to national legislation in case of conflict (Mean 1989: 140). Although the policy had been accepted by the CVP with great reticence, the party had nevertheless eventually consented to the creation of regional institutions. The interaction between this prior policy commitment and the organic development of federalist projects within the party enabled the party to effect a plausible shift in policy in its quest to placate the VU and reclaim its hegemonic position in Flanders.

In parallel to the CVP's espousal of federalism, the Socialist party also gradually emerged as the chief mainstream proponent of regionalism in Wallonia. However, unlike the Christian Democratic party, it was still a unified state-wide political party and was forced to manage the internal tensions that its political objectives would generate. There occurred decisive changes within the party's organization that enabled it simultaneously to deal with linguistic divisions and advance an ambitious agenda for regionalization. Firstly, in 1973, the party created a dual presidency to replace the role of the president and vice-president (Deschouwer 1992; Deschouwer 1994). Leon Collard stepped down and was succeeded by Edmond Leburton and Josse Van Eynde. When Leburton was elected Prime Minister of a tripartite coalition in 1973, he was replaced as party president by André Cools. Much like the election of Martens, a change of personality at the top produced an important re-direction in the party's outlook. Cools was a former syndicalist from the industrial milieu of Liège and one of the most vocal activists of the Walloon federation of the Socialist party. He had been a member of the *Congres National Wallon* in 1945 and had reinforced his adherence to the federalist cause following his participation in the strike of 1960 (Lepere-Brahimi 1972). Faithful to the party which had constructed his social and political world, he refused to join the Walloon autonomist movement, preferring to promote his federalist ideas within the Socialist party.

His ambition to give the process of regionalisation a decisive impulse first arose when the Socialist party entered government in January 1972 with the Christian Democratic Party (Eyskens-Cools II); the two parties had developed a common interest in advancing the regionalisation of the state and joined forces to achieve this objective. Given that the coalition government lacked the two-thirds parliamentary majority to enact the regionalization legislation, it put forth a bill that proposed the creation of regional economic councils composed of members of the Chamber of Representatives. The proposal was taken up by the next tripartite government but with a slight nuance. Regionalization would be effected in two stages: the regional councils would first be composed of national representatives and then directly elected. The contentious matter of the scope of the Brussels region would be the subject of a cross-partisan accord in a parliamentary commission (Brassine 1974: 6). The Socialist party's policy was determined by electoral considerations: it continued to suffer losses to the FDF in local authority elections, and in the campaign for the general election of 1971, the regionalist party had received the benediction of the eminent Socialist leader Paul-Henri Spaak. There was thus an importance electoral incentive for addressing the demands of the FDF for the creation of regional institutions for Brussels. The electoral competition against the RW had largely attenuated by the early 1970s, but the two parties continue to pose as rival champions of regionalism. In response, Cools cast himself as the responsible and serious statesman and derided the weak and provisional purpose of the 'comiques du RW' (Maurage 1997: 22)

However the regionalist profile of the Socialist party had not been driven purely out of electoral expediency, as the party had developed a commitment to the regionalization since the mid 1960s. The first adoption of a policy on regionalism dated back the Accords of Klemkerske-Verviers. Then in the late 1960s, the Socialist party adopted a policy of functional decentralization and the Socialist Minister for Institutional Reform, Freddy Terwagne pushed for the enactment of what became the 1970 law on planning and decentralization- creating a regional planning bureau, regional economic council, regional development agencies, and office for industrial promotion (Mabille and Lorwin 1977: 388). This was an ideal tool of the party since it injected a regional dimension to its dirigiste vision of economic development. The law introduced only a modest degree of decentralization, but it provided a referent for the party's attempt to push forward its programme for regionalization. In the campaign for the 1974 election, the PSB called for the creation of directly elected regional councils competent in a wide range of economic policies, emphasised the importance of financial transfers and

administrative capacity, as well as the reinforcement of cooperation with regional development agencies for the modernization of the Walloon economy (PSB-BSP 1974). Thus, while the presence of the FDF and RW certainly did push the Socialist party to act on its commitment to regionalization in 1972, these pressure were situated in the gradual evolution in the Socialist party's thinking on the territorial structures of the state.

It should be underlined here that the Socialist party's capacity to develop and implement these ideas was largely due to the party's electoral strength in Wallonia and to the weight of the Walloon federation within the party, the Flemish wing of the party continued to hold deep reservations about the implications that extensive decentralization would have for their power and status in Flanders. Nevertheless, the Socialist party maintained, for the meanwhile, a fairly cohesive stance on the principle of decentralization- deliberately muting any differences on the number of units at the basis of the regionalized state- and sought to present itself to the Belgian electorate as the last remaining strong and united party, hovering above the community quibbles.

Preparing Regionalisation (1974-1977)

In addition to influencing the attitudes of the three mainstream parties, the RW, FDF and VU exercised a more direct influence on the agenda during the 1970s, through their participation in coalition governments, their involvement in the preparation of special legislation and proposals for constitutional reform that were designed to advance the process of regionalisation. The bargaining power of the regional nationalist parties in the parliamentary and governmental arena was buttressed by an important institutional constraint: the qualified majority required for the ratification of special laws, enshrined in the consociational settlement of 1970. Article 3bis stipulated that special majorities would be required to put into effect many constitutional provisions regarding cultural and regional councils, including their composition, powers and resources. This special majority rule was decisive in enhancing the coalition potential and bargaining power of the regional nationalist parties (Kerchove and Mabille 1979). The access to majority power was also facilitated by an easing of attitudes on behalf of the mainstream parties towards the idea of co-opting the regional nationalist leaders in government and by an unprecedented willingness on the latter's behalf to take up the offer (Dewachter 1987). By the mid-1970s, the regional nationalist parties were established actors in the party system, their political objectives for the reform of the country's territorial structures were compatible with those of the mainstream elites, and as a result, they were finally considered as *regierungsfahig*.

The task of undertaking the regionalisation of the Belgian state was complicated by the vague specification of Art.107d, which established a basic framework enumerating the creation of regional councils for Brussels, Wallonia, and Flanders, but stated only that "eachwas to be composed of elected representatives with the power to rule on such matters as it shall determine." (Senelle 1972). There was no specification of the precise territorial delimitation of each region, the identity of its representatives, the scope of their jurisidiction and their relationship to cultural councils. Following the general election of March 1974, the Prime Minister Tindemans intended to create a tripartite coalition including all mainstream parties to approve its proposals for regionalization; the outgoing Catholic-Liberal coalition would invite the Socialists to partake in the negotiations. However the Socialists had ruled out governing with the Liberals, in view of their divergent positions on how to tame the inflationary spiral sparked off by the first oil shocks (Mabille 1977). Moreover, the FDF and the VU, parties that held the most radical and reconcilable views on the status of Brussels, refused to enter government together. The RW was thus left as one of the few available potential coalition partners. Faced with the opportunity of playing a constructive participation in government, the RW took the unprecedented step of announcing their willingness to discuss joining a government. This choice reflected an acute awareness of the new political environment. The general election marked an important turning point in the party system because it was the first time in which regional nationalist parties failed to grow, indicating that they had tapped the maximum share of the available electoral and reached their peak without having been sufficiently strong to impose a federal settlement on mainstream parties (Mughan 1985). Any opportunity for advancing the creation of a federal state was to be seized. However, given that the parliament was not a constituent assembly it would be impossible in this legislature to embark on the constitutional reform of the state. The secondary aim was thus to make progress on regionalisation. The aims of Francois Perin were clear::

"we decided to help the future governmental if the programme that it proposed was acceptable…what was important was to do something with the seats that we had…in the absence of immediate federalism, we must attempt to put into place a real but moderate regionalism, an option to which a large majority of Walloon public opinion adheres" (Gheude 2007: 81)

Although the RW had been co-opted by the Christian Democratic-Liberal coalition primarily for expedient reasons- providing the government with a majority in the vote of investiture- the influence that it exercised on the content of the political agenda. The RWs' participation in government enabled it to assert its demands during coalition

negotiations and to assume ministerial posts. The party leader, Perin assumed the portfolio of Minister for Institutional Reform, while two RW deputies, Jean Gol and Etienne Knoops were given secretarial positions in the Ministry of Economic Affairs (CRISP 1974). The RW exercised a critical influence in the formulation of ideas that propelled the regionalization process. The party president Perin maintained his intellectual stewardship during the Steenokkerzeel conclave in April 1974 which preceded the formation of the government, with a proposal on establishing the territorial limits of Brussels.[90] The second annex of the political agreement reached in June was eventually adopted in its entirety in the Preparatory Regionalisation Law of August 1974, also known as the Perin-Vanderkerkchove law. Acknowledging the difficulties of reaching an agreement over a definitive form regionalisation, the aim of the preparatory law was to induce a convergence of positions of parties, which eventually could facilitate the implementation of Art.107quater (Brassine 1974). The law created three transitional regional councils, and three ministerial committees of regional affairs, and established the geographical limits and the composition of the regional councils of Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels. The councils were assigned consultative and advisory powers in a range of economic matters, but the actual transfer of competences in. each policy field would have to wait the execution of Art 107quarter. [91] The degree of the RW's influence was therefore much deeper than the mere providing of a government majority or the enactment of the 'preparatory' regionalization legislation, as this law influenced the evolution of ideas among political elites on how to take forward the process of regionalisation, most notably, by introducing the principle of regionalization based on three entities.

Finding itself back in the opposition, the Socialist party began to sharpen its project for a definitive process of regionalization as a part of its broader strategy for regaining power. André Cools wished to transform the Socialist party as the only political force capable of bringing regionalization to the country, and to fulfill this ambition, he sought inspiration from the ideas propounded earlier by André Renard- advocating federalism as the best institutional remedy for acting on the region's deteriorating

---

[90] Perin suggested freezing the Brussels territory along the limits of the existing territory comprising the 19 communes, maintaining the electoral district of Brussels-Hal-Vilvoorde, maintaining the administrative regime of linguistic facilities in the six peripheral communes and obtaining a new regime of individual rights for francophones in the fifteen peripheral communes

[91] The regional executives would be composed of ministerial committees drawn from the central government, binding the political process of regions to the national one. Flemish and Walloon regional councils would be composed of Senators living in the region that are members of the Flemish and Francophone linguistic groups. The Brussels regional council would be composed of Senators living in the Brussels region and members of the Brussels City Council. Competences concerned territorial management and urbanism, regional economic development, employment and growth, industrial policy, housing and family policy, water, forestry and wildlife policy

economy, collaborating with the syndicalist movement in matters of regional economic development and using its membership base to mobilize popular support for the project (Maurage 1997: 39). In 1974, the PSB and the FGTB presented a note outlining the broad parameters of an eventual governmental accord: regionalization on the basis of three regions, direct election of regional legislatures and executives, simplification of overlapping institutions through the suppression of provinces, and fusion of the cultural and regional councils. This represented an important shift in the Socialist party's thinking. From the functional decentralization it introduced while in government in 1971, it now envisaged the direct election of regional councils. The main impetus underlying the strengthening of the party's regionalist outlook was to reclaim its place in government. The PSB sought to weaken the RW by criticizing the centralist features of the 'provisional' regionalization law, most notably the continuing tutelage of the central government over regional executives, and by presenting its own ambitious proposal for regionalization. The party's electoralist motivations were also evident in the leadership's efforts to stifle the public expression of internal differences between the Francophone and Flemish wings on the format of regionalization. The Flemish co-president Willy Claes accepted the creation of regional institutions for Brussels, on the condition that the executive be composed on the basis of linguistic parity and that the protection of the Flemish minority be guaranteed with an 'alarm bell' procedure (Beaufays 1985: 260). In 1975, members of the PSB executive established contacts with the PSC leadership over the possibility of entering the government or forming a coalition following the election, and the elaboration of a future governmental programme was handed to Guy Spitaels (PSB) and his counterpart Michel Hansenne (PSC).[92] Cools' objective was to create a Christian Democratic-Socialist core and to co-opt the regionalist parties in order to secure the 'special' majorities; the hidden purpose of the latter choice of partners being, of course, to undermine the electoral position of the RW and FDF in Wallonia and Brussels.

While the return to office was high on the party leadership's mind, the accentuation of the Socialist party's regionalist profile was compatible with the broader movement of political renewal that occurred with the new doctrinal congress of 1974, in which the historic *Charte de Quaregnon* was replaced with a new charter, the *Socialisme d'Aujourdhui* (Falony 2006: 119). It is interesting to note that while the Charte emphasized a functional form of federalism towards industrial, commercial and agricultural bodies- as well as the autonomy of provinces and communes, the new constitution identified a

---

[92] Interview with Guy Spitaels (PSB)

precise role for capable and responsible regional institutions in fulfilling the principle of political democracy. Regional autonomy was, moreover, complemented with autonomy in the economic sphere: the new charter promoted the introduction of self-management practices in the industrial workplace, allowing for greater worker control at all decision levels in the firm- albeit within the framework of the national plan and in collaboration with trade unions. Permeating each of these principles was a deeper Social Democratic commitment to ensuring that individuals are able to exercise as large an influence as possible on the problems and decisions that affect them (PSB 1980: 220-8) Thus, the Socialist party's accommodating strategy was not merely a ploy for returning to office, it was inherent to the revitalization of its credentials as an agent of democratic change.

In June 1976, the PSB-BSP concluded a pact on regionalization with the FGTB that allowed it to present itself as a unified political force devoted to institutional change and as the natural candidate for political power. It prompted the government to initiate a community-wide dialogue to establish a partisan consensus on the direction of the regionalization process. However, the gradual bifurcation of the party system had strengthened the electoral ties of mainstream parties to regional constituents, compelling them to adopt increasingly autonomist stances, and inducing a deep divergence in their positions on a number of matters, namely the separation of competences allotted to cultural and regional councils and, of course, the Brussels region. Their positions did reflect a divergence in public opinion in Flanders and Wallonia, in the priority assigned to different aspects of the community conflict; while the Flemish felt very strongly about the linguistic regime, the Francophone felt more strongly about the delimitation of the Brussels region (Verdoodt 1976). Thus, in spite of the intention to forge a partisan consensus on the direction of the regionalization process, the community dialogue served to cement the emergence of a territorial and linguistic cleavage in the party system.

The lack of progress became unacceptable to members of the RW, including the president Paul-Henri Gendebien, who did not have the patience to accept the delays inherent to a consensus system, and began to question the dividends of government participation. In addition, the RW was by then feeling the pressure of the 'outbidding' tactics of the Socialist party, and needed to intensify its federalist demands in order to reclaim some degree of ownership over the issue. Government participation also exposed the pluralism that existed within the party, between the radical socialist and liberal traditions, divisions that became apparent in government decisions such as the purchasing of military equipment (CRISP 1974; Lemaitre 1982). Following an internal split in June

1976 in which the liberal current formed an alliance with the Liberal Party, to form the *Parti des Réformes et de la Liberté de la Wallonie* (PRLW), the party radicalized its tone and veered to left. In March 1977, it issued an ultimatum to the government, threatening to withdraw from the government majority if talks were not complete before the party' annual congress. But the CVP and PVV could not reach an agreement on the attribution of competences to regions (CRISP 1977a). In April 1977, the RW refused to support the government on its budget and was expelled, provoking the dissolution of the parliament and new elections. Reflecting on the party's experience, the president Gendebien stated:

> "our experience was disappointing, it was too rapid, we lacked preparation and strategy for pursuing our objectives. The crises which the party suffered were too successive for us to be nothing but an ephemeral and circumstantial partner."

Dealing with Brussels (1977-1978)

New elections provided regional nationalist parties with a fresh opportunity for directly influencing the government's agenda. The formateur's aim of creating a tripartite coalition floundered once again on the discordant relations between the Socialist and Liberal parties. Tindemans thus sought the support of the VU and FDF, which together provided the government with the necessary majority for passing the 'special' law. The first phase of negotiations was straightforward as parties agreed to the creation of directly elected regional assemblies. They diverged on the criterion for determining the assignment of fiscal resources and the administration of 'personalisable' matters, but the most divisive issued continued to be the question of the territorial boundaries of Brussels, a matter on which the VU and the FDF held the most diametrically opposite views. The FDF was in favour of a solution in which the six bilingual peripheral communes of the city and seven uni-lingual Flemish communes would be re-attached to the Brussels region; the VU instead proposed that a section of the six peripheral communes be attached on condition that the bilingual facilities be eliminated (CRISP 1977b). The situation had reached an impasse. Pushed by Martens, the VU and FDF party presidents, Hugo Schiltz and Lucien Outers, found a compromise: the FDF renounced any territorial expansion of the Brussels region, but secured greater rights for the Francophones in the periphery and the abandonment of the principle of linguistic parity in the regional executive of Brussels.[93] The compromise negotiated over Brussels facilitated the reaching of an agreement and on

---

[93] This included the right of the francophone in the six bilingual suburbs to enjoy the same rights as the Flemish citizens inside the city agglomeration, and the right of the francophone in another seven peripheral uni-lingual communes to have access to Brussels bilingual judicial, fiscal and administrative facilities. The latter were also given inscriptions rights; the right to create fictitious residences in the Brussels area in order to be on the Brussels electoral roll, and to avoid wasting their vote in communes with exclusively Flemish party lists

the 25th of May, the five parties consented to a final text, which was published as an appendix to the government's coalition programme. Since the VU and FDF occupied the most distant positions on the central dimension of the negotiations-the status of Brussels, the success of the Egmont Pact depended entirely on the convergence between their position, a movement that was a necessary condition for reaching an agreement on institutional change. Appreciating their constructive participation, Martens stated:

> "by overcoming their vast differences on the fate of Brussels, the VU and the FDF had realized the impossible, allowing the negotiations to move forward and lifting an important burden that weighed on Belgian political life."

The significant agenda-setting power of the VU and FDF enabled them to give direction to the negotiations and to impart their stamp on the federal characteristics of the Pact. The Egmont Pact foresaw the creation of directly elected Community Councils with similar competences in cultural matters, financed entirely by central grants, according to the criteria of population and surface area. Regional councils were also to be directly elected bodies, with exclusive competences in the areas established during the Community dialogue, financed by block grants, non-fiscal resources, supplementary taxes and loans, and whose ordinances would have the same legal status as community decrees or regional laws. In Brussels, the regional executive would be composed of seven members, of which a minimum of two would be Flemish-speakers. Lastly, the pact also enshrined the compromise solution regarding the geographical limits of the Brussels region and the inscription rights of francophone speakers domiciled outside the region.

The Stuyvenberg Accords, agreed following the Egmont Pact, established a calendar for its implementation.[94] The Egmont Pact foresaw that the parliament would be committed to the immediate implementation of Art. 107d. The special law would both supply a definitive regionalisation, pending a reform of the Constitution, and would organize a transitional regime, in which regional authorities would enjoy a reduced autonomy. The purpose of disaggregating the agenda for the pact's execution was to insure against the possibility that parties support the initial stages of the reform and then renege on the final and more difficult items of the Pact that implyied constitutional changes. The regional nationalist parties had insisted during the negotiations on tying the process of regionalisation to a new revision of the constitution, and were concerned that residual unitarist elements within the mainstream parties would sabotage the Pact once

---

[94] Not all of the Pact's provisions could be realised at once The aspects of the pact that dealt with the relation between the state and sub-state level, such as the hierarchy of norms or the creation of an arbitration court needed to be enshrined in the constitution, while the components that specified the composition, competence and financing of substate entities needed to be passed through special or ordinary legislation

minimal reforms had been undertaken (CRISP 1977c). The consequence of this ratification process was a significant heightening of the decision-making threshold: by disaggregating the content of the political agenda across time-periods, it increased the potential for discord among the parties concerning the content of the different phases, and extended the time periods in which disagreements could surface. Opposition to the Egmont Pact grew very quickly once it was released in the public domain, as the radicals on each side, edged on by a jingoistic press corps, denounced the concessions that had been made. The Flemish and Francophone parties had displayed relatively symmetric agendas on the question of Brussels, that is, both sides had equally intense preferences on the issue that made logrolling and compromise difficult to reach, since gains for one side translated into immediate and visible losses for the other. Isolation and secrecy had enabled negotiators to reach a compromise, but in doing so, they had become more concerned with preserving the relationship with each other than with carrying their party organizations and supporters, and as a result, had produced a document that was difficult to sell to their respective supporters (Covell 1982; Tsebelis 1990).

The lag separating the elaboration and implementation of the agreement exposed party leaders to the electoral arena, a sphere to which they had become a. lot more sensitive in view of the heightened degree of competition for the representation of regional interests in the territorialised party system. The implementation of the Pact was thus threatened by the intransigent reactions of parties who were fearful of risking their own position within the party and jeopardizing the electoral performance of their party. The electoral constraint quickly transformed into an ideological constraint, into a philosophical hostility to the format of regionalization that had been adopted. Tindemans-who represented the residual unitarist tradition within the CVP- observed with anxiety that large segments of the Flemish electorate perceived the Pact to be favourable to Francophones, because of the acceptance of a three-region solution and the absence of linguistic parity in the Brussels executive. Martens explained:

"the VU, the FDF, the PS and the PSC wanted an agreement at Egmont. Tindemans had more reservations. The friction between those that formulated the accord and those that had to execute it grew under the enormous influence of the opposition movements and the Flemish press, which criticized the concessions. The position of the Prime Minister was never clear., he doubted of the content of the Pact anyway, and it was under the pressure of public opinion that he allowed the pact to fail."

In October 1978, Tindemans provoked a governmental crisis by supporting the CVP parliamentary group which had voted against the regional bill, (Projet de Loi 461),

after the State Council (Conseil d'Etat) had delivered its advisory opinions suggesting that a number of articles were unconstitutional. The deputy minister Hurez's (PSB) call for a cabinet meeting and for the clarification of the Prime Minister's position was met by a stonewalling Tindemans. Interpreting the public dissension within his majority as a direct attack on his authority, Tindemans tendered his resignation to the monarch precipitating the fall of the government (Lemaitre 1982: 223-27). The motivations for reneging on the Egmont Pact on such a technical matter were clear: for Flemish nationalist in the CVP, the three-region solution was unacceptable as it would put Flanders at a numerical disadvantage in the country's regionalized structure. The rulings of the Constitutional Council only strengthened their hand by allowing them to depict their decision as a neutral one. The most important partisan actor in government was thus willing to let the government fall, rather than to support a Pact which was unpopular in Flanders and likely to be costly in electoral terms. In doing so, the CVP was able to depict itself as the defender of the constitution an the champion of Flemish interests.

The Demise of the Belgian Party System (1978)

The failure of the Egmont Pact claimed a number of casualties, but the greatest single victim was the teetering Belgian party system. The divisions between the linguistic wings of the Socialist party were the result of a divergence on the strategy to pursue towards the CVP and Tindemans. Cools wanted to create a common Socialist front of opposition to the treacherous maneuvering of the CVP, but the BSP was concerned that raising the salience of the linguistic issue would carry devastating electoral consequences, given that the CVP would always emerge as the winner of any campaign that sought to stir Flemish nationalist passions. The BSP thus aligned itself with the CVP and the remaining Flemish parties in opposition to the Francophone front. The independence of the two wings of the party was the only way to reconcile these differences. Cools stated during the Congress that witnessed the rupture:

"the subscription of Flemish socialism to the strategy of the Flemish front constrained the Francophone Socialists to adopt a parallel strategy, with the scission of the party as the predictable and inevitable outcome." (cited in Maurage 1997: 112)

Much like the splits of the Liberal and Christian Democratic parties, the rupture of the Socialist party was due to the impossibility of reconciling the divergent demands of Flemings and Walloons. With the separation of the Parti Socialiste (PS) and the Vlaamse Socialisten (VS), and the complete bifurcation of the party system, the position of parties on the linguistic issue-dimension became increasingly polarized. During the campaign,

two separate fronts, comprising on the one hand the CVP-SP-VU and on the other, the PSPSC- FDF, issued common declarations regarding their objectives for the reform of the state (MacMullen 1978). The Flemish front asserted the principle of territoriality- the authority of the Flemish community over the entire Flemish territory- and re-iterated demands for the autonomy of the Flemish community council. The CVP radicalized its views, promoting a federalism based on two communities, in which the Flemish cultural and regional councils would be merged (CVP 1978). The parties of the Francophone front promised concerted action in their quest for a decentralisation towards three regions. The PRLW took an aggressively pro-francophone stance by opposing the fixing of the city's boundaries and linguistic parity in the executive branch of the Brussels regional government (PRLW 1978). The institutionalization of linguistic divisions had freed the country's linguistic divisions from its organizational straight-jacket. Christian Democratic, Socialist and Liberal party families no longer needed to reconcile the conflicting demands of the two communities for different formats of territorial autonomy. Since the shift to a strongly pro-nationalist position for parties on either side of the linguistic frontier was now relatively costless, they were no longer constrained in deploying the accommodating electoral strategies that would help them to compete against their regional nationalist rivals. However, the split of the party system simply shifted linguistic tensions from the party arena into the governmental arena, where parties would need to reconcile their own preferences with that of their coalition partners. As Deschouwer (1996: 300)observes:

"almost every linguistic issue that comes to the surface after the split of the national parties, ends on the table of the government, and that means conflict in the governmental party system".

The results of the 1978 election vindicated the electoral strategy of mainstream parties. The VU was punished by the Flemish electorate and lost 5 percent of the vote and 6 seats. The neo-traditional current in the VU formed a separate party, the *Vlaams Blok* (VB) which obtained its first parliamentary seat. The decline of the VU was to the immediate benefit of the CVP, which reaped the rewards of its *Flamingant* posture and re-established its hegemony in Flanders, regaining in the same measure a more influential presence in state-level politics. Developments in Wallonia and Brussels were more erratic. The precipitous fall of the RW after 1977, was to the benefit of all mainstream parties, the Liberal party increased its share of the vote from 15.5 to 19.4 percent, the Socialist party from 34 to 37 percent and the PSC from 20 to 27 percent. In Brussels, the FDF remained the strongest party, through its alliance with the Liberals. It was followed by the PSC with

27 percent, while the PSB continued to trail in third place. The 1978 election thus witnessed a restoration in the partisan distribution of power. The Christian Democratic and Socialist parties regained their predominance over their traditional strongholds, translating into an even balance of power at the state level, while the Liberals mustered a stable performance remaining the third political force at both the regional and state level.

The Regionalisation of Belgium (1979-1980)

Subsequent attempts at government formation focused on forging a compromise between the Flemish and Francophone visions of Belgian federalism. This was not an easy task as the *informateurs* and *mediateurs* were confronted with the hardening of the positions on all fronts. As way of overcoming differences over the format of federalism, the Prime Minister heading the caretaker government, Vanden Boeynants (PSC) brought forward the principle of asymmetry, proposing the creation of a Flemish council, competent in community and regional matters, alongside a council for the French community, and regional councils for Brussels and Wallonia. The Flemish parties would obtain the creation of a regional body corresponding with the contours of the Flemish nation, while the Francophone parties would obtain a three-region institutional settlement. Andre Cools subsequently issued a note that suggested that the parties agree to the 'immediate' phase of regionalization, creating the executives of regional and community council, but postpone decisions on the 'definitive' phase dealing with their competences and financial resource. Lastly, it was agreed that the question of the composition of the Brussels executive would be put 'on ice' until the next legislature (Brassine 1979: 255-9). The PS could no longer let the issue of Brussels hold the negotiations hostage. As Martens stated:

"the fate of Brussels was the price to be paid by the Walloons, which did not want to wait any longer for their regional autonomy."

On the basis of this agreement, the CVP-PSC and PS-SP co-opted the support of the FDF, and in April 1979, the five parties assumed office. By refusing to countenance the creation of a two-community settlement, in which the Brussels agglomeration would be overlooked, the FDF forced the CVP to accept the principle of institutional asymmetry. But once in government, the influence the FDF exercised over the running of the executive was negligible, due to its continuous conflicts with the CVP. Following the CVP's annual congress in December 1979 and 1980, the position of the CVP hardened and it began to revise its position on many of the items contained in the governmental agreement, calling for a federalization process on the basis of two entities and the need to

fuse the second and the third phases of the regionalization process, provoking the ire of the PS and the FDF (Lemaitre 1982: 266-8).[95] The latter were quickly dispatched and Martens opened the government to the PRL-PVV in order to enact the regionalization legislation. In August 1980, the government revised the constitution and passed two laws on institutional reform. The reform greatly enhanced the legislative autonomy of the constituent entities: the competences of community councils were extended from cultural to 'personalisable' matters- including health care and welfare policy- and they were given the right to exercise the competences of regions mentioned in Art 107d. The special law of the 8th of August put this into effect for Flanders, fusing the Flemish Region and Community, and created the possibility for the Francophone community. Regions were given an institutional infrastructure and they were assigned policy autonomy in wide range of social and economic policies. The ordinary law of the 9th August 1980 provided communities and regions with financial resources principally from indexed block grants, and paved the way for the financial autonomy by including a right to taxation. The process of decentralisation was also organized according to the vertical principle: communities and regions obtained exclusive competences and separate institutions, including a separate legislature, executive and civil service. The combination of separate institutions enjoying equal legal status, with exclusive competences was designed to create watertight compartments, in order to keep conflict low (Hooghe 1993: 57)

The reform to the Belgian constitution was thus once again steered and settled by the mainstream parties, which maintained a tight control over the dynamics of the negotiations and the ratification process. While the VU and the FDF had exercised a significant influence on the political agenda at Egmont by defining the definitive format of regionalization, their efforts were stymied by the volte-face of the CVP. Mainstream parties, which had by then assumed a fully regionalist profile, seized the content of the pact to pursue their efforts of constitutional reform, but contributed two innovations to secure an agreement-the principle of institutional asymmetry and the postponement of the thorny question of Brussels. The establishment of decentralized institutions and the incomplete format of Belgian federalism furnished mainstream politicians with a specific political programme for the next phase of institutional reforms- pushing Belgium more clearly in the federal direction.

---

[95] The government accord distinguished between the immediate, transitory and definitive phases. The immediate phase was undertaken as soon as the government was constituted, but the transitory phases would necessitate a special and ordinary bill on the communities and regions, and the proposition for the revision of certain articles of the constitution. The definitive phase dealt with balancing the weight of linguistic groups in the central government in order to ensure equal participation in the formulation of laws in reserved matters

Completing the Federal Edifice (1981-1993)

Following the collapse of the Egmont pact, the break-up of the Socialist party and the complete bifurcation of the party system along linguistic lines, the regional nationalist parties suffered a dramatic fall in electoral fortunes. The RW and FDF all but disappeared in the francophone party system, but the VU's resilience and the shift in its policy towards the endorsement of a confederal Belgian union did nevertheless have some effect on the nationalist rhetoric of the CVP. The policies of mainstream parties were however increasingly determined by competition in the regionalized party system, which were becoming increasingly different in their format and mechanics, as well as by the unfinished business of the previous round of reform and their experience at the helm of regional executives. Although the VU participated in and lent its parliamentary support to the centre-left coalition that had the task of completing the federal state, its demands were too far removed from the concrete problems of creating regional institutions for Brussels, and establishing direct elections for community and regional councils, for the party to exert an important influence on the substance of the reforms. Instead the deal that was forged reflected a compromise between the perspectives of the CVP and the PS, the two mainstream parties that emerged as the principal spokespersons for Flanders and Wallonia.

Surrendering the Agenda (1981-1987)

The split of the Socialist party in 1978 and the enactment of the regionalization laws in 1980 marked two critical turning points in the evolution of the Belgian party system that decisively affected the capacity of the regional nationalist parties to set the political agenda from the electoral arena. By 1980, all three regional nationalist parties had become associated with the political establishment, and in keeping with Deschouwer's (Deschouwer 1994: 103) contention, that "new parties begin to lose as soon as they are perceived as being part of the traditional game", the give-and-take nature of coalition politics created the perception that they had failed to protect the interests of their respective community, and the parties paid a hefty price for their participation in government. However, they were now competing in a party system bifurcated along linguistic lines in which state-wide parties had disappeared. This distinctive Belgian feature radically transformed the logic of party competition by compelling mainstream parties in each regional party system to outbid each other continuously in their role as representatives or defenders of their language group, enabling the VU in particular to continue exerting pressures on the flanks of the CVP and PVV.

In the Flemish party system, the debacle of the Egmont Pact engendered a radicalization of the Flemish nationalism, the immediate offspring of which was the extreme-right *Vlaams Blok* (VB). The VB incarnated the radical and authoritarian component of Flemish nationalism and grew in protest at the VU's willingness to compromise the party's objective of creating a two-community federal settlement. The VB is a typical populist party, that claims to represent the will of the people against the corrupt interests of the elite cartel (Canovan 1999; Mudde 2004). It aims to transform Flanders into an independent state, and its slogan, "*Eigen volk eerst*" connotes an exclusivist form of nationalism. Its independentist stance was also coupled with such objectives as ensuring that the system of tax collection and social security allocation in Flanders benefit the Flemish only (VB 1991). The position of the VU also hardened during the 1980s as the party adjusted its stance to the regionalised Belgian state and to the co-option of the main tenets of its platform by the CVP. The compromise reached in 1980 corresponded with the VU's vision of Belgian federalism- Flemish parties had obtained the fusion of the Flemish community and regional councils and Brussels was put on the backburner. In response, the VU radicalized its platform, by endorsing confederal framework for Belgium (VU 1985). The party president, Vic Anciaux explained the party's aims:

"our objective has always been to push the CVP in what concerns federalisation, but we always went further. What we wanted after the reform was a form of confederalism, to create a federal state, where the two communities agree to what they still do together. We wanted a community with an autonomy as large as possible and that join together in certain areas when it is necessary."

The influence that the VU exerted on the position of the CVP during this period is rather ambiguous: the immediate electoral pressures that it exerted in 1981 had little visible effect on the party's behaviour in government, while the policy shift that it undertook in 1985 had an immediate influence on the CVP's nationalist rhetoric, but coincided with a drop in the party's performance. After a period in opposition and a change in leadership, the VU was able to make incursions in the Christian Democratic camp in 1981, increasing its share of the vote from 11.5 to 15.9 percent and its number of seats from 14 to 21, taking 4 seats from the CVP, two from the PVV and one from the PSB. The PVV also performed well, increasing its share of the vote from 17.7 to 21.1 percent and its number of seats from 22 to 28, taking six seats from the CVP and becoming the second party of the region ahead of the SP. The election was thus a disaster for the CVP, which experienced its worst election since 1946, falling to 43.8 to 32.3 percent of the vote and from 57 to 43 seats (Mabille 1981; VUB PWS 2007).

In spite of this pressure, the turbulence of the late 1970s gave way to a period of relative calm at the level of the national government, presided by two consecutive Christian Democratic and Liberal coalitions, which oversaw the stabilization of the economy. The protracted task of regionalizing the Belgian state had taken its toll on the stamina of the political establishment, which was wary of the detrimental effects of the community debate for the government's capacity to tackle the country's growing macroeconomic difficulties (Mughan 1981). However, expressions of dissatisfaction with the earlier round of reforms emanated from elements in the CVP, which criticized the regionalisation laws for failing to bring about genuine federalism.[96]

The first issue to be raised by the CVP concerned the regionalisation of industrial sectors. The special law of August 1980 had left five industrial sectors under the tutelage of the national government: steel, coal, glass, construction, naval repair and textiles. Under the Second Claes Plan (1981), these sectors were subjected to equivalent parallel large-scale restructuring initiatives, financed entirely by public investment. However, they differed markedly in their economic weight and cost, as well as in their territorial implantation, infusing the debate on industrial sectors with a strong community dimension (Lentzen and Arcq 1981). In particular, the steel conglomerate of Cockerill-Sambre, an industrial giant of Wallonia, had suffered since the economic crisis of 1974 a continuous loss of revenue, pushing private stakeholders and creditors to call for the state's intervention. This would be the catalyst for another skirmish between communities (Capron 1989). In June 1981, the CVP deputy Luc Van den Bande put forth a bill that proposed the regionalisation of these sectors, aiming to ensure their financing through the resources of regional councils. This demand found resonance in Flemish public opinion, among the Flemish business confederation and trade unions, as well as the SP and VU, which were convinced that the restructuring of Wallonia's economy was occurring at the expense of the Flemish tax-payer (Witte and Craeybeckx 1987: 470). It was equally supported by the CVP during its Congress in 1982, when it approved a resolution demanding the regionalisation of sectors. The issue was temporarily resolved in 1983 when Martens created regional ministerial councils in the national government responsible for the disbursement of industrial aid. Thus, the initiatives promoting 'economic federalism' during this period emanated principally from elements within the CVP, rather than from a need to stave off the pressures of the VU. The initiative anyway failed to

---

[96] The principal limitation of the 1980 reform was that although it attempted to minimize conflict between levels of government by devolving competences on an exclusive and jurisdictional basis, individual policy areas were not allocated as a coherent whole, but rather were distributed in slices among two or three arenas (Hooghe 1993: 57)

bring about the desired outcome, as the Prime Minister remained steadfast in his will to keep a lid on the community file.

The second demand emanating from Flanders was the regionalisation of education. This initiative had received the explicit support of the Minister of Education Coens (CVP), but was initially met with the reticence of the secular parties which were a minority in Flanders. However, in 1984, the presidents of the four principal Flemish parties (CVP, SP, PVV, VU) signed a common declaration for the federalisation of education and agreed to work to this end while in national government. This was clear evidence of the way in which the logic of competition in the regionalised party system compelled mainstream parties in Flanders to compete in the articulation of nationalist sentiment and even to overcome their ideological reticence in order to advance autonomist demands (Simon 1986). The strengthening of nationalist fervour in Flanders then erupted in the CVP's party congress in 1986, when it passed a series of resolutions on the parameters of a definitive reform of the state. The rhetoric of the party witnessed an important shift in emphasis that borrowed many of the confederalist and sovereigntist expressions of their regionalist competitors:

"all the competences necessary for the development of our Flemish identity must be transferred to the absolute and sovereign responsibility of the Flemish community, to allow for the for autonomous action and initiatives in these fields… this constitutes an essential condition for allowing the sustainable pursuit of cohabitation between the two communities." (Menu 1994)

The opportunity for the CVP to undertake the institutional reforms which it sought was created in October 1987, when the government fell over the small but politically non-negligible affairs in the Fourons, whose perennially uncertain status as a French-speaking district on the Flemish side of the linguistic border was exacerbated by the fiery antics of its mayor, José Happart, a man incapable of speaking Flemish in spite of the location of his constituency in Flemish territory. The issue inflamed passions in both communities and quickly became a national symbol of the linguistic conflict. The deadlock at the heart of the government over the linguistic obligations of communal representatives appeared impossible to overcome, and the Prime Minister Martens tended his resignation in October 1987. The campaign for the general election of 1987, witnessed a distinct heightening of nationalist sentiment among Flemish political parties (Deschouwer 1987). The CVP's manifesto clearly indicated that it was intent on carrying out a new reform to the country's institutions, calling for the direct elections of regional representatives, the expansion of competences in the fields of education, industrial and

scientific policy, and a corresponding degree of fiscal autonomy. It also called for greater responsibility in the allocation of financial resources, entailing a more accurate reflection of Flanders' fiscal effort and the attribution of solidarity payments on the basis of objective criteria (CVP 1987). The BSP and the PVV echoed demands for the coherent delineation of policy areas, and the PVV went as far as calling for complete fiscal responsibility, so that the Flemish council could establish its own policies on industrial subsidies (PVV 1987; SP 1987). All Flemish mainstream parties stood opposed to the establishment of a fully-fledged institution in Brussels, preferring that the capital city maintain the distinct status of agglomeration governed by a metropolitan council in which the two linguistic communities would be represented on the basis of parity. The CVP emphasized that the community councils would continue to exercise their functions in the capital city, while the PVV stressed that the established territorial boundaries of the city were non-negotiable. The eruption of nationalist passions were matched by the increasingly confident posture of the Socialist party in Wallonia.

Though the Socialist party found itself in opposition between 1985 and 1987, it gradually reasserted its hegemony over the Walloon party system. In 1981, it maintained a stable electoral performance with 36.5 percent of the vote, but increased its number of seats from 32 to 35. Its immediate regionalist competitor, the RW suffered a fall in support from 9.2 to 5.5 percent and lost three seats to the mainstream parties. In 1985, the RW was obliterated from the political scenery and its support base once again scattered their votes across all three mainstream parties, which emerged with a strengthened basis of support, the PS obtaining 29.5 percent, the PSC 22.6 percent and the PRL 24.1 percent. In Brussels, the FDF witnessed its electoral support fall from 35.4 to 22.6 and to 10.9 percent, to the exclusive benefit of the PRL which improved its performance by a comparable magnitude, increasing its share of the vote from 6.4 to 15.8 to 26. percent (Mabille 1981; VUB PWS 2007). Thus, while the party system in Flanders witnessed the perpetuation of regional nationalist parties and patterns of electoral interchange between parties on the centre-right; in Wallonia, the party system was now anchored exclusively on the three traditional mainstream parties, and especially the PS

In opposition, the Socialist party rekindled with its federalist and syndicalist tradition. In February 1981, Cools was replaced by Guy Spitaels, professor of sociology at the Université Libre de Bruxelles and author of numerous works on the sociology of syndicalism. The party adopted an increasingly regionalist profile primarily in order to satisfy its ambition of becoming the majority party in the region; in Brussels in particular,

the erosion of support for the FDF presented an important opportunity for the party to lift its electoral fortunes. The party's electoral tactics suggested that it was intent on emphasizing its Walloon identity. In 1981, it formed a coalition with the RW in the Walloon regional executive and with the FDF-RW in the Francophone Community; in 1984 it even placed José Happart on the party list for European elections in 1984 (Mabille 2005). Spitaels sought to revitalize the party's ties with the FGTB, after relations had soured with Cools over the president's refusal to discipline deputies which had failed to vote against the austerity package passed by the cenre-right coalition. The PS and the FGTB joined forces in opposition to the government's policy on the moderation of pay settlements and to the enactment of laws designed to limit the scope of corporatist intermediation (Witte and Craeybeckx 1987: 466). As an element of its strategy of opposition, it also sought to exploit community tensions, denouncing the 'Belgo-Flemish' state for the collapse of the steel industry in Wallonia. The PS issued demands for the regionalisation of industrial sectors, an initiative that received the endorsement of the FGTB, which was intent on managing industrial problems at the regional level, given that the national government was occupied by a centre-right coalition. In its Congress of 1981, the PS demanded the deepening of the regionalisation laws of 1980 and endorsed an 'integral' form of federalism, with direct regional elections, the transfer of exclusive competences and the allocation of residual power to regions (PSB 1981). It also demanded greater financial resources to fund the new policy sectors, but argued for a balance between financial responsibility and solidarity (PS 1985, 1987). Though it was labeled as a 'radical' form of federalism, the demand for further decentralization was also spurred by considerations of efficiency. As Spitaels stated in an interview:

"we were motivated by two considerations-the fact that the strongest (the Flemish) continued to make decisions in their own interests, and that it was difficult to pass decisions that affected primarily the Walloon region….and the fact that the distribution of competences in the regionalization laws of 1980 was absurd…so, from the perspective of the public investments, and certainly of the process of decision-making, if each group is allowed to manage more, there is a more rational system."

As with Flanders, Wallonia witnessed a convergence in the position of mainstream political parties on the territorial dimension and a demand for improving the efficacy and transparency of the regionalized state through the simplification of policy jurisdictions. This decentralization was however to be balanced by the strengthening of central institutions: the PSC aimed to achieve a 'federalism of union'- underlining the importance of federal loyalty- in which institutions of intergovernmental cooperation would play a

central role in resolving conflicts; the PRL added the request of ensuring linguistic parity in the Senate. Both parties vaguely recognized the need for revising financial arrangements in accordance with the principles of responsibility and solidarity (PRL 1987; PSC 1987) The legacy the previous round of reform also influenced the position of the Socialist party on the matter of the creation of fully-fledged regional institutions for Brussels. While the councils of the Flemish and Walloon region had operated autonomously since 1980, the government of the Brussels agglomeration remained with the Ministerial Committee for the Brussels Region in the national executive. This situation was unsatisfactory to the deputies and ministers of the Brussels region. Anne Mouzon (PS), member of the Cabinet for the Brussels Region explained:

"the immediate impact of putting Brussels 'on ice' was the lack of autonomy. There was a genuine disinterest on the behalf of the federal authorities which continued to exercise legislative power over the region, generating enormous difficulties for French- Flemish relations. Simple example: if one needed to develop a plan for urbanism for the entire region, one needed to modify federal law, pass through the federal parliament, which would require linguistic parity in all the concertation committees, even though it only concerned the region of Brussels."

The positions of political parties in the Francophone community on the format of federalism however diverged significantly. The PS and PSC demanded the establishment of separate fully-fledged regional institutions for Brussels, and the PSC added that the these should also be competent for community matters for the two linguistic communities in the region. The position of the PRL reflected its newly established predominance in Brussels: it continued to defend the rights of the Francophones in the periphery suggesting that the territorial limits of the city should be determined by plebiscite, it also demanded the simplification of federal institutions through the transfer of community matters to the Brussels regional government and the fusion of the Walloon Region and Francophone Community. The onset of a generalized community crisis in 1987 offered a decisive opportunity for the Francophone and Flemish parties to address the unfinished business of the previous round of negotiations. However, the breakdown of the party system along linguistic lines and the polarization between Francophone and Flemish parties engendered the country's longest governmental crisis. It is important to recall moreover that mainstream parties were confronted with increasingly different electorates. Surveys conducted during and following the elaboration of the regionalisation laws of August 1980 indicated that the north and south of the country were becoming alienated from one another in terms of their feeling of belongingness to the Belgian state and their intentions on the question of institutional reform. The population of Flanders displayed a

more robust cultural identity than Wallonia, identified less with the Belgian state than the Francophones, and was more in favour of federalism. In both regions autonomy was perceived as a way of offsetting the consequences of cultural or economic minorisation. The electorates of the two regions were thus increasingly distant from one another, and it was uncertain whether there was a sufficient feeling of national identity for the system to survive (Delruelle-Vosswinckel 1981, 1982, 1983)

Finalising the Federal Format (1988-1992)

The 1987 general election resulted in a devastating setback for the CVP and a emphatic victory for the PS. In Flanders, the CVP lost three percent of the vote and six seats, principally to the SP, PVV and Agalev; the VU maintained a steady performance with 12.9 percent of the vote and 16 seats. In Wallonia, the PS recorded its best result since 1965, obtaining a formidable 43.9 percent of the vote and 40 seats, 20 percent ahead of the PSC. Given that the two largest mainstream parties had each elaborated ambitious proposals for constitutional reform during their period in office and opposition, combining talks for constitutional reforms and for the formation of a new government provided the opening necessary for calming the tension between communities created by the Fourons affair. The content of the constitutional reforms would thus overwhelmingly reflect the preferences of the largest mainstream parties steering the debate.

The task of forming a government was initially complicated by the need to establish the requisite majorities for 'special' laws, by the divergence performance of parties in the two regions, and by the importance attached to maintaining congruence between coalitions at the national and regional level.[97] The *formateur*, Jean-Luc Dehaene, invited the VU in an informal preliminary dialogue to identify whether a sufficient common base could be found to begin negotiations. The VU had expressed a willingness to join the government, a participation which was supported by the CVP because it would have the added benefit of providing a Christian Democratic- Socialist coalition with the qualified majority for revising the Constitution and passing the special laws for institutional reform. But the co-option of the VU was never perceived as a decisive for the success of negotiations. Rather, its participation was conceived as a guarantee that the institutional reform would be acceptable to all parties. As the formateur stated:

---

[97] While it favoured a tripartite at the federal level, the CVP also proposed an incongruence of coalitions, so that it could maintain control of the Flemish executive with its Liberal partner. This option was rejected by the Socialist party and the PSC. The PS had established a coalition with the PSC and FDF in the Francophone community and wished to maintain congruence. The Flemish Socialists and the VU demanded access to the Flemish executive as a condition for entry to the national government. As a compromise, Dehaene proposed that the Flemish regional executive be formed on the basis of proportionality rather than majority, enabling the entry of the SP and the VU.

"for us, it was a type of guarantee, if they accepted the reform, we would not be under the pressure of public opinion once the content was released. We needed them to satisfy the two thirds, but the main reason was the guarantee. If they were in it, we could avoid a fight from breaking out. Their technical contribution to the institutional content was not really important."

The negotiation strategy that Dehaene deployed was to compartmentalize discussions in 'closed circuit dialogues', and to proceed first by negotiating the issues on which there was a consensus, such as the decentralisation of competences, and to tackle the most difficult questions last, such as the institutions of Brussels, in the hope that the results already achieved would be sufficiently important to all parties to force them to reach a compromise (Brassine and Mabille 1988). The government accord stated that one of the major challenges was to:

"undertake a new phase in the reform of the state whose objective is to meet the aspirations of the population and to augment the efficiency of political structures" (CEPESS 1988)

The heart of the agreement reflected a compromise between the positions of the CVP and the PS. It included a commitment to the decentralisation of competences for communities in education and for regions in the regulation of the national industrial sectors, as well as in transportation, public works, environment and scientific research. These new competences would be matched by increasing financial resources-predominantly in the form of central government transfers. Fiscal devolution thus remained limited- since regions and communities exercised no power over tax base and rates- but they nevertheless obtained considerable discretion in the allocation of central transfers (Stienlet 1999). Lastly, the accord also foresaw the creation of a genuine federal structure with directly elected regional institutions. The solution to the Fourons crisis reflected the CVP's staunch defense of the territorial principle embodied in the linguistic laws of 1962-1964, conferring jurisdiction over communes with linguistic facilities to the regional government. But the Francophone parties were able to secure a concession for the six communes around Brussels, with the extension the principle whereby elected representatives of the people are automatically assumed to know the language of their constituency.[98] The francophone negotiators were thus able to argue that the rights of French speakers in the six communes around Brussels had actually been reinforced, so that town councillors andaldermen who did not speak Dutch would occupy an effectively unassailable position (Witte 1992: 102)

---

[98] Known in Belgian constitutional vernacular as the "*présomption de connaissance irréfragable de la langue de la region*" (the irrebutable presumption of knowledge of the regional language)

With regard to Brussels, the PS recorded an important gain: the capital city was to become a fully fledged third region with an elected council and an executive body. The executive and council were divided into two linguistic groups and colleges, which were responsible for the execution of community-related matters in the Brussels region. The linguistic college would be headed by the French or Flemish-speaking Brussels member of the French or Dutch Community. As a compensation for this fundamental concession on behalf of the Flemish parties, a number of consociational devices were introduced in the legislature and executive, analogous to those present at the national level: an alarm bell procedure, fixed representation of two Flemish members in the executive, allowing them to be over-represented without achieving a status of parity. Lastly, the Brussels region did not enjoy the same constitutional status as other regions, since its ordinances could be overridden by national legislation (Loumaye 1989).

The accord committed the government to undertaking the reform in three separate phases: the first phase would take place immediately, the second would begin at the opening of the parliamentary session, while the timing of the third phase would depend on the speed at which the parliament adopted the second phase. The purpose was to satisfy enthusiasts such as the VU, which demanded the immediate satisfaction of some of their demands, and to leave to an unspecified date the implementation of certain reforms over which disagreement remained. The second was to dispel the apprehension that certain parties would renege on the government agreement once their preferences on institutional reform were satisfied. The Francophone parties, in particular, feared that the Flemish parties would torpedo the creation of a Brussels region once the laws reinforcing their competences and financial resources were approved. The order of legislative activity was structured to counter this possibility. In her account, Mouzon said:

"we knew that the Flemish economic minister does not have anything in his hands as long as the special laws financing was not approved. When we look at the timeline, first we did the constitutional revision, then the special law on competences- but these are meaningless until we approve the law on financing- then we passed the special law for Brussels, then the law on financing. So the Flemish minister only obtained financial resources attached to the new competences, once we consented to the law for Brussels."

The implementation of the first phase and second phase of reforms were unproblematic. In July and August 1988, the government revised seven articles of the constitution concerning the regime for communes with linguistic facilities, the competences and financial arrangements for communities and region, and the creation of institutions for the Brussels-Capital Region. These amendments were then brought into

play with the special laws of August 1988 and January 1989. The content of the third phase posed greater problems. The government accord had announced the tackling of further issues- the direct elections of community and regional councils- which it had left only vaguely defined because of the persistent differences over its content. The direct elections of constituent bodies meant that electoral divisions needed to be brought into line with territorial divisions, entailing the division of the Brussels electoral district into the Dutch-speaking Hal-Vilvoorde district and the Francophone Brussels-Capital district, and thus the loss of effective voting rights of the French-speaking minority in the Flemish region (Arcq et al. 1991). While the PS adamantly opposed this scission, it was equally forcefully demanded by the VU and certain members of the CVP. The most critical aspect of the installation of a genuine federal system, the creation of a tier of government with a separate source of legitimacy was impeded by the complications generated by the fate of Brussels and its periphery. The high ideological distance separating the Flemish and Francophone partisan actors imposed a high decision-making threshold on the ratification of the third phase and had effectively diminished the likelihood of institutional change. Legislative deadlock engendered government instability. The lack of progress on federal reform lead to the escalation of tensions between members of the coalition.

In the spring of 1991, the VU threatened to make its participation in government conditional on the completion of institutional reforms. But, rather than lead to a new round of constructive engagement, the threat of exit simply intensified the tensions. The PS and PSC demanded the integral transfer of revenues from radio and television licenses to communities, and added the request that French-speakers in the Flemish region be given the right to vote in elections to Community councils. In return, the CVP, SP and VU demanded that any increase in transfers should be met by the devolution of social security and continued to express deep hostility at the idea of granting French-speakers extraterritorial voting rights (Mabille 2000). Then, an open conflict broke out over the question of the competence of the Walloon region to issue licenses for arms exports. Suddenly infused with pacifistic proclivities, the VU quit the government and the government fell. On the night before the election, the Flemish council drew up a list of demands with strong a confederalist flavour. It demanded the direct election of the Flemish council and the respect of the principle of territoriality, the scission of the Brabant province, the maximum devolution of competences, along with genuine fiscal and financial responsibility. The antagonist posturing of the two Communities set a confrontational tone for the following round of negotiations.

Concluding the Third Phase (1993)

The election of November 1991 in Flanders was catastrophic for the mainstream political parties. The incumbent parties were severely punished: the CVP sunk to a new low of 26.9 percent and the SP fell from 24.2 to 19.6 percent, the VU also fell from 12.9 tom 9.3 percent. Anti-system sentiment was rife, as the VB made a historic breakthrough, increasing its support from 3.0 to 10.3 percent. In Wallonia, the incumbent parties also suffered a loss, though far less dramatic and exclusively to the benefit of the Ecologists. The sudden surge in support for the far-right VB was a particularly worrying development and it placed considerable pressure on mainstream parties to finalise the reform of the State and to conclude the third phase (Mabille et al. 1991). This task was complicated by the polarisation of positions between the Flemish and the Francophone parties on the fate of the electoral district of Brussels in direct elections as well as the question of financing of regions and communities.

In February 1992, Jean-Luc Dehaene was appointed formateur and re-introduced in his note the thorniest issue of the third phase- direct elections. The main innovation in the accord was the avoidance any specific solution, it only included a general commitment to "developing the federal structures of the state". However, given that the CVP and PS had been seriously weakened in the election, that the government lacked the requisite majority for undertaking a reform of the constitution, and that it was feared that negotiations could once again lead to the escalation of tensions between communities, Dehaene delegated the task of reaching a compromise to a community dialogue between Flemish and Francophone parties. The dialogue involved all parties in government and opposition, save for the VB and Van Rossem, and was divided into five working groups under the direction of Hugo Schilts (VU) and Gerard Deprez (PSC). The choice of these individuals was not random. Philippe Busquin, president of the PS stated that the polarisation between the two communities required the parties to bring about a convergence in position.

"we asked for the dialogue to be presided with a good equilibrium between federalists and unitarists, and we included the most divergent groups to ensure that all view points would be respected."

The aim of the dialogue was thus to induce a convergence in the position of the most distant actors in the parliament, to create the space in which a compromise on institutional change could be inserted, and to establish a basis for the formation of a government. But by June, it was apparent that the dialogue had achieved little and the

position of parties remained poles apart, in particular over the question of the representation of French-speakers in the Brussels periphery and the refinancing of the French Community.[99] In July, the Flemish council adopted a ten point programme submitted by the VB, which opposed the attribution of voting rights to the French-speakers of the Brussels periphery, a motion that was opposed with equal vehemence by the Francophone parties (CRISP 1992). Faced with persistent partisan quarrels, the Prime Minister returned from the summer recess with a new strategy: reaching an agreement within the coalition and searching for the necessary support in parliament to meet the qualified majority for its implementation. As he explained:

"during the recess, I created enormous pressures on the CVP, stating that if by the date of the next party congress, the 4th of october, there was no agreement on state reform, and on the budget, we would make the government fall. Without this pressure, we would never have reached an agreement."

At the end of September, the parties in government arrived at a bargain on institutional reform, integrating the main aspects of the Flemish council's programme including the further transfer of competences, the granting of greater fiscal autonomy, the scission of the Brabant province into two linguistic parts. In order to be realised, the accord between the four parties in government needed the legislative support of parties in the opposition, namely the Green party family and the VU, the Liberals having already expressed their opposition to the reforms. The chief demands of the VU at the time were the transfer of residual competences towards federated entities and the reform of the social security system to eliminate transfers that could not be justified on the basis of social solidarity or objective social factors. But the influence of the VU on the content of final agreement was not significant. Although achieved its objective of transferring residual competences towards federated entities, Dehaene stated:

"it was a symbolic thing, in which it is written that it possible. But you would need the two-thirds to execute it, but I knew this would never be the case, because we would need first to define the list of reserved competences and in a state that is constantly decentralising, it is practically impossible."

In mid-November the Congress of the VU approved the accords, but reiterated opposition to transfers between the north and the south. The claims however fell on deaf ears, as the task of ascertaining the direction and size of indirect transfers from north to south, was too demanding and sensitive to address at such a late point in the process of

---

[99] The VU deputy Bert Anciaux had opposed the 'cementing' of the linguistic facilities around Brussels and the proposal of the PS for increasing the financing of the French community by allowing schools to access credit without placing these debts on the community's balance sheet. Interview. P.Busquin (PS)

implementation. The bulk of the accords were subjected to parliamentary debate in January and February 1993. The most symbolic aspect of the reform was the revision of Art.1 which modified the vocabulary of the constitution, stipulating that "Belgium is a federal state composed of communities and regions." The constitution assigned all residual powers to the regional and community governments and in May, the parliament approved the transfer of competences to regions in matters of external trade and agriculture, scientific research as well as external representation in their respective devolved policy areas (Delpérée 1993). While the state remained responsible for macro-economic stabilisation and redistribution-primarily through the welfare state, the reform had lead to the creation of a profoundly decentralised state. The financial capacity of sub-state entities was reinforced with an increase in transfers to the Communities and Regions but the federal government retained substantial control in the fiscal arena. Lastly, the principle of direct election was inserted in the constitution; the two tiers of government in Belgium finally enjoyed separate spheres of autonomy and sources of legitimacy. The edifice of Belgian federalism was finally completed.

The profound restructuring of the Belgian state that unfolded from the late 1960s to the early 1990s was undertaken by mainstream political parties representing the three spiritual families in response to rising nationalist sentiment in Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels and to the increasing pressures of regional nationalist parties in the electoral, parliamentary and governmental arenas. The single most important influence that these parties exercised was situated at the level of the attitudes of mainstream parties towards the issue of territorial autonomy. The Christian Democratic, Socialist and Liberal parties all displayed similarly unitarist positions in the post-war era, and their initial response to rising tensions between linguistic communities was to neutralize it, mainly though 'output' concessions such as the reform of the linguistic regime and budgetary and administrative separation in culturally sensitive policy areas. This choice of strategy reflected both the absence of an immediate electoral threat, the resilience of their position, the presence of important internal division on the constitutional form of the state and the legacy of consociational methods for pacifying political conflict. When the electoral pressures of regional nationalist parties grew in their respective strongholds in the late 1960s, they were compelled to co-opt nationalist demands for a federal reform of the state. The difficulty of deploying such an electoral strategy however compounded existing divisions within the linguistic wings of mainstream parties and forced the split of party

organizations, first of the Christian Democratic and then the Liberal parties, producing a gradual bifurcation of the party system along linguistic line, and the disappearance of the only actor in the party system with a strongly unitarist ideology. Thus, the need to placate nationalist parties in the electoral arena engendered the disappearance of state-wide party organizations which, in turn, facilitated the adoption of pro-autonomist positions, even among mainstream parties that did not feature of past tradition of accommodation. In contrast, the territorial branches of the Socialist party were able to revive the party's federalist traditions and produce a unified stance in favour of territorial autonomy, in the face of the electoral pressures of the RW and FDF, and they maintained a common front during much of the 1970s, playing an active role in government by advancing a functional form of decentralization and producing an ambitious proposal for federal reform on the basis of three regions while in opposition. The gradual polarization of the party system on the linguistic dimension and the rancor created by the collapse of the Egmont Pact however lead to the party's unraveling in 1978 and to the demise of the Belgian party system. Thus, the net effect of the pressure exerted by nationalist parties in the electoral arena was the bifurcation of the party system, the increasing competitive pressures on the territorial dimension in the regionalized party system and the adoption of strongly pro-autonomist positions among the leading mainstream parties of each regions: the CVP in Flanders, the PS in Wallonia and the Liberals in Brussels. However, the regional nationalist parties may have been too successful for their own good. By the 1980s, most of their demands for federal reform had become fully co-opted by mainstream parties, and while the VU remained resilient in the Flemish party system by radicalizing its platform, the RW and FDF disappeared from the political scenery.

While the influence of nationalist parties on the attitudes of mainstream parties lied at the origin of the restructuring of the Belgian state, the consensual institutional arrangements of Belgium also enabled them to give impulse to and to shape the content of the constitutional reforms from the parliamentary and governmental arenas. The possibilities offered by the decision-rules for reforming the constitution and by the consensual decision style prevailing in Belgian political culture- manifest in the habitual organization of cross-party conferences, conclaves or community dialogues- arose first in the late 1960s when the centre-left coalition sought parliamentary support for its plan for constitutional reform, enabling the proposal for decentralization on the basis of communities and regions to surface. The association of regional nationalist parties with majority power came about during the 1970s. Their bargaining power before the

255

mainstream parties in government was underpinned principally by the increasing fragmentation of the party system, by the decision-rules inherited from the consociational settlement of 1970, and by the discordant relations between the Socialist and Liberal parties which systematically precluded the creation of tripartite coalition governments. When in government, the RW played a decisive role in the elaboration of the 'preparatory law' on regionalization, in which the principle of regionalization on the basis of three regions was introduced and the territorial limits of three constitutent units were established. The VU and the FDF also made a constructive contribution to resolving the divergent perspectives between Flemish and Francophone parties on the format of regional government, by reaching a compromise on the territorial limits of Brussels and the rights of the Francophone minorities situated in the adjacent communes in Flemish territory. The VU was co-opted once again in the late 1980s, but while the party was numerically necessary for satisfying the 'two-thirds' quorum, their influence on the substance of the compromise was mitigated by the distance of their demands from the positions of mainstream parties in government.

The ideology of mainstream parties proved to have a decisive effect on conditioning the feasibility and determining the content of institutional change. This was illustrated most vividly when the CVP leader, under pressure from nationalist elements within his party and in the Flemish electoral arena, opposed the implementation of the Egmont Pact, because of the fundamental concession it made on the creation of fully-fledged regional institutions for Brussels. It was also visible in conditioning what the regional nationalist parties could achieve while in government: the FDF was incapable of achieving its main objective because of the CVP's opposition to the creation of a Brussels region; the VU could not obtain a scission of the BHV electoral district because of the PS's opposition to any measure that compromised the political rights of the francophone minority. The influence of ideology could finally be appreciated in the types of compromises that were being forged between the Christian Democratic and Socialist parties. In the first moment of reform, the basic trade-off was between the protection of the francophone minority through power-sharing institutions at the centre being pushed by the PSB and the recognition of cultural councils pushed by the CVP. During the late 1980s, the bargain reconciled the decentralization of powers and resources and the creation of regional institutions for the Brussels, albeit with power-sharing and mutual veto devices to protect the Flemish minority. The leading mainstream parties of Flanders and Wallonia thus maintained an important control over the outcome of the negotiations.

Part III/ Comparative Perspectives

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Accommodation of Nationalism

The accommodation of nationalism is a delicate form of government. It is a political strategy undertaken primarily for the purpose of containing regional nationalism, a political force whose 'controlling goal' is to alter the structures of the state in such as way as to reflect the distinctiveness of a country's stateless nations and to gratify their desire for self-government. It is a fine balancing act that obliges mainstream political elites to tackle the dilemma of responding to the political claims of regional nationalist parties by giving recognition to the multinational character of society and establishing institutions of regional government while simultaneously ensuring the stability and territorial integrity of the state, the alignment of political decentralisation with their values, beliefs and political objectives and the satisfaction of potentially diverging preferences expressed by other social and territorial constituents comprising their support base. Territorial autonomy constitutes the main strategy of accommodation available to political elites for 'managing' this dilemma and its continuous deployment is at the source of the process of territorial restructuring in which unitary states have gradually shed their centralist characteristics and transformed into regionalised states and federations. This thesis set out to investigate the influence that regional nationalist parties have exercised on this momentous transformation and proposed a two-stage theoretical framework that captures the electoral, institutional and ideological variables that conditions the capacity of regional nationalist parties to place their demands on the agenda and the capacity of mainstream parties in government to enact the policies designed to address these demands.

The purpose of this chapter is to take stock of the politics of accommodation in Great Britain, Spain and Belgium and to uncover the conditions under which regional nationalist parties have influenced changes in state structures by effecting a systematic comparative analysis between the three countries during key moments in the process of restructuring: the creation of decentralisation structures, the empowerment of regional government and the deepening of territorial autonomy. In order to shed light on the significance of the factors that have produced institutional change, this chapter also examines negative cases, the instance of failed territorial reforms. Understanding diversity lies at the heart of social scientific inquiry and the ambition of this thesis was precisely to examine the variation observed across three countries in the influence exerted by regional

nationalist parties on the reform of state structures. To do so, the thesis abided by the conventional wisdom of comparative politics for mitigating the problem of limited causal inference inherent to all 'small-N' analyses and made use of the congruence procedure by disaggregating each case-study into distinct temporal units.[100] The analysis of these individual observations demonstrated the existence of an important degree of variation in the capacity of regional nationalist parties to set the political agenda and to prompt institutional change. This variation was given theoretical coherence and empirical flesh in the individual case-studies, but it is important to explore this pattern of diversity across and within the different case-studies in order to "transcend generability and complexity" (Ragin 2000: 21), that is, to arrive at a historically-embedded explanation of the phenomenon that can provide a generalisable insights about certain systemic relationships.

The main parameters of comparison between each observation will correspond to the two-stage framework for analysis. The purpose is to identify the variable sources of the agenda-setting capacity of regional nationalist parties in different arenas of political action, to examine how elements in the political context- the ideological openness of mainstream parties, the configuration of power and patterns of competition between them, and the salience of the territorial dimension- amplifies the resonance of nationality claims in the political system, and to investigate how the type and composition of governments and the ideological distance between partisan veto players during the decision-making phase affects the likelihood and the substance of territorial reforms. The idea here is to view each observation within a type as a configuration of different factors that have produced similar outcomes. This insight underpins the notion of 'equifinality', i.e. the idea that a same outcome may be caused by different values on the independent variables or by different paths featuring different interaction effects. The purpose of configurative analysis, as Ragin (2000: 71) puts it, is "to compare cases by building up accounts whose generality lies in the categories the analysis generates." The inferences that are drawn from these two forms of comparisons are based on a form of causal reasoning grounded in the analysis of necessity and sufficiency, establishing the set conditions underlying the influence of regional nationalist parties on territorial reforms.[101]

---

[100] This method generation a total of sixteen observations in three different countries, four for Great Britain [GB_1= 1966-1974]; GB_2=1974-1979; GB_3=1979-1987; GB_4=1987-1997], six for Spain [S_1=1977-1978; S_2=1978-1982; S_3=1982-1989; S_4=1989-1993; S_5=1993-1996; S_4=1996-2000], and six for Belgium [B_1=1961=1968; B_2=1968-1970; B_3=1974-1977; B_4=1979-1980; B_4=1987-1992; B_6=1992-1993]

[101] The widely accepted weakness of this form of reasoning is that it is too deterministic, i.e. the conditions posited as necessary and sufficient explain all the observed variation, and that it cannot therefore take into account the presence of deviant cases, the impact of random fluctuations or the bias introduced by measurement errors (Mahoney 2000). However, it is nevertheless possible to produce probabilistic statements, by looking at the frequency at which certain conditions are either necessary or sufficient, what Little (1991) refers to as enhancing or inhibiting conditions

The Creation of Decentralised Structures

The creation of decentralised structures is the most important moment in the process of territorial restructuring as it signals a fundamental and irreversible shift in the categorisation of state structures from unitary-centralised towards a decentralised, regionalised and federal. It is a momentous initiative that recognises the legitimacy of nationality claims, puts into place the architecture of territorial authority that ensures a coincidence between national identity and political-administrative boundaries and that paves the way for the ensuing migration of authority towards the regional level. And it is for these reasons that the initiatives are often so strongly resisted by mainstream political parties and take place only under very specific conditions. In all three cases under investigation, there were striking commonalities in the paths adopted: regional nationalist parties were able to exert pressures on mainstream parties and place their demands on the political agenda; their claims received the support of Social Democratic parties in opposition which were open to the accommodation of nationalism and manipulated the territorial dimension in their strategy against centre-right governments; the question of territorial reform featured as a salient and controversial issue of competition between mainstream parties during electoral contests; the constitutional reforms were carried out by centre-left governments in which veto players displayed the will to implement reforms. The comparison between three instances of a successful creation, and the contrast with the case of failure, shows that these were jointly necessary conditions

The creation of decentralised territorial structures was driven by the increasing strength and assertiveness of regional nationalist parties. Although there was an important degree of variation across political systems in the arena from which they set the political agenda, in the electoral and institutional variables underpinning their 'relevance' and in broader parameters of party system change, in each case, they systematically exerted the pressures necessary to compel mainstream parties to shift their position on the issue of territorial autonomy and to undertake constitutional reforms. The re-forging of the British union by the Labour party at the end of the 1990s was the product of a long-held commitment to political decentralisation that was revived primarily in an effort to placate the threat of regional nationalism in the electoral arena, in the context of a severe disruption in the functioning of the two-party system. The driving factor that induced Labour's steady 'Tartanisation' and gave rise to its decision to set up the Constitutional Convention- giving explicit recognition to the Scottish tradition of popular sovereignty-was the electoral advance of the SNP in the party's strongholds in the central and western

261

parts of Scotland, starting in the general election of 1987. The magnitude of this threat was significantly intensified by the trends in electoral behaviour that taken shape over the course of the 1980s. The growing territorial imbalance in electoral support- exaggerated by the plurality electoral system- resulted in the near-disappearance of Labour in England and in its repeated inability to win office at the centre- the so-called 'Doomsday Scenario'. Thus, the capacity of the SNP to set the political agenda by compelling the Labour party to change its stance was strengthened by the co-incidence of its electoral surge and the breakdown in the central mechanisms underlying the two-party system: the alternation in government of mainstream parties that acted as agents of territorial integration.   In Belgium, the shift in the strategy deployed by the mainstream parties, from output-oriented to consociational accommodation, was also driven by the significant swell in electoral support for the VU, RW and FDF, which rose to prominence following the 'critical' election of 1965, threatening the Christian Democratic and Socialist parties in their regional strongholds of Flanders and Wallonia. As in Britain, this blackmail potential was exerted in the context of severe disturbance in the format and mechanics of the two-and-half party system, but in Belgium, this was provoked by the weakening hold of the religious cleavage and the consequences that electoral de-alignment bore on the changing social bases of party support, visible notably in the shift in the partisan distribution of power towards the Liberal party. The strategy deployed by the Belgian mainstream parties thus also designed to placate the threat of regional nationalist challengers while restoring the hegemony of the 'spiritual' families and the normal functioning of the party system. During Spain's democratic transition, the nationalist parties of Catalonia and the Basque country set the political agenda from the parliamentary arena. Given that the country was holding its first democratic elections, the mainstream parties were not responding to any prior electoral pressures or to any changes in the parameters of a party system that had yet to be institutionalised. The coalition potential of the nationalist parties following the founding election was determined by the interaction between three variables: the ideological moderation and weak-partisanship of the Spanish electorate, which produced a hung parliament; the formal institutions regulating executive-legislative relations that required a vote of investiture; the absence of alternative feasible coalitions that made their position all the more 'pivotal'. The bargaining power of the nationalist parties forced an important shift in the attitude and strategy of the UCD, which had initially envisaged monopolizing the privilege of drafting the constitution, but was persuaded to open up the scope of partisan participation in the constituent assembly. Power-sharing devices were

not specified in the Franquist legislation regulating the founding elections, nor did they have any significant precedent in Spanish political culture; emerging from the consociational spirit of the *ruptura pactada,* they were conjured by a prudent leader in a highly uncertain political environment. Thus, in spite of the variety observed in the type of 'relevance' exercised by regional nationalist parties and in the electoral and institutional variables that conditioned their electoral pressures and bargaining power, in all three cases, one of the necessary conditions for the creation of decentralization structures is that regional nationalist parties set the political agenda by persuading mainstream parties to accommodate their demands for the re-organisation of state structures.

If the stimulus for constitutional reform originates invariably in the growing might of regional nationalist parties, a significant factor conditioning the amplification of their claims is the presence of a Social Democratic party in political opposition, that is ideologically open to the accommodation of nationalism and willing to manipulate the territorial dimension as a component of its electoral strategy against a unitarist centre-right government. When the British Labour party dropped its opposition to the establishment a cross-party Convention, its principal aims were to undercut the SNP but also to displace the centralist Conservative party from office. The policy was a 'plausible' one for the party to adopt: historically, the party could appeal to the tradition of steering the Scottish National Convention in the 1920s, while in contemporary epoch, it could point to the existing policy commitment to the 'unfinished business' of devolution that was in continuity with the belief in using devolution as a bulwark against Thatcherism. The pledge to devolution was also coherent with the party's broader programme for constitutional reform and the modernization of the British sate. The Labour party was, moreover, cohesive in its commitment to devolution: the NEC and the Scottish Executive had aligned their perspectives on devolution since the publication of the interim report in 1981 and the party leadership later incorporated the pro-devolution projects nurtured by Scottish MPs during their participation in pressure groups such as the CSA and SLA. Thus, by the late 1980s, the Labour party had fully resurrected its Home Rule ideological tradition. Asymmetric devolution was place squarely in the party's vision of a just social democratic order that would give expression to differences in policy preferences, correct the discrepancy between unitary state structures and the absence of a unitary political culture and offset the deficit in democratic representation that the majoritarian system had occasioned over three successive elections. The party returned to the role it had played in the early 20th century by transforming its image from a British state-wide party to that of a

territorial party defending the interests of the Celtic fringe, asserting its leadership over the devolution movement against the Conservative, and English, central government. The Tory party has acted as an important centralising force in British politics during this period. After returning to power, the Conservative leader Margaret Thatcher quickly buried any residual demand for devolution voiced by members of the Scottish party. The party leader's 'New Right' doctrine produced a programme aimed at cutting public spending and reducing the scope of the state's activity that harmed Scotland's and Wales' industrial base and social welfare, engendered a strong centralisation of power, in particular in matters of local government financing, and reduced the intermediating role of institutions of territorial representation. In the early, 1990s, faced with intensifying competition from the Labour party and with no plausible devolution policy to turn towards, the Conservatives adopted a strongly adversarial strategy that sought to polarise the regional electorate and deny the relevance of the constitutional option advocated by Labour. Spurred on by the initiatives taking place in civil society and, in particular, the efforts of the Convention to produce a blueprint for a Scottish parliament, the main consequence of the wide gulf separating the position of mainstream parties on Scotland's constitutional future was a heightening of the salience of devolution, as the two mainstream parties competed openly on the principle and details of the devolution settlement advocated by Labour.

A comparable configuration of power between mainstream parties was also conducive to the intensification of tensions between linguistic communities in Belgium. When the Socialist Party advocated the reform of the Belgian state on the basis of three territorial entities, it deployed a strategy that was designed to thwart the electoral threat of regional nationalism and raise the visibility of its opposition to the Christian Democratic-Liberal government. The plausibility of the Socialist party's policy shift was facilitated by the existence of a strong federal tradition and a past record of support to nationalist movements. Although at the time, the Socialist party's vision was strongly inspired by the tradition of centralist socialism, the party had been created on the basis of a federation of corporatist guilds and trade unions; it had endorsed a functional form of federalism between municipalities and provinces in the delivery of public services; it had joined a coalition government during the inter-war period that sought to satisfy Flemish demands for the enhanced use of their language in the public sphere. The choice of policy was also influenced by the existing aspirations of the Walloon wing of the party for a federal state as the best institutional means for sheltering and regenerating the Walloon economy,

views that were most stridently expressed during the Great Strikes of the 1960s. In addition, the Socialist party was able to produce a cohesive stance following the Accords of Klemskerke-Verviers, as the difficulty experienced by the Brussels and Flemish branches to endorse the federalist projects of their Walloon comrades was overcome with the growth of regional nationalist parties across the country's three regions. The unitary structures of the Belgian state were upheld in this period by the centre-right coalition, and in particular by the Liberal party, which was associated historically with the defence of the unitary, francophone and bourgeois kingdom. The party faithfully fulfilled this characterization after its electoral triumph in 1965, when it opposed any measure of change in a federal direction and neutralized the community conflict by declaring a linguistic 'truce' and entrusting the question of constitutional reform to a parliamentary commission. Its Christian Democratic coalition partner was however more inclined to accommodate nationalist demands, in particular after it was victim to the VU in 1965. The CVP's endorsement of cultural councils was a 'plausible' policy for the party to adopt: the belief in the principle of subsidiarity entailed that it was open to political decentralization; the Christian Worker's Union had supported the Flemish nationalist movement and the Catholic Union had enacted an important spate of linguistic reforms during the inter-war period. The leadership's policy was also consistent with the projects for constitutional reform that had developed within the party in the years preceding the appearance of linguistic parties, as elements within the Flemish wing, had voiced demands for greater territorial autonomy as a means of protecting the Flemish language and culture. In addition, following the divorce between the Flemish and Francophone linguistic wings of in 1968, the CVP was united in its commitment to this new strategy of accommodation. While the differences between the two wings had forced the party to diffuse the community problem in the early 1960s, divisions over the scission of the University of Leuven proved impossible to contain and it was only after an organisational split that the CVP could present a united stance in favour of cultural councils. The strategic adaptation of the Socialist and Christian Democratic parties to regional nationalist claims in their respective strongholds however produced divergent positions that, alongside public demonstrations and protests in Leuven, heightened the salience of the linguistic issue and generated a climate of polarization unfelt since the acrimonious resolution of the Royal Question. The CVP party defended the strict application of the linguistic regime and called for the creation of cultural councils to give greater autonomy to the country's two linguistic communities, while the Socialist party endorsed the creation of cultural and

regional councils for the three economic regions, and the PSC and Liberal party remained staunchly unitarist, pleading for the unity of the University of Leuven, and advocating mainly the protection of the French minority at the centre as an institutional reform. Having adopted such contrasting projects for reform and strongly adversarial postures, it would be difficult for mainstream parties to forge an agreement that would substantially transform the Belgian state.

The territorial organization of Spain also featured as one of the most sensitive and controversial questions of the country's delicate transition to democratic rule. The recognition of regional nationalism and the federalisation of the state were the two principal constitutional objectives of the PSOE-*renovadores*. This posture reflected the objective to garner support in regions featuring a sizeable industrial proletariat, where regional nationalism had adopted a distinctively leftist character under the Franquist regime, and the anticipation of having to compete against nationalist parties in regions in which there was undeniable support for the restoration of the Statutes of Autonomy. The stance also reflected the party's long-standing resistance to a conservative, Castilian and centralist dictatorship. Following the 1979 election however, the electoral incentives for promoting the rapid development of the State of Autonomies were more immediate, as the PSOE had come under the pressure of the PSA in its regional stronghold of Andalusia, the control of which it consequently lost to the UCD, the party in government. During the two elections therefore, there were strong incentives for the PSOE to deploy an accommodating strategy that would help the party to placate regional nationalism and compete against a centre-right government. The constitutional policy of the PSOE could be cast as 'plausible' as the party exhibited a federalist tradition that dated back to the endorsement of a federation of 'Iberian' nationalities in 1918 and to the ratification of the Catalan Statute of Autonomy during the Second Republic. The credibility of the PSOE's ploy to accelerate the autonomic process by encouraging Andausia's adoption of the 'rapid route' was strengthened by the line that the party consistently maintained during in the constituent assembly, where it had pushed for a generalization and equalization of the autonomic process across the regions of Spain. The PSOE was also certain to project a cohesive stance. In the period leading up to the founding elections, the party was weakly structured and there were few opportunities available for expressing dissent against the leadership's policy. As the PSOE's greatest electoral asset, Felipe Gonzales steered the party towards a centrist position by gradually re-balancing its enthusiasm for territorial autonomy and solidarity in order to compete better with the moderate PSOE-*historicos* and

to monopolize political supply on the centre-left. But once the latter had been eliminated, the party leadership could rely on the strong support for a fast access to autonomy among the Andalusian branch of the party to revitalize the federalist tradition with vehemence. In both scenarios, the target of the PSOE's federalist revival was the UCD, a centre-right party that was formed by elements of the Franquist *Movimiento Nacional* and had initiated the dismantling of the authoritarian regime, but hosted a number of different ideological currents within its fold and consequently exhibited a variety of positions on the territorial organisation of the state: the Christian Democratic strand favoured a limited form of decentralisation and a valorisation of Spanish nation, while the Liberal strand, articulated mainly by the PSLA, expressed a strong conviction in regional autonomy. This explained the party's ambiguous posture during its period in office: declaring itself in favour of the unitary state but encouraging the formation of systems of pre-autonomies, endorsing a generalisable format of territorial autonomy in which both nationalities, regions and the Spanish nation would be recognised, embarking on bilateral negotiations for the ratification of the Statutes of Autonomy but strenuously opposing the efforts of Andalusian municipal councils to adopt the fast route to autonomy. Although the UCD attempted to contain the momentum of the autonomic process, it was incapable of tempering the ardour with which the nationalities question was treated during the transition. The issue took on a particularly violent tone with the escalation of ETA's terrorist campaign and the rising apprehension of the reformists that the democratic transition would be aborted by a military coup. In addition, the territorial organisation of the state emerged as one of the most salient and divisive issues of the electoral campaigns. The polarization of the party system was evident in the irreconcilable postures adopted one the one side by the nationalist parties and the federalist Socialist and Communist parties and on the other by the conservative AP, composed of prominent right-wing *Franquistas* that opposed any concessions to nationalist parties and maintained a resolute devotion to the centralised structures of the Spanish state. The desire to reach a partisan consensus on Spain's new constitution would generate a symbolic and institutional compromise on these conflicting visions of character of Spain.

Finally, creation of decentralised structures was systematically carried out by Social Democratic parties that, depending on the type of political system in which they operated, acted alone as single-party governments or as partners in coalition governments. Great Britain being the paragon of a majoritarian democracy, it was not surprising that the creation of devolved parliamentary institutions in Scotland and Wales reflected the

evolution of the Labour party's constitutional preferences: the SMP electoral system, the two-party system, the doctrine of parliamentary sovereignty and the party's overwhelming majority enabled it to carry out its objectives during the decision-making phase without obstruction from any partisan actors. Thus, the Labour government inserted the asymmetrically devolved institutions within the unionist settlement by preserving the role of Secretary of State, maintaining representation for Scotland and Wales in Westminster and keeping parliamentary sovereignty undivided; moreover, the Scottish parliament was assigned residual authority and tax-raising powers and the establishment of the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly was subjected to a pre-legislative referendum. Minor intra-party differences over the problems associated with the West Lothian question were assuaged by the guarantee to reduce the size of the Scottish and Welsh parliamentary delegations. There were two significant sources of influence on the government's policy, but these appeared in the pre-decisional phase. The first resulted from the Labour party's decision to infuse the project of constitutional reform with a veneer of procedural fairness by opening the scope of partisan participation in the Convention, obliging it later to compromise with the Liberal party on the AMS electoral system for regional elections. The second resulted from its decision to place the issue of devolution as a core component of its electoral strategy, forcing the party to deflect the Conservative party's attack on the credibility of its strategic repositioning towards the centre by subjecting the Scottish parliament's tax-raising powers to a separate referendum question. Thus, the Labour party did make concessions to the Liberals and Conservatives in order to enhance the legitimacy of its proposals before the British public, but once it office, it maintained sole control over the process that transformed Britain's territorial structures.

The institutional arrangements that the nascent Spanish democracy inherited from the Franquist regime were also majoritarian in their features as the malapportionement built into the PR electoral system was conducive to the emergence of a 'closed' party system. However, the *ad hoc* deployment of consociational methods for the elaboration of the constitution proved to be a significant source of empowerment for the opposition parties as it enabled the PSOE, PCE, CDC and PNV to exert influence during the deliberations. The actual veto power wielded by these partisan actors varied with their size and ideological position. The largest parties in the constituent assembly, the PSOE and UCD, steered the negotiations by encouraging the radical and reactionary parties to converge on a set of moderate compromises. Thus, although the PSOE was not a member of the government as such, it was certainly one of the dominant partisan actors in the

ruling coalition that gave birth to the constitution. This was less the case for the nationalist parties, which were also given the opportunity to shape the constitutional settlement but not the effective power to block the proposal mustered by mainstream parties. Their sway over the content of the draft varied with the proximity of their claims to the median position of the ruling coalition and with their willingness to put up with the qui pro quos unavoidable in a consensual arrangement. The CDC proved a great deal more apt in acknowledging this reality than the PNV. The party recognized the consensus emerging around the largest partisan actor, accepted the generalization of the autonomic process and the affirmation of the constituent power of the Spanish nation in return for the symbolic recognition of 'nationalities' and the establishment of a temporal degree of asymmetry between regions and nationalities in the autonomic process. In contrast, if the PSOE and UCD could conceive of distinguishing between the Foral and the common regime in the financing system, the PNV's demand for the inclusion of the Foral Pact in the constitution was rejected, because it would have allowed the PNV to claim that the Basque sovereignty was an inalienable pre-constitutional right and thus to maintain ambiguity on the question of eventual independence. Thus, while it is difficult to imagine that the Spanish constitution would have featured a hybrid territorial formula without the involvement of regional nationalist parties in the constituent assembly, the ideology of the PSOE and UCD kept a check on the most ambitious nationalist claims and furnished the State of Autonomies with its core characteristics as a generalisable framework in which the Constitution remained the defining source of territorial authority.

The consociational approach that the Spanish elite adopted towards the management of the nationalities questions had strong echoes in Belgium, a country with a set of political institutions that fostered a multiparty system, coalition governments and a consensual decision-making style. As in Great Britain and Spain, it was only following the return of the Socialist party to office in 1968 that the Belgian government earnestly addressed the linguistic conflict by seeking to institutionalise parity between groups at the centre and to create councils that would furnish communities and regions with the autonomy to manage their cultural and economic affairs. The common determination of the Socialist and Christian Democratic parties to reform the structures of the Belgian state formed the basis of the coalition agreement: to satisfy the concerns of the PS for protecting the francophone minority, linguistic groups were given formal recognition and veto power in the parliament and government, while the CVP's long-standing demand for cultural autonomy was gratified with the creation of indirectly elected cultural councils.

269

The strategic response of mainstream parties to regional nationalism nevertheless reflected the resilience of their historic preferences for managing divisive issues through consociational methods at the centre rather than through the decentralisation of political authority, a fact that was evident in the highly circumspect nature of the constitutional reforms- the territorial basis of regionalisation was left undefined, constituent entities did not enjoy a separate democratic mandate and very little power was actually devolved to cultural councils. However, the decision-rule regulating constitutional reforms forced the governing coalition to reach out to the opposition in search of a qualified majority, increasing the number of veto players involved in the deliberations. Although the Liberal party's participation had little effect on the substance of the agreement- other than reinforcing the institutionalising linguistic parity at the centre- the party's support was nevertheless crucial for cementing the agreement established by the ruling coalition and for facilitating institutional change. The RW also exercised an important ideational influence by establishing the distinction between the two different formats of regional government, that would continue to define and trouble debates on the reform of the state, but it did not wield the bargaining power necessary to persuade the mainstream parties to take decisive action beyond outlining the procedures for regionalisation. Thus, as in Great Britain, the need to adapt to nationalist pressures, to maintain predominance and compete successfully in the party system proved to be sufficiently strong an incentive for mainstream parties accommodate nationalist claims but the substance of the constitutional reforms entirely the preserve of the centre-left coalition.

The strong similarity in the paths adopted towards the creation of decentralised structures in Great Britain, Spain and Belgium shows that in spite of the important contextual differences in the type or age of democratic political institutions, such momentous transformations take place only when a constellation of specific conditions are present. Firstly, the capacity of regional nationalist parties to set the agenda- whether from the electoral or parliamentary arena- is the stimulus that is always at the source of mainstream parties' efforts create decentralised structures. Secondly, nationality claims should have a broader resonance for political competition and must be seized by Social Democratic parties as part of their broader struggle against a centralist centre-right government, occupied either by Liberal or Conservative parties. Finally, Social Democratic parties must be present in the government that negotiates and sees through territorial reforms, either as members of single-party or coalition governments, that include a wider range of partisan actors, including regional nationalist parties.

The Empowerment of Regional Government

The empowerment of regional governments constitutes the second moment in the process of territorial restructuring that signals the activation of the powers assigned to the constituent entities and the initial migration of authority towards the regional level. At this stage, the legitimacy of nationalist claims has been recognised and the constitutional status of regional government established, the main duty that partisan actors confront is to fulfil the provisions of the constitution and furnish constituent entities with the legislative competences, fiscal and bureaucratic resources that make their autonomy meaningful. There are important variations in the constitutional details regulating the evolution of this process, as well as in the sensitivity of the territorial scope and types of powers assigned to regions. However, given the importance of the decentralist thrust bequeathed by the preceding territorial reform, the conditions for undertaking such initiatives are not as restrictive as those found at the moment of creation, and there is greater variation in the paths adopted by different countries. While these reforms continued to be carried out by single-party or coalition governments comprising Social Democratic parties- with the attendant variation in the number of veto players involved in the decision-making, the driving force of regional nationalism and the wider implications of nationalist claims in political competition between mainstream parties are sufficient but not necessary conditions for the empowerment of regional government.

The impetus underlying the transfer of powers to regional authorities in Spain and Belgium stemmed from two very different set of conditions. Regional nationalist parties maintained a confident electoral performance, but the differences in the dynamics of electoral competition and in the parameters of party system change decisively conditioned their power relationship against mainstream parties and resulted in a variable capacity to set the political agenda, indicating that the pressure of regional nationalism is a sufficient but not a necessary condition for the empowerment of regional government. Throughout the 1980s, the nationalist parties of Catalonia and the Basque Country were incapable of exerting the pressures necessary to compel the governing Socialist party to shift its position and steer the autonomic process in a direction that would satisfy their constitutional preferences. These were defined largely in reaction to the developments of the preceding period: the full transfer of competences and resources listed in the Statutes of Autonomy, the reform of the central government administration, the re-valuation of financial transfers and opposition to any curtailment of the territorial autonomy through LOAPA. In the electoral arena, the CiU and PNV strengthened their electoral

performance and asserted their monopoly over the nationalist option, but they nevertheless did not compete directly against the PSOE. In Catalonia, there existed a high degree of competitiveness between the PSC-PSOE and CiU, but the weakness of the national cleavage in general elections and the prevalence of inter-bloc electoral interchange meant that the Socialist party was primarily in competition with the Communist party, while the nationalists collected the votes of defunct centrist parties. In the Basque country, the PSE and PNV were also in a tight race for the title of regional leader, but the strong anchoring of the nationalist cleavage meant that the PNV found itself in competition primarily with other moderate or radical nationalist parties, while the PSE competed mainly with radical or moderate social democratic parties. This was the result of two particular features of regional party systems in Spain: the simultaneous institutionalisation of the class, religious and territorial cleavages in the party system following the founding elections allowed each party to establish and maintain a hold over a different segment of the electorate, while the centre-right ideological profile of CiU and PNV allowed the PSOE to nurture its electoral ties with the working-class of predominantly immigrant origins. Thus, the absence of competition between nationalist and mainstream parties closed off the electoral arena as a sphere from which the former could set the political agenda. In addition, the transformation of the Spanish party system following the 'critical' election of 1982, from a fragmented and polarized to a pre-dominant party system, precluded nationalist parties from employing alternative avenues. The collapse of the UCD and the dramatic fall in support for the PCE worked to the dramatic benefit of the PSOE, which was endowed with an unassailable parliamentary majority for two consecutive terms, preventing the nationalist parties from wielding any bargaining power in relation to the central government.

The sheer powerlessness of the Catalan and Basque nationalist parties stood in striking contrast with the substantial influence that the regionalist nationalist parties of Belgium exerted on the political agenda during the 1970s. In the electoral arena, all three regional nationalist parties experienced a considerable surge in support that enabled them to apply strong 'whipping pressures' against their mainstream rivals and compel them to address their demands for the empowerment of directly elected cultural and regional councils. A particularity of the Belgian case was that the main effect of the expansion of regional nationalist parties and the concomitant rising salience of the linguistic issue was a change in the environment of party competition. By provoking mainstream parties to simultaneously undertake a strategic and organizational adaptation, regional nationalist

parties induced the steady disintegration of the party system along linguistic lines which, in turn, magnified the vulnerability of mainstream parties and heightened the incentive to adjust their position and deploy accommodating strategies. The VU reached its electoral apogee, encouraging the CVP to accentuate its nationalist profile in an attempt to re-assert its hegemony over its tradition stronghold. Similarly, after the RW adopted a 'catch-all' electoral profile, it joined the FDF in scoring important gains at the expense of the Liberal and Socialist parties in Brussels and Wallonia, inducing the two mainstream parties to emphasize their concern about the fate of Brussels in the regionalization of the state. The regional nationalist parties also exercised 'coalition' potential during this period. When it entered government in 1974, the RW's bargaining power was determined by its pivotal position, by its ideological proximity to the Christian-Democratic party on the federalization of the Belgian state and by the absence of alternative feasible coalitions- the PSB, FDF and VU being indisposed to negotiating with the Liberals or with each other. However, once in government, the RW's power evaporated. When progress on regionalization came to a standstill in 1976, the RW threatened to exit the coalition to force the process along, but the effectiveness of this strategy was limited, as the party was expelled from government when it refused to support the budget. A similar set of factors underpinned the FDF's bargaining power in 1980: the Christian Democratic and Socialist parties were seeking to put together a governing coalition with enough seats to pass the 'special laws' for the empowerment of regional and community councils. However, the FDF's standing was seriously weakened by the fact that it was reluctantly invited into the coalition- many within the CVP demanded that the VU be incorporated as a counterweight, which the latter refused to contemplate after its defeat in 1978. In addition, its influence was mitigated by the distance of its position on the format of federalism and the status of Brussels from that of the CVP, and increasingly to that of the PS, which formed the core of the coalition. The party's intransigence on the issue was its undoing and, like the RW, it was thrown out of the coalition. Thus, although nationalist parties displayed a strong electoral performance in the two countries, the broader changes in the context of party competition significantly conditioned their 'relevance'. As a result, the empowerment of regional governments was spurred by two very different vectors: in Spain the process unfolded because the Socialist party upheld its commitment to implementing the provisions of the constitution, while in Belgium, it advanced because the regional nationalist parties exercised strong agenda-setting powers both by exerting electoral pressures on mainstream parties and entering coalition governments.

The set of conditions that contributed to amplifying the resonance of nationalist claims during the creation of decentralized structures- a Social Democratic party in opposition that manipulates the issue of territorial autonomy in its electoral strategy against mainstream rivals- were also sufficient but not necessary contextual factors for the empowerment of regional governments, as they held clearly in the case of Belgium but not Spain. During the 1980s, the PSOE exercised an unfettered discretion over how the implement the provisions of the 1978 Constitution on the empowerment of Autonomous Communities. The party made the most of its strong agenda control to rediscover its centralist tradition, re-assert its socialist faith and belief in a homogeneous federal framework and use the levers of authority in central government to enact its redistributive programme. The main determinants underlying the revival of the party's centralist attitudes were its position in government and the incentive to meet the preferences of its political base. The shift from the federalist to the centralist tradition had actually occurred in the exceptional circumstances surrounding the attempted coup of February 1981, a traumatic event for the young Spanish democracy that persuaded the PSOE to temper the promotion of further political decentralisation. The fact that it subsequently entered office at the helm of a strong parliamentary majority consolidated the predominance of that tradition and furnished the party with the authority to act upon it. The position was also reinforced by the social and territorial basis of electoral support that the party garnered in the election of 1982, which was strong among the working-class and rural proletariat of the poorer regions of the South. These social segments were the immediate beneficiaries of the PSOE's redistributive policies and the party needed to assert control over the autonomic process in order to cater to their economic and social requirements. In addition, the extensive nation-wide basis of electoral support persuaded the PSOE of the importance of adequately meeting the needs of all ACs. The switch between ideological traditions was entirely 'plausible' for the PSOE to undertake: historically, the party could hark back to the tradition of centralist socialism, dating to its earlier efforts to enact state-wide labour legislation during the Second Republic, while its support of the LOAPA legislation initiated by the UCD provided a more recent record of support for centralizing measures. Moreover, the egalitarian ethos underlying the party's autonomic policy was coherent with the redistributive policies that it passed to shelter its electoral bases, such as the instauration of a progressive taxation system. Finally, the decision to revive the centralist tradition was facilitated by the strong degree of party cohesion. This unity was owing to the strong grip of the federal executive over the party organization: Felipe Gonzales

continued to offer charisma and electoral triumph in return for party discipline, while Alfonso Guerra managed the party with an iron hand, a task that was supported by a number of systemic and party-specific institutional features. Thus, the alignment of factors that enabled the PSOE to deploy an accommodating strategy during the democratic transition also facilitated its switch to a centralist attitude during the 1980s. The PSOE also faced few external electoral and parliamentary pressures to revise its centralist stance, especially given that the PP, the mainstream party in opposition, displayed an overtly Conservative and nationalist profile that meant it was incapable of manipulating the territorial issue for electoral gain against its Socialist rival.

Party politics in Spain during the 1980s and early 1990s offers a 'mirror image' of the developments that unfolded in Great Britain: a confident Socialist party in office and a tormented Conservative party treading in the fog of opposition. In a quest to enhance its electability, the PP gradually eschewed all ties with its Franquist past and adapted its attitudes to the reality of the State of Autonomies, accepting the existence of a decentralised state alongside the defense of the Spanish nation, engaging in party competition in regional elections and building regional power bases in conservative regions such as Castilla-León. However, the PP did not take the Socialist government to task for presiding over the unfolding of the State of Autonomies in a way that suffocated the administrative and fiscal capacity of AC governments. This can be explained by the fact that the PP's room for manoeuvre on the territorial issue-dimension was severely constrained by its ideology. Spanish Conservatism's profound, and periodically brutal, hostility to regional nationalism and political decentralisation and the PP's residual association with the Franquist centralist regime- at least in the minds of voters - were too great a stigma for the party to credibly exploit the issue of territorial autonomy for partisan advantage in its contest against the PSOE. The PP was able to adjust its position only as far as accepting the status quo and promoting the reform of the Statutes of Autonomy of ten ACs that had followed the slow route. This policy was motivated primarily by electoral expediency: the PP had witnessed a steady improvement in its performance at the regional level and was in power in four of the affected ACs; it also saw these elections as a way of constructing and consolidating the electoral support that would secure its triumph at the national level. Moreover, promoting the simultaneous adaptation of all ten Statutes of Autonomy coincided with the party's vision of a symmetrically decentralised state in which the *hecho diferencial* and sovereignty claims of the historic regions would be neutralized and the 'vertrebration' of Spain ensured. The immediate effect of the constraint imposed by

the PP's ideology was to mitigate the salience of the territorial issue in its competitive interactions with the PSOE: the PP focused on its re-branding by emphasizing its neo-liberal programme and traditional values and by attacking the PSOE government on its economic record- such as the decline of industrial sectors and the rising levels of unemployment- and for the clientelistic practices that had been fostered as a results its extensive implantation in local and regional government.

The contrast with Belgium offers a particularly instructive illustration of how a particular configuration of power between mainstream parties can enhance the prominence of nationality claims across the party system. Finding itself in opposition in 1974, the Belgian Socialist party once again faced the incentive to manipulate the territorial dimension and the party put forth an ambitious proposal for the empowerment of three directly elected regional councils with extensive powers in economic matters, a policy that would remain at the heart of its strategy. The choice of policy was driven by electoral expediency: the aim was to make opposition to the centralist spirit of the 'preparatory' regionalization law developed by the RW in government, to undermine the latter's electoral position in Wallonia and to compete better against the FDF-PLP alliance in Brussels. In addition, the bifurcation of the party system along linguistic lines, following the splits of the Christian Democratic and the Liberal parties, had encouraged the PSC and PLP to accentuate their profile as Francophone parties in Brussels and Wallonia, putting pressure on the Socialist party to 'outbid' them. This pressure was heightened especially once the party had split and relied solely on its support in Wallonia and Brussels. The regionalization policy of the PS was an entirely plausible one for the party to adopt as it marked a restitution of support for federalist ideas projected by the Walloon branch of the party in which economic decentralization would improve the region's recovery; it was a logical extension of the steady development of pro-federal positions evidenced in the law on planning and decentralization that the party enacted in government in 1970; it was coherent with the party's ideological renewal in the doctrinal congress of 1974 in which it asserted its belief in the principle of autonomy in the political and economic spheres of life. Moreover, the Socialist party was remarkably cohesive on its new policy as the presidents of each linguistic wing refused to let their differences interfere with their appetite for power and elaborated a compromise solution on the arrangements for the Brussels regional executive. The scission of the party in 1978, brought about by the recriminations that ensued from the collapse of the Egmont Pact only facilitated the PS's task in maintaining the line adopted by its state-wide forebear, since it eliminated the need to

forge a policy that would maintain internal party harmony. Thus, in line with the pattern of behaviour displayed a decade ealier, the Belgian Socialist party systematically strengthened its regionalist profile in order to compete with regional nationalist parties and make its way back into a coalition government. The main difference with the earlier period was that the centralising function of the centre-right parties had eroded with the disintegration of the party system along linguistic lines.

The CVP undertook an important policy adjustment in 1972, from supporting the creation of cultural council to advocating the instauration of a 'federalism of union', in an attempt to re-establish its hegemony over its regional stronghold and placate the VU. This policy entailed the creation of a federal state based on two directly elected entities with exclusive powers in cultural and economic policy areas and the financial resources to meet their policy responsibility. The shift in position was an entirely plausible one to effect: historically, the Christian Democratic party had played a role in the emancipation of the Flemish working-class, lent its support to nationalist movements and ratified the original spate of linguistic legislation, while in more recent times, the party could also point to its close involvement in the negotiation of the previous constitutional reforms and in the subsequent passing of legislation transferring authority to cultural councils. Finally, federal ideas had long existed among the Flemish wing of the Christian Democratic party, ideas that the new leader, Wilfried Martens, had persuaded the party to adopt in an effort to give a new lease of life to the Belgian union. His task was rather unproblematic given the strong internal cohesion that the party displayed on its Flemish regionalist perspective since splitting with its Francophone counterpart. If the CVP's new approach to the reform of the state was an entirely conceivable turn, the Liberal party's switch towards promoting Walloon interests and endorsing territorial autonomy in 1974 was particularly remarkable, in view of the party's historic association with the defense of the unitary state and the complete absence of a tradition of accommodation. Much like the repositioning witnessed among other mainstream parties in this period, the causal factor driving the shift in strategy was the pressure to compete against the FDF and RW in Brussels and Wallonia. Although there was little historical precedent to legitimate the shift, the PLP had earlier declared its allegiance to Walloon interests and devotion to liberal ideals, following the distancing between the two linguistic branches in 1970. Picking up these existing pledges was relatively straightforward once the two wings of the party had formally split, since it liberated the Francophone wing from the organizational and ideological straight-jacket of the state-wide party. This rare example suggests that the organizational breakdown of a

party can be a sufficient cause for the sudden invocation of a policy in favour of regionalisation, even in the absence of an older tradition to legitimate such a shift. The immediate consequences of the division of the Liberal party were the disappearance of the only party that customarily protected the centre, the regionalization of party competition, and the rising salience of the territorial and linguistic issue in electoral contests. The importance attached to theses matters stemmed primarily from differences in partisan positions and the adversarial postures adopted by mainstream parties towards their linguistic counterpart, visible between and within regions. The CVP and PS exhibited the most zealous decentralist impulses, but nevertheless espoused opposite perspectives on the territorial format of Belgian federalism. On the other hand, minority parties on each side tended to be more sceptical: the PSC upheld the centralist tradition articulated by the Belgian Catholic Church and advocated the protection of francophone interests at the centre; the PVV sustained the unitary ideology of the Liberal party, defending existing constitutional structures. Following the split of the PSB however, the polarization of the party system reached new extremes, witnessed in the formation of Flemish and Francophone fronts during the 1979 electoral campaign, in which the mainstream parties on each side of the linguistic frontier defended their perspective on the appropriate foundations of Belgian federalism, on the basis either of two linguistic communities or of three functional regions.

The diversity of circumstances that were on display in the sphere of party competition however converged to a common set of conditions during the decision-making stage, as the empowerment of regional governments was driven in both Spain and Belgium by centre-left parties, acting either in single-party governments or in a cartel with other mainstream parties, suggesting that a necessary condition during this moment is the presence of a centre-left party in office. In Spain, the construction of the State of Autonomies during the 1980s was a process that was steered entirely in accordance with the federal vision of the PSOE. The party's autonomic policy was informed by its commitment to political decentralization and its duty to implement the provisions of the constitution pertaining to the drafting of the outstanding Statutes of Autonomy and to the transfer of legislative autonomy, fiscal and administrative capacity to ACs, consistent with the different routes adopted by historic and non-historic regions. The PSOE exercised a great deal of discretion in managing this process due to its overwhelming parliamentary majority, the strong position of the central government in the hierarchical system of inter-governmental relations and its control of a high number of AC governments following the

first cycles of regional elections. The PSOE's ideological preferences for development of a homogeneous federal framework were closely reflected in the substance of the outcomes: the extensive transfer of legislative competences was met with the limited transfer of bureaucratic and financial resources and the enactment of highly detailed framework legislation in concurrent policy areas. This alignment of preferences was sustained when it came to renewing the Statutes of Autonomy of the ten non-historic regions in the late 1980s. However, the waning of the PSOE's parliamentary majority and the decision-rule regulating the revision of Statutes forced the government to reach out to the PP to establish an absolute majority. The collaboration between the two parties in forging the *Pactos Autonomicos* was facilitated by the convergence of their positions on the territorial organization. Both parties shared the will to neutralise nationality claims by homogenizing autonomy across ACs and to strengthen their respective regional power bases in the affected ACs. Both parties could refer to an earlier tradition of bi-partisan consensus on unilaterally controlling the autonomic process from above that dated back to the ratification of LOAPA. Thus, the proximity of the partisan veto player to the government during the decision-making process enhanced the likelihood but did not significantly affect the substance of institutional change.

Similarly in Belgium, the process of regionalization was driven and implemented by a cartel of mainstream political parties that spent many weeks in coalition talks forging compromises between their radically opposite positions on the eventual format of Belgian federalism. The difficulties that mainstream parties inherited from the earlier episode of consociational constitutional reform were two-fold: the first was that the basis for regionalization was vaguely defined in the constitution, leaving crucial matters such as the territorial boundaries of regions and the scope of their powers undefined- the task they confronted was thus not simply one of triggering the migration of authority but also establishing the content and territorial basis of that authority; the second was that the highly demanding decision-rule for the ratification of 'special laws' required qualified majorities that would increase the number of partisan veto players in the negotiations. The Socialist party consistently featured as one of the main protagonists of change during the negotiations by instigating the community-wide dialogue in 1976 that sought to find an impasse to the regionalization process and also by seeking a solution to the community crisis that erupted following the failure of the Egmont Pact. In asserting its leadership over the Francophone front, the PS party exerted an important influence on the substance of the reforms carried out in 1980, in particular, by forcing the CVP formateur to conjure the

principle of institutional asymmetry as a way of reconciling their divergent ambitions for the fusion of regional and cultural councils, and by proving willing to adopt that typical consociational technique of postponement and putting the fate of Brussels 'on ice', much to the chagrin of the FDF. Once these parameters were agreed upon, the PS and CVP invited the Liberals into the coalition to enact the series of special laws on regionalization that furnished the Flemish and Walloon regional councils with powers and resources, replicating the composition of the mainstream cartel that had ratified the first consociational constitutional reform in 1970. The PS's efforts were in many respects inspired by the trailblazing advances of the RW, which had drafted the 'preparatory regionalization' law during its time in government in 1974-77 and introduced the principle of regionalization on the basis of three territorial entities. The RW's influence is notable in so far as it corroborates the general conjecture that the presence of a centre-left party in a governing coalition was a necessary condition for the process of empowerment. However, the realization of the RW's objectives was seriously curtailed by the fact that the parliament was not a constituent assembly, and thus, by the impossibility of undertaking a wholesale federal reform, as well as by the significant distance between the position of parties on the basic parameters of the regionalisation process. Given such constraints, little actual empowerment followed the RW's actions, save for the elaboration of a general principle and the creation of organs with limited advisory and consultative powers.

The contrast between Spain and Belgium illustrates how the configuration of factors producing institutional change tends to diversify with the unfolding of territorial restructuring. While a similar alignment of conditions was necessary to bring about the creation of decentralized structures, the empowerment of regional governments was achieved by a combination of causal factors that followed two distinct paths. The difference between these two paths is situated primarily at their origin, as the process was spurred on either by the decentralist momentum inherited from the preceding moment of creation and seized by a Social Democratic party, or by the continued pressures of regional nationalism in the electoral and governmental arenas, whose claims for autonomy were heightened by a specific configuration of power between mainstream parties. Either of these sets of conditions is sufficient but not necessary to prompt the migration of authority to regions. However, when reaching their close, the two paths converged, as a necessary condition for the successful completion of the process of empowerment is the presence in office of a Social Democratic party with a commitment to decentralization, governing either as a single party or in cartel with other mainstream parties.

The Deepening of Territorial Autonomy

The deepening of territorial autonomy constitutes the third moment in the process of territorial restructuring that deals mainly with the completion of pending powers to regional authorities, the expansion of the range of their powers and the fine-tuning of their authority through the adjustment between their autonomy and capacity. The format of regional government- and the associated symbolic connotations that it bears- also comes into play, in particular as the asymmetric degree of autonomy and resources conferred to certain regions will entail the recognition of their distinct status and the acceptance of their particular federal vision. The empowerment of regional government is a lengthy and difficult procedure that usually demands a period of pause in the dynamics of decentralisation, so that central and regional authorities, and the parties that govern them, can adapt to the contours of the new system. This tendency towards equilibrium in the territorial distribution of authority is however usually disrupted in multinational states, where regional nationalist parties continue to be a key driving force for institutional change. Although their capacity to set the political agenda is a necessary condition for reform in both Spain and Belgium, it is important to underline that their influence on the position and action of mainstream parties take place in a context in which the latter are also adjusting their preferences, in accordance with their experience of governing a regionalised state. It is this secular process of adaptation in the attitudes of mainstream parties towards the regionalised state that explains why adjustments can be undertaken by governments of different ideological persuasion, and that it is no longer a necessary condition for Social Democratic parties to be in office at the time of reform.

The adjustments brought to the Spanish State of Autonomies and to regionalised state of Belgium occurred in circumstances in which regional nationalist parties were able to set the political agenda either through their influence on party competition and/or through their association with majority power, indicating that the presence of nationalist pressures in different arenas of political action was a necessary condition for the deepening of territorial autonomy. The most remarkable instance of direct influence on the agenda was the case of Spain in the mid-1990s, when the CiU and PNV were able to dictate the timing and shape the content of the concessionary measures deployed to obtain their parliamentary support. The patterns of party competition witnessed during the 1980s persisted in the following decade, preventing the CiU and the PNV from applying any real electoral pressures on the PSOE or the PP. Instead of battling the forces of inertia by trying to persuade mainstream parties to revise their attitudes on the

territorial issue, regional nationalist parties presented their rivals with the crude choice of accepting their demands as the price for political power. The bargaining power of the Catalan and the Basque nationalist parties was conditioned by same set of variables that that shaped their ability to give direction to the democratic transition: the advent of a hung parliament, a pivotal position in the party system, the requirement of the vote of investiture, and their ideological proximity to mainstream parties. The hung parliament produced by the general elections of 1993 and 1996 was a problematic outcome for mainstream parties since the constitution required that the Prime Ministerial candidate receive an absolute majority of support in parliament before taking office. So, the PSOE and the PP turned to the CiU and PNV for support during the vote of investiture. Their coalition potential was buttressed by their pivotal position and their capacity to furnish mainstream parties with a minimum-connected-winning coalition, confirming the tendency towards majoritarianism in the Spanish political system.

In 1993, CiU arrived at an informal agreement with the PSOE, in which it offered parliamentary support in exchange for the cession of a greater proportion of shared taxes on income (IRPF). The collaboration between CiU and the PSOE was facilitated by the proximity of their positions on the left-right dimension- in particular regarding the type of reforms to undertake for meeting the Maastricht convergence criteria- as well as by the latent proclivity of the PSOE to consider reforming financial arrangements. However, CiU's bargaining power was mitigated by the nature of the informal arrangement, which had been elaborated in private, was thin on detail, and relied on the PSOE's capacity to establish *ad hoc* parliamentary majorities on an issue-by-issue basis. Thus, once the concession was made, the CiU's leverage was severely weakened by the absence of an explicit parliamentary pact, and it was unable to force the PSOE to make further concessions, in spite of threatening to withdraw its support for the government's budget. In 1996, the nationalists were on a surer footing- they had the experience of negotiating with PSOE and the PP was accessing office for the first time. The negotiations were lubricated by the natural affinity existing between the nationalists and PP as bourgeois parties defending the interests of commercial classes and by the PP's gradual acceptance of reforming the financing system CiU and the PNV pushed for the establishment of an explicit and comprehensive Pact of Governability with the PP in which the latter agreed to a number of substantial concessions. Thus, a result of their stronger bargaining power, the 'coalitional' character of their pact, and their ideological proximity to the PP the nationalist parties were able to assert their own preferences on the content of the reforms.

In Belgium, the only remaining relevant regional nationalist party, the VU, applied pressures in two different arenas. It adjusted its claims in the early 1980s towards the creation of a confederal union- whereby the Flemish council would assume residual powers and full fiscal responsibility-and experienced a resurgence of electoral support that intensified the tone of the CVP's nationalist rhetoric. In addition, the VU was twice co-opted by the Christian Democratic-Socialist ruling coalition. As in the past, the bargaining power of the VU was underpinned by the need for the government to obtain the two-thirds parliamentary majority necessary for amending the constitution and ratifying 'special' laws. The party's influence on the substance of the agenda was however curtailed by the distance of its preferences from the political consensus being forged between the Christian Democratic and Socialist parties, which envisioned a set of reforms that would finalize the federal format of the Belgian state. In particular, the VU's demand for the scission of the Brussels electoral district was faced with the strenuous opposition of the PS. In much the same way that the FDF's demand for the establishment of a fully-fledged Brussels region was obstructed by the CVP in 1980, the VU was incapable of pushing its demand past the Socialist party. When the VU lent parliamentary support to the same coalition in 1991, its influence on the agenda continued to be limited by its insistence on proposals, such as the reform of the social security system, that were far too remote from the emerging mainstream consensus to be politically acceptable. The content of political agenda was so deeply shaped by the preferences of the Christian-Democratic and Socialist parties that the VU could do little else than give impulse to the reforms carefully elaborated by the mainstream actors. From the beginning of 1991, the VU repeatedly threatened to exit the coalition in order to force the government to complete the third phase of institutional reforms and achieve a breakthrough on the thorny issue of direct elections. As was the case for the RW, the only effect of this strategy was the escalation of intra-coalition tensions and the fall of the government. Thus, in both Spain and Belgium, the increasing assertiveness of regional nationalist parties and the exertion of pressures in the electoral and parliamentary arenas against mainstream parties was a necessary condition for the instigation of reforms deepening the territorial autonomy of regions. However, their association with majority power did not reflect a comparable degree of bargaining power. In fact, while institutional constraints and parliamentary arithmetic underpinned their relevance in both cases, their ideological proximity to the mainstream parties, and the acceptability of their specific demands to those parties, decisively affected the extent to which they could set the political agenda from the parliamentary arena.

The configuration of power between mainstream parties proved to be a significant set of factors conditioning the resonance of nationality claims in the broader political system. In both Spain and Belgium, mainstream parties were gradually becoming more receptive to the decentralization of authority, given that their preferences were informed by their perception of the functional effectiveness of existing territorial arrangements. As was the case in the preceding moment however, the important differences in the patterns of party government - particularly the presence of a Social Democratic party in opposition that manipulates the territorial dimension- and in the salience of the territorial issue in contests between mainstream parties, revealed that this set of conditions were sufficient but not necessary to the deepening of territorial autonomy. The question could, but did not need to, feature as an important matter on which to compete.

In Spain, the PSOE's justification for acting upon the demands imposed by CiU was purely expedient- entering office and securing a stable governing coalition. The PSOE did display a historic tradition of sympathy for regional nationalism, but this could not be appealed to credibly after a decade spent in office presiding over a symmetric autonomic process. Instead, the party could point to an existing proposal for augmenting fiscal autonomy that had been put forth in the context of the quinquennial reform of LOFCA as evidence of a latent willingness to decentralize financial resources and enhance fiscal co-responsibility. The proposal had been shelved because of the anticipation of its negative repercussions on the central government's budget deficit and for Spain's preparation for EMU. However, an idea had nevertheless emerged within the party based on its evaluation of the performance of existing financial arrangements and their tendency to encourage 'consumption' federalism in the lower-level ACs. It was an indication of the CiU's shrewd awareness of the art of the possible that its demands reflected a long-held desire to relieve the economic asphyxiation of the Catalan government and revived a proposal developed by the federalist current within the PSOE that made the latter's policy appear credible. Finally, the Socialist party was relatively unified in its decision to grant a concession to CiU on financial matters, in particular in light of the rising predominance of the federalist current within the party following the departure of Alfonso Guerra and the establishment of an alliance between *Renovadores* and regional 'barons' that decisively weakened the *Guerrista* faction's hold over the party's policy and strategy. However, there were three factors that inhibited the PSOE from making a wholehearted adjustment in its stance on the decentralization of resources and make the concession on the IRPF a permanent feature of the common financing system. Firstly, the PSOE was still in government- after a

decade of continuous rule- and still guided by a unitarist outlook. Secondly, the party leadership needed to reconcile the conflict between the centralist and federalist currents, incarnated by the regional 'barons' of the poorer and richer regions of Spain that held widely divergent preferences regarding the direction of reforms to the financing system: a temporary increase in the transfer of IRPF was one available compromise. The third reason was that the party had not faced the incentive to transform its attitudes and revise the complex array of values that shaped its ideology. In light of what has been established in other countries during different moments of reform- only strong electoral pressures by nationalist parties and a place in opposition would have occasioned such a transformation.

The PSOE did eventually fall from power as a result of the rejuvenation and resurgence of its mainstream rival. But, as was the case during 1980s, the PP's conservative and nationalist ideological profile limited its room for strategic maneuver in the type of issues it could raise in its competitive interactions against the PSOE. As a result, the question of deepening the State of Autonomies did not feature as a salient topic in the general electoral contests of the 1990s. In fact, the dynamics of electoral competition were structured by the class cleavage, witnessed in the increasing division of the social bases of political support for the two mainstream parties along class lines, as the white-collar middle-classes fled to the PP and the PSOE retained its support among the working-class and rural proletariat. The strategic movements of the PSOE and PP also took place primarily along the left-right dimension: the PP cruised towards the centre on a neo-liberal programme of reform in its rehabilitation as an electable conservative force; the PSOE veered to the left in 1989 under the influence of the *Guerristas* but then returned to the centre in 1993 in its bid to satisfy the Maastricht convergence criteria. On the issue of reforming the State of Autonomies, the PP had done little to modify the substance of the position it had adopted since its re-founding in the early 1990s- defending the constitution and accepting decentralist initiatives insofar as they brought about a greater degree of symmetry between ACs and neutralized the claims of the nationalities. In spite of its strongly conservative and Castilian profile and historic hostility to the accommodation of regional nationalism, the PP could nevertheless make the concessions to nationalist parties appear credible, when it was eventually obliged to seek the support of nationalist parties to seize the trophy of office. The initiatives were in continuity with the party's gradual acceptance of the reality of the State of Autonomies, demonstrated in its support for the *Pactos Autonomicos*. In addition, the party could point to the coalition agreements reached with centre-right regionalist parties in a number of AC regional government as evidence of

its willingness to broker agreements with territorial parties. Finally, the CiU and PNV were able to give impetus to a set of reforms that featured in the programmatic pledges of the PP, such as the decentralization of concurrent competences, greater fiscal co-responsibility, and the transfer of administrative resources, measures which, in the party's view, would bring about a more effective functioning of the State of Autonomies. Thus, after adapting to the autonomic process and governing at the regional level, the PP had, much like the PSOE, produced a distinct territorial policy that reflected its own views of the type of reforms that would benefit the performance of the federalized system. The PP perforce also agreed to concessions that went beyond these pledges, to satisfy the nationalist parties' demands for the recognition of their historical and cultural particularity

The principal source of similarity between the adjustment effected to the State of Autonomies and the federalization of Belgium was that mainstream parties were defining their preferences on the territorial dimension, not simply in response to nationalist pressures, but in function of the evolution of decentralized structures of the state. However, the crucial differences that explain the prominence of constitutional reforms in Belgian contests were the contrasting partisan configuration- with the Belgian Socialist party being in opposition- and the regionalization of the party system, which encouraged Belgian mainstream parties to accentuate their regionalist aspirations. In the third period of Socialist opposition between 1981 and 1987, the PS advocated an 'integral' form of federalism, demanding the establishment of a federal state based on three regions, direct regional elections, the transfer of exclusive competences and the allocation of residual authority to regions, and greater financial resources. The choice of policy was motivated to a certain extent by electoral considerations- the PS wished to take advantage of the erosion of support for the FDF and RW to re-assert its hegemony over the Francophone regions and dominate the regional party system against the PRL and PSC. However, it mainly reflected a dissatisfaction with the regionalisation laws of 1980 which had transferred competences only on a limited basis and left the governing of the Brussels region to the national executive. Much like the demands expressed by the PSC and PRL for improving the efficacy of the regionalized state, the PS's demands were inspired by a desire to rationalize the territorial distribution of authority. To strengthen the plausibility of its objectives, the PS returned to the strategies of the Walloon autonomist movements: re-establishing links with the trade unions in opposing the government's economic measures, denouncing the policies of the 'Belgo-Flemish state', and focusing on the economic aspects of territorial autonomy by demanding the regionalization of industrial sectors

which had been the subject of community confrontations in the parliament. The sharpening of the Socialist party's regionalist profile was eased by the divorce from its Flemish wing in 1978 which entailed that the party leadership was no longer hindered by any internal dissent regarding the format of Belgian federalism, the decentralization of fiscal powers, and the authority of community councils over municipal bodies, a question on which its counterpart had unequivocally adopted a Flemish perspective

The fact that the Socialist party found itself in opposition in the national parliament, developing its own views on the functional effectiveness of the decentralized structures of the Belgian state was the main reason for strengthening its territorial claims. However, this was no the only factor that enhanced the importance attached to the question of state in reform in electoral contests. As was the case following the collapse of the Egmont Pact in 1978, the salience of the territorial dimension was triggered by intra-coalition crises and the fall of governments, over specific matters such as the status of the Fourons district in 1987 or the question of arms export licenses in 1991. Once these crises had erupted, their prominence was exaggerated by the regionalized party system, which intensified the competition between mainstream parties and the incentive to continuously outbid each other on the territorial dimension. This was witnessed in Wallonia and Brussels, in the strongly francophone position adopted by the PSC and PRL on the responsibility of Brussels regional authorities for community matters and the determination of the territorial limits of Brussels by plebiscite. The CVP also used the governmental crisis of 1987 as an opportunity to projects its own demands for the direct elections of regional councils, the regionalization of industrial sectors, the further decentralization of powers in the fields of education and industrial policy and greater fiscal autonomy. Much like the PS, the CVP developed these specific demands in response to its experience governing a regionalized state. The initiatives advancing 'economic federalism' emerged within the party as a result of its opposition to the national plan, perceived to be a subsidization of the declining sectors of Wallonia. The proposals for the further decentralization of education and research policy were situated within a broader nation-building project at the regional level, as these fields were seen as critical to the flourishing of Flemish identity and culture and to the economic development of the region. Naturally, the competitive pressures extant in a regionalized party system also played a role, in particular in Flanders, where there was a more even partisan distribution of power. The CVP's nationalist rhetoric was shaped partly in response to the surge in support for the VU, but also to the increasingly Flemish demands of the Liberal party, which not only

joined the CVP in demanding a coherent delineation of competences and in opposing the establishment of fully-fledged institutions in Brussels, but also went as far as demanding full fiscal autonomy. The important contrast displayed between Spain and Belgium in the configuration of power between mainstream parties and in the willingness of mainstream parties to engage one another on the issue of territorial reform shows that the set of conditions that tend to amplify the resonance of nationality claims for the broader patterns of political competition are sufficient but not necessary conditions for bringing about a deepening of territorial autonomy.

There was a notable persistence of this diversity during the decision-making phase. When scrutinising the types of governments and number of partisan veto players involved in the elaboration and implementation of reforms that engendered a deepening of territorial autonomy in Spain and Belgium, what emerges is that, contrary to the two preceding moments in the process of territorial restructuring, the presence of a Social Democratic party in office is not a necessary condition for institutional change. Rather, it was sufficient for the adjustments to be undertaken by a single-party or by a coalition government comprising parties of different ideological persuasions. The variation displayed between the two countries on this parameter of comparison is shaped entirely by the accommodating posture of the PP towards the nationality claims of CiU and PNV. The principal advantage of setting the political agenda through an association with majority power is precisely that it enabled the Catalan and Basque nationalist parties to assert their demands before mainstream parties that are other-wise disinclined to gratify their claims. This was an attractive alternative in light of the incapacity of nationalist parties to exert the electoral pressures necessary for influencing the attitudes of the PSOE and PP and given that mainstream parties were not under any constitutional obligation to prompt the further migration of authority towards regions. The aim of the nationalist parties in this period was to persuade mainstream parties to correct what they saw as important sources of constraint on their territorial autonomy, namely, the lack of correspondence between their legislative competences and fiscal and bureaucratic resources, and in doing so, to revitalise the *hecho diferencial*. The types of reforms they envisaged did not entail the revision of Statutes of Autonomy or the passage of organic laws and could thus be implemented with simple majorities; the only partisan veto players involved in the enactment of reforms were thus the nationalist and mainstream partisan actors making up the governing coalition. The ideological position of mainstream political actors strongly conditioned the substance of the political outcomes. Although CiU was in

a sufficiently powerful position to compel the Socialists to address its demands for greater fiscal capacity, the realisation of its objectives was nevertheless curtailed by the preferences of the PSOE, and rather than fulfil its pledge to make the cession on income tax a permanent feature of the common financing system, it was in fact enacted as a temporary measure in the government's budget. Although the centralist current within the PSOE was one the wane it was nevertheless maintained by the party leadership's residual centralist instincts, by the strengthening of the PSOE's electoral ties to the working-class and rural constituencies of the South and the apprehension of the Socialist presidents of those regions that fiscal autonomy would exacerbate problems of regional inequality. Strikingly, the PP proved to be a more congenial partner. The nationalist parties achieved the bulk of their objectives for greater resources and tax-raising powers, and also extracted some highly symbolic concessions such as the removal of central administrative organs and the re-introduction of asymmetry in the degree of legislative autonomy afforded to ACs, which, by reviving the *hecho diferencial*, gave implicit recognition of the particularity of the Catalan and Basque nations. However, the unitarist and nationalist tradition of the PP was strongly enough ingrained in the party's ideology to oppose the sovereigntist aspirations of nationalist parties, articulated in the Pact de Estalla and the Declaration of Barcelona in the late 1990s, through a programme of 'Constitutional Patriotism'. While the PP was prepared to make adjustments to the structures of the state that deepened territorial autonomy, it refused to countenance any measure that undermined the indivisible sovereignty of the Spanish nation.

While adjustments to the State of Autonomies were carried out by mainstream parties of left and right, in Belgium, it was the Christian Democratic and Socialist parties that, once again, acted as the shepherds of constitutional reform. In Spain, the *Pactos Autonomicos* forged between the PSOE and PP had seemingly brought inter-governmental relations to an equilibrium by the early 1990s, but in Belgium the agenda of reform was moulded by the aspirations held by mainstream parties for completing the federal format of the state by assigning a status to the Brussels region, for improving the system of decentralised government through a clearer assignment of competences and for resolving the unforeseen problems related to the oversight of municipalities with linguistic facilities. The only available recourse for action for simultaneously addressing these matters was to revise the constitution and activate the amendments with the ratification of 'special' laws, both of which entailed highly demanding decision-rules that required qualified majorities. Thus, consensual political institutions forced the Christian Democratic and Socialist

parties to co-opt the VU, first as a coalition partner and then as a parliamentary ally to ratify their proposals. The opening up of negotiations increased the number of partisan veto players involved in the decision-making process, but the convergence in the position of the CVP and PS and the willingness of the VU not to block the reforms, even if they fell short of its ultimate constitutional objectives, paved the way for change. At the heart of the negotiations in the late 1980s and early 1990s, was the transaction between the PS, which obtained the status of a fully fledged region for Brussels, and the CVP, which acquired greater policy autonomy and fiscal capacity for the Flemish council. The question of municipalities with linguistic facilities was also resolved by compromise- while regional governments were conferred jurisdiction over the communes of their region, it would presumed that their elected representatives were automatically familiar of the language of their constituency. Finally, the direct elections of representatives to regional and community councils, which required the realignment of electoral and jurisdictional boundaries, lead to a scission of the Brabant provinces but not of the electoral district of Brussels-Halle Vilvoorde.

The comparative analysis of Spain and Belgium during the moment of deepening confirms that the diversity in the configuration of factors producing institutional change tends to increase with the development of territorial restructuring. In direct contrast to the preceding moment, the distinct paths adopted by Spain and Belgium were similar at their origins but diverged towards their close. Given the tendency of decentralised systems to experience a pause following their instauration and empowerment, regional nationalism was the necessary driving force behind institutional change in the two countries. However, the different arenas employed for setting the agenda and the differences in the configuration of power between mainstream parties meant that the set of contextual conditions that normally furnished nationality claims with meaning for the broader pattern of political competition, were sufficient but not necessary conditions for bringing about territorial reforms. Adjustments to the structures of the state could, but did not need to, feature in contests between mainstream parties. The divergence in the path persisted into the decision-making phases, where the independent preferences of mainstream parties for carrying out changes hat would rationalise the structures of the state, entailed that it was sufficient for a coalition government of centre-left or centre-right to implement the reforms.

The Failure of Territorial Reform

The comparative analysis conducted in the three previous sections of this chapter has focused on how complex configurations of actors, structures and events have engendered similar types of institutional change at different moments in the process of territorial restructuring and has searched for causal commonalities across each case in order to establish the necessary and sufficient conditions for change. However, it is worthwhile to examine the negative cases explored in this thesis- the cases of failed territorial reforms- in order to look at the sufficiency of the necessary conditions, i.e. look at what else must be present for a necessary condition to yield a particular outcome. The investigation of negative cases is fruitful only if they share important similarities with the positive cases and if there is a good possibility that the outcome will be present. Both instances of failure- the false start of devolution in Great Britain and the collapse of the Egmont Pact in Belgium- showed a strong indication that institutional change was likely: regional nationalist parties set the political agenda and the issue of devolution or regionalisation featured as a highly salient dimension of competition between mainstream parties; both conditions were revealed to be necessary for the creation of decentralised structures. However, the crucial difference lies in the ideological opposition of the partisan veto players involved in the decision-making process to the individual proposals for constitutional change, a factor which was sufficient for causing the failure of reform. This finding also sheds lights on the previous analyses by showing that those conditions that were shown to be necessary for institutional change were not in fact sufficient.

An investigation into the conditions surrounding the failure of territorial reforms shows that the increasing assertiveness of regional nationalist parties is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for successful institutional change. The arena from which these parties set the political agenda varied according to the type of political system in which they operated, their blackmail and coalition potential was buttressed by a constellation of different electoral and institutional variables and their claims were projected in the context of a dramatic rupture in electoral alignments and in the geographical basis of party competition, but their forceful presence provided the crucial stimulus for the initiation of territorial reforms. As mentioned in the second part of this chapter, the regional nationalist parties of Belgium achieved the pinnacle of their influence during the empowerment of regional government in the second half of the 1970s, by exercising relevance in both the electoral and governmental arenas. Their electoral expansion in the early 1970s enabled them to exert strong pressures against all three mainstream parties

and to encourage them to shift their stance towards promoting the establishment of a federal state. However, their performance began to flatten over the course of subsequent elections and it appeared as though they had reached their electoral ceiling without having been able to force a significant breakthrough in the regionalisation of the state. The RW had made a modest contribution in pushing the process along during its spell in office, but the obdurate conflicts between mainstream parties over certain fundamental matters such as the number, territorial limits and powers of constituent units proved to be a decisive hindrance. A similar opportunity was handed to the VU and FDF when they were co-opted into a coalition government in 1977. As was the case for the RW, their coalition potential was determined less by their electoral performance than by the institutional constraints of the consociational system and their ideological affinity with mainstream parties. The fragmentation of the party system and the decision rule governing the sanctioning of constitutional amendments and the ratification 'special' laws made their political support to the coalition government indispensable. In addition, the incorporation of the VU and the FDF into majority power was facilitated by the independent ambition of the CVP and PS to advance the regionalization of the Belgian state and by the rancorous relations that existed between the PS and the Liberal party that precluded the latter's participation in government. Indeed, the plan to co-opt the regional nationalist parties had been contrived by the PS in 1975, when it approached the CVP over the possibility of returning to office and forming an alternative coalition. Although the co-optation of VU and the FDF owed much to the machinations of the Socialist party- and in particular its concealed objective of undermining their position by associating them with mainstream politics and by advancing the regionalization process- the FDF and VU nevertheless wielded an important degree of influence on the content of the political agenda. Their influence was due to the fact that they held diametrically opposite views on the territorial format of Belgian federalism and that the highly institutionalized rules regulating the negotiation and ratification of constitutional reform endowed them with the capacity to block the proposals for change. An agreement between regional nationalist parties was the *sine qua non* of institutional change.

During the same period, the question of devolution to Scotland and Wales appeared on the political agenda of the British government as a result of the sudden and substantial surge in electoral support for the SNP. The threat from the SNP was situated primarily in the electoral arena: in February 1974, it doubled its share of the Scottish vote, taking votes and seats from both the Conservative and Labour parties. The significance of

the SNP's pressures was aggravated by the political and institutional context: the election had witnessed a generalized drain in support for the two mainstream parties and a high degree of electoral and parliamentary competitiveness that forced the Labour party to form a minority government. Moreover, the distortive effects of the SMP electoral system that had amplified the Labour party's dependence on Scottish seats. As a result, the Labour party was highly vulnerable to any further loss of electoral support in Scotland. The majoritarian institutional arrangements of the Westminster democracy confined the agenda-setting capacity of the SNP to the electoral arena. Given the absence of an investiture procedure, the Labour party's policy on devolution was deployed in order to placate the SNP and regain lost electoral support in Scotland, not, as was the case in Spain, as measure for gaining access to government. Following the election, there was no formal agreement established between the government and its nationalist ally in the parliamentary arena, merely a tacit understanding that the SNP's continued backing in the enactment of the government's legislative programme was dependent on the instigation of changes to the country's territorial structures. The only real bargaining chip available to the SNP for forcing the Labour party's hand was to withdraw its support, but the effectiveness of this tactic proved to be rather limited. The SNP withdrew its support after the failure of the guillotine motion in February 1977, providing the Conservatives with the opportunity to forward a motion of no confidence. However, the Labour party simply established an informal pact with the Liberals and continued with its efforts to push the devolution bills through parliament. In contrast with CiU and PNV, the SNP did not enjoy a pivotal position in the party system, such that once the party withdrew its support, it was effectively sidelined from negotiations. The SNP repeated this move in March 1979 but the strategy seriously backfired as the Labour government lost the vote, forcing elections that opened the way to eighteen years of Tory rule. Although the electoral conjuncture endowed the SNP with the capacity to set the agenda, the absence of strong institutional means for influencing the government's action, and the weakness of the informal collaborative arrangement prevented the nationalist party from forcing the Labour government's action when the ratification process periodically came to a halt. Thus, we find that, as was the case during the creation of decentralized structures, one of the necessary conditions for the instigation and failure of territorial reforms is the capacity of regional nationalist parties to set the agenda, a capacity that could be exercised either in the governmental or the electoral arena, depending on they type of political system in which they were operating.

When examining the set of contextual factors that raised the prominence of nationality claims, a comparison between Belgium and Britain shows that a necessary condition for the instigation and failure of territorial reforms was the high salience of the issue of regionalization or devolution in the competition between mainstream parties. In contrast with what was observed during the creation of decentralized structures however, the positioning of a Social Democratic party in opposition was not a necessary condition. The ideological openness of the three spiritual families of Belgium and the configuration of power between them in the mid 1970s decisively shaped their responses to nationalist electoral pressures: the PS and PLP advanced projects for regionalization on the basis of three regions and the CVP sought the establishment of a federalism of union between the two linguistic communities. The place of the PS in opposition was a crucial variable in inciting the party to strengthen its regionalist profile and to manipulate the territorial dimension in its bid to return to office, but was not itself enough for the instigation of territorial reforms. The projection of mainstream parties' respective constitutional objectives in electoral contests also helped to open up discussions on constitutional reform during the formation of the government in 1977. The high salience assigned to the issue of regionalization was shaped by political events and the regionalized structure of party competition. The two precipitating events were firstly, the failure of the community-wide dialogue held in 1976 to bring about a convergence in the position of mainstream parties on the parameters of regionalization and secondly, the expulsion of the RW from the coalition following its decision not to support the government's budget, in frustration at the limited effect that the 'preparatory' law on regionalization had on laying the foundations of this process. Thus, the detrimental effects of the issue of reform on the stability and duration of the government encouraged parties to focus on addressing and bringing about constitutional reform. The dynamics of party competition provided the second impetus. Following the organisational break-up of the PLP, all parties save for the PS, were competing in a regionalized party system, a situation that strengthened the electoral ties of parties to their regional constituents and, coupled with the pressures of regional nationalism, fostered continuous 'outbidding' on the territorial dimension and the accentuation of mainstream parties' regionalist profile. Although the PS still competed on the two sides of the linguistic border, the objective of its electoral strategy was to re-establish its pre-dominance in Brussels and Wallonia and the party thus adopted a Francophone perspective by promoting regionalization on the basis of three regions. An additional effect of the regionalized structure of the party system was the polarization of

the party system in the parliament and government, as Francophone and Flemish parties projected widely divergent constitutional projects and vaunted these ambitions to their respective electorates in an attempt to cast themselves as regional champions. Thus, by the late 1970s, the regional nationalist parties of Belgium were exerting centrifugal pressures on a party system whose fundamental transformation gave rise to the establishment of two linguistic fronts that were fundamentally at odds about the direction of reform; they were thus the only actors capable of fostering an agreement and preventing polarization from degenerating into deadlock.

Turning to the British case, the first significant change in the Labour party's policy occurred in September 1974. After years spent under the sway of the centralist tradition, resisting any pressure for devolution and neutralising nationalist demands by establishing a Royal Commission, it proposed the creation of directly elected assemblies for Scotland and Wales. The main cause of this policy shift was the irresistible logic of electoral expediency generated by the high electoral threat posed by the SNP and the existence of a majority of support for devolution in Scotland. The change in policy was facilitated by the fact that the Labour party drew its roots in the Celtic fringe and had taken an active part in the movement for Home Rule, a demand that was associated with its broader struggle for the democratisation of the British state. In addition, the Labour party had already loosened its attachment to the unitary state by adopting a policy of regionalism on a British scale. Nevertheless, the centralist and Home Rule traditions vied for predominance. This competition between currents was visible in the compromise solution that the Labour government mustered as well as in the important rifts that appeared between the party leadership and the PLP over the desirability and the substance of devolution. The Conservative party was equally shocked by the result of February 1974 and immediately followed Labour's initiative in accommodating the SNP by proposing a new 'Charter for Scotland'. However, in contrast to the Labour party, this shift in policy was implausible: the Conservative party's ideology was intimately bound to the preservation of the Union and parliamentary sovereignty and there was little tradition of support for Home Rule. Moreover, the party's position had continuously changed between 1968 and 1974. Heath had pledged to create a Scottish Assembly in 1968 but the proposal was abandoned in 1973 when Scottish Conference defeated a motion demanding that the party re-assert its commitment to devolution. This repeated change in policy direction made it difficult for the party to undertake a credible policy shift in 1974. The party's prevarication was due to the fact that, like Labour, it was deeply divided on the issue of devolution. The Home Rule

tendency was defended by a few relatively isolated individuals, but the Unionist current was more influential and in 1976, under Margaret Thatchers' leadership, it took the party in a direction from which it would not return. Devolution was deployed by a leadership driven by the logic of expediency, and imposed on a party that uneasily accepted the implications of blatant electoralism for the party's ideological integrity.

As was the case in Belgium, the decision of mainstream parties to advance their separate constitutional projects paved the way for Labour's devolution reforms. There were a number of contextual factors that gave devolution a particularly high salience. The discovery of North Sea oil altered the calculus of independence and emboldened the SNP's commitment to meeting Scottish social and economic needs; the mainstream parties thus needed to present devolution as an attractive and feasible alternative. Carrying out this objective was facilitated by the publication of the Kilbrandon Commission report that outlined the powers and mode of election of the Scottish and Welsh assemblies. Finally, the dynamics of party competition in this period encouraged the Labour and Conservative parties to compete openly on the territorial dimension. In previous elections, British mainstream parties had dismissed the issue of devolution, because the nationalist parties were too weak to constitute a significant threat. However, the surge in the SNP's support was not an isolated occurrence; it took place in the context of a severe rupture in the class-based political alignments on which hinged the two-party system. The drop in partisanship and the weakening of hold of class yielded a rush of support for third parties, including the Liberal party, but also produced a very high level of electoral and parliamentary competitiveness between Labour and Conservative parties. In view of the fact that changes in voting behaviour in Scotland would affect the Labour party's share of votes seats, and thus, the identity of the mainstream party in government, the two mainstream parties faced every incentive to raise the profile of their proposals in the campaign and compete on the issue of devolution. Thus, in both Belgium and Britain, dramatic changes to the parameters of the party system- either in the form of the regionalization of party competition or of a weakening of electoral alignments- intensified competition between mainstream parties and created the incentives for them to redirect the focus of their electoral strategies to the regions featuring assertive regional nationalist parties.

The failure of territorial reforms was the outcome of the attempted creation of decentralized structures in Britain and the empowerment of regional government in Belgium. It is therefore fitting that these initiatives were, as found in the positive cases, also attempted by single-party or coalition governments comprising Social Democratic

parties. The decisive effect of partisan ideology on the capacity of a political system to generate 'policy change' was corroborated in the case of Great Britain and Belgium which reveal that the opposition of any single veto player to the proposal for institutional change is a necessary and sufficient condition for the failure of territorial reform. In Belgium, the Egmont Pact was at the basis of the coalition agreement which the VU and FDF had played a decisive role in elaborating. It held the promise of taking forward the regionalization process and resolving the seemingly irreconcilable differences between the Flemish and Francophone federal visions by establishing a fully-fledged regional institution for Brussels but freezing the capital city's territorial limits and creating special rights for the Francophone minority in its periphery. However, the partisan consensus that emerged during the coalition negotiations was undermined during the ratification stage, which took place over two legislatures, exposing mainstream parties to the electoral arena and increasing the time period over which potential discord among partisan actors could surface. Nationalist elements in Flanders expressed profound reservations about the content of the compromise that had been forged- in particular, the three-region solution and the absence of linguistic parity in the Brussels executive. The potentially deleterious electoral effects of the agreement were sufficient for the leader of the CVP to develop a strong nationalist profile, to present itself as the genuine champion of Flemish interests, and to scupper the delicately-crafted agreement. Thus, the polarisation between mainstream parties on the most divisive aspect of the regionalisation process- the format of Belgian federalism- resurfaced during the decision-making phase, and the hostility of the CVP to the Pact was sufficient to lead to its unravelling.

In Great Britain, the Labour government reluctantly shifted policy on devolution in the 1970s. The party's Home Rule tradition was not resurrected from within as part of a general evolution in the party's ideology, but was a short-term measure deployed to placate an external threat, and important elements within the party remained committed to the existing system of territorial management and to the institutions of territorial representation. The competition between the Home Rule and centralist traditions engendered tireless opposition to its devolution bills from the PLP. Although the government had developed a proposal that aimed to please both sceptics and proponents, internal discord persisted and the gulf between the cabinet and the PLP was too wide for a zone of potential agreement to emerge. These divisions produced a collapse in the party's discipline during the ratification process. Opposition from Labour MPs lead to the defeat of the guillotine motion in February 1977; continued opposition in parliament forced the

government to introduce a referendum clause as a concession to rebellious Labour backbenchers; during the referendum campaign, the party produced an image of disunity and was incapable of mobilising the level of popular support necessary for passing the 40 percent threshold. The parliament and referendum emerged as institutional veto points that effectively sealed the fate of devolution. The Labour government's accommodating strategy was thus hindered by the deep ideological divisions within the party. The comparable rejection of the Labour government's devolution bills by the PLP confirms the decisiveness of ideology for a political system's capacity to generate 'policy change'. The source of ideological opposition was very different in the two countries: the reticence of the PLP was due to the unwillingness of centralist currents to undertake a reform that might undermine the economic interests of the working class and the unity of the British state; the CVP's position was pushed by the centrifugal dynamics of the regionalised party system towards the endorsement of a format that reflected the long-standing Flemish preference for a two-nation settlement. In both countries however, ideological hostility to institutional change by any single partisan actor- whether the PLP or the CVP- was a necessary and sufficient condition for bringing about the failure of institutional reforms. While the different decision-rules and the variable 'ridigity' of the constitution were significant, insofar as they determined the identity of the partisan actors whose consent was necessary to the ratification of the legislation, ideological opposition by any veto player to a change in the status quo was enough to uphold it. Although both institutions and ideology are necessary for understanding the outcome, because ideology intervenes last and does so across all types of political systems, it is the most proximate and therefore most decisive factor for explaining the success of failure of institutional change.

The comparative analysis of the two negative cases reveals that they adopted very similar paths from start to finish: the strong agenda-setting capacity of regional nationalist parties and the high salience of the territorial dimension in party competition was accompanied by the ideological opposition of a mainstream partisan veto player to the proposal for constitutional change. Thus, a sufficient condition for the failure of reform was for a mainstream party hostile to change, to simply negate the proposal. This particular alignment of conditions helps to shed light on the positive instance of change that also featured a common path. The contrast between the positive and negative cases shows that the necessary conditions underlying the creation of decentralization were jointly necessary but not sufficient for institutional change, as they also required the absence of any veto player ideologically opposed to territorial reforms.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion

Having conducted an intensive and comparative study of the politics of accommodation in Great Britain, Spain and Belgium, the purpose of this chapter is to tie together the findings of this thesis. This chapter first examines the implications of the main findings for existing theories of party competition, government formation and institutional change, and assesses their internal validity on this study's research design, including the selection of cases and variables. It then examines the consequences of the findings for the study of institutions and institutional change, and proposes a different interpretation of the main conceptual tools employed in historical institutionalist analysis. The chapter concludes by suggesting how the analytical framework developed in this thesis could be adapted to the study of accommodation in multi-level systems. The main point to emerge from the analysis is that the attitudes and actions of partisan actors remain crucial to our understanding of the dynamics of territorial restructuring.

Partisan Brokerage and the Nationalities Question

This investigation into the influence of regional nationalism on the restructuring of the state cannot avoid reaching the broad conclusion that political parties still matter, and moreover, that they play a particularly instrumental role in the 'management' of the nationalities question. It is said that the functions of political parties in contemporary Europe are challenged on numerous fronts: their intermediating function is being eroded by citizen apathy, declining partisanship and lack of trust; their representative function is being supplanted by the media and by the proliferation of alternatives forms of representation and mobilization; these shaky foundations have in turn forced parties to adjust their organizational structures, to detach themselves further from society and nestle in the organs of the state; at the policy-making level their influence on public policy outputs are severely constrained by the stock of policies they inherit as well as by economic interdependence and transnational integration. The evolution may augur the birth of 'post-democracy' (Crouch 2004), in which social cleavages and citizens preferences are no longer channeled into the political system and in which parties are reduced to a set of competing technocratic elites that periodically alter in power to organize and staff government and control the public administration.

Yet, if the declining hold of social class and the constraints of the international environment have attenuated the sharp conflicts that divided political parties in the past, reduced the scope of partisan influence in policy-making and degraded the purchase of the traditional distinction between left and right, when it comes to politics in the 'world of constitutional choice' (Kiser and Ostrom 1982: 208), to debates regarding collective choices about ways of organizing the polity, then the involvement of political parties makes a substantial difference to the types of constitutional outcomes that are observed. Political parties are responsible for the institutionalization of the territorial cleavage as well as for the projection and management of nationality claims, and they exercise a decisive influence over the political settlements that are conjured and negotiated for the explicit purpose of accommodating regional nationalism. In all three states examined in this thesis, the claims articulated by regional nationalist parties have been addressed and acted upon by mainstream parties and have engendered the transformation of formerly unitary states into asymmetrically devolved, regionalized and federal states, in which the recognition of nationality and territory are at the basis of the political order.

This thesis set out to examine the influence of regional nationalist parties on this process and to uncover the variation in the relationship between their electoral and policy success. It was argued that the capacity of regional nationalist parties to achieve their political objectives depends on their ability to set the political agenda by influencing the attitudes and actions of mainstream parties in government. Underlying this influence is a power relationship that is exploited either in the electoral arena, where, in the face of electoral pressures, mainstream parties adjust their position on the territorial dimension to compete against their nationalist and mainstream rivals, or in the parliamentary and governmental arenas, where mainstream parties undertake adjustments to the territorial structures of the state as a result of their governing alliance with regional nationalist parties. Whichever of the two spheres of political action is exploited, a similar kind of partisan brokerage takes place. Regional nationalist put forth a specific claim, to which mainstream parties will respond, according to the gravity of the threat for their electoral fortunes and governing viability. Their willingness to accommodate nationalist demands is strongly conditioned by their prevailing attitudes towards the recognition of plurinationalism and territorial autonomy, which are in turn swayed by past traditions and the configuration of power between different ideological currents within the party. This brokerage is evident primarily in the parliamentary and governmental arenas, where there is a clear transaction between regional nationalist parties that support the authority of

mainstream parties which, in exchange, make concessions towards greater autonomy and capacity. But a similar transaction is at work in the electoral arena, where mainstream parties undertake a shift in policy in order to appeal to regional electorates, to subdue nationalist parties and defeat their mainstream rivals. In both cases, territorial autonomy is traded-off for the improved electoral prospects and governing viability of mainstream parties and the magnitude of the policy adjustments or institutional changes are circumscribed by the ideology of mainstream. It was shown that although the electoral arena offers far more opportunities for engaging in this type of partisan brokerage, political outcomes will tend to reflect overwhelmingly the preferences of mainstream parties, while the chances of acting in the parliamentary and governmental are fewer, but offer the possibility of giving direction to institutional change. The content of the transaction- the strategy of accommodation, the creation and format of regional governments, the degree of policy autonomy, administrative and fiscal capacity- will be specific to the historical and cultural context in which it is taking place and will vary primarily according to the types of nationality claim, the nature of the status quo and the general evolution of a mainstream party's attitudes. Nevertheless, the timing and substance of institutional alterations will reflect changes in the power relationship, the brokerage process between regional nationalist and mainstream parties and the compromise between their respective views. Political parties have thus played a critical role, both as catalysts and mediators, in the 'management' of the nationalities question, and can claim a good deal of credit for ensuring that the accommodation of nationalism does not descend into intractable conflict and separation, but rather can be turned into what Ted Gurr referred to as a form of 'prosaic politics'.

Empirical Findings and Research Design

What the empirical part of this thesis set out to achieve was to identify how electoral pressures and institutional arrangements conditioned the power relationship between regional nationalist and mainstream parties in different arenas and how the attitudes and internal politics of mainstream parties conditioned their responses. The value of the findings of this thesis will depend on whether they contribute to the existing stock of knowledge about the relationship between regional nationalism and territorial restructuring. The review of the academic literature in chapter two did not enumerate a competing set of explanations as much as identify a series of different approaches that supplied analytical categories and set of variables, which were expanded upon and

organized in a systematic fashion in the two-part theoretical framework developed in chapter three. The explanation offered here is meant as complement rather than an alternative to these approaches. Structural approaches remain essential to our understanding of how the multinational composition of societies puts pressures on the structures of the state. The existence of politically mobilized national groups expressing demands for greater self-government invariably generates friction against a territorial organization that fails to reflect their distinctiveness. All three countries examined in this thesis all adopted a format of regional government that reflected the differential intensity of nationalist sentiment, lending a degree of credence to W.S Livingston's claim that federalism is a 'function of societies'. Structural approaches thus help us to identify the macro-sociological conditions that have engendered the existence of distinct territorial cleavage, determined the number of nationalist groups, their propensity for mobilization, and so on. However, these approaches only set the stage for political actors, and lay the foundations of a deeper examination of how partisan brokerage in different arenas determines the timing and the nature of institutional reforms.

This task has been greatly facilitated by the application of Sartori's(1976) two criteria of 'relevance', which set the key distinction between the two main spheres of political action in which regional nationalist parties have set the political agenda Institutional arrangements were shown to exercise a decisive influence on the type of relevance that regional nationalist parties are likely to exercise, and the pertinence of the distinction employed by Newman (1996) and Rogowski (1981)between majoritarian-plurality systems and consensus-PR systems is confirmed in the finding that the influence British regional nationalist parties was confined to the electoral arena, while that of Belgian regional nationalist was present in both electoral and governmental arenas. But there is little here that is either new or counter-intuitive. Exploring the different pathways through which regional nationalist parties have set the agenda in different arenas has however yielded interesting findings, because it has enabled the identification of variations within political systems- in the different responses of political parties of different ideological persuasion, a crucial element for explaining the timing, direction and content of changes to the structures of the state.

In the electoral arena, it was shown that Sartori's 'blackmail' relevance has actually two distinct dimensions- regional nationalist parties can influence the position of mainstream parties either in order to placate the nationalist threat or to compete against mainstream rivals. Regional nationalist parties set the agenda by exerting significant

electoral pressures, in a context of partisan dealignment, high electoral volatility, a territorial imbalance of support and a high degree of electoral and parliamentary competitiveness. The electoral system exercises a significant but nuanced conditioning effect on the degree of threat they pose across different types of political systems: while the high threshold created by a plurality system discriminates against the representation of regional nationalist parties that cannot concentrate their electoral support, it also exaggerates the size of electoral swings and the dependence of mainstream parties on certain territories, entailing that they are no less vulnerable to nationalist incursions than in consensus systems. The variety of responses of mainstream parties to the threat of regional nationalism revealed that what are often presented as rival theories of party competition can in fact be used in a complementary manner. Saliency theory is useful in the first stage: whether parties choose to alter the salience of the territorial issue-dimension depends on the magnitude of the electoral threat; if regional nationalist parties do not constitute an important electoral force, their demands will be ignored or dismissed. Directional theory is useful in the second stage: if the threat is one to be reckoned with, the choice of a broadly accommodating or adversarial strategy will depend on the individual party's ideology and on whether it displays the traditions or policy commitments to undertake a plausible shift in policy towards greater territorial autonomy, confirming Robertson's (1976) conjecture that policies are not party-neutral. In Great Britain and Belgium, electoral pressures were exerted on cohesive Christian Democratic or Social Democratic parties, the mainstream party families that exhibit the traditions and existing commitments necessary for undertaking a plausible shift in policy. The refinements that have been brought to the spatial model of competition since its inception have thus proven to be constructive. But Downs's idea that a policy spectrum constitutes an ordered scale of alternative retains its utility, for it helps to appreciate the fact that the policy shift is gradual and to understand how the extent of a party's policy adjustment is determined by internal rivalries between different ideological current. Mainstream parties do not immediately converge to the position of regional nationalist parties or the regional median voter; they abandon the status quo reluctantly and move slowly towards a stance that favours asymmetric political decentralisation. Moreover, as the case of Belgium revealed the choice of policy response of mainstream is strongly influenced by past practices or models of accommodation. Therefore, past traditions do not simply legitimate a policy shift; they also affect the type of strategy that is employed. The competitiveness between mainstream parties and their position in government or

303

opposition are also important determinants of their responses. In Great Britain, Spain and Belgium, the rising salience of the territorial dimension in the competitive interactions between mainstream parties occurs when a Social Democratic party is in opposition and is unified on a policy stance that harkens to its federalist tradition. In Great Britain and Spain, the incumbency of the Labour party and PSOE produces a more centralist stance, as does the need to compete in a nationalized party system. Conservative parties are obstinately opposed to revising their attitudes in the face of regional nationalist or mainstream electoral pressures and do not manipulate the territorial dimension for electoral gain when they find themselves in opposition. Liberal parties act both as centralizing and decentralizing forces in government.

The findings on the influence of regional nationalist parties in the parliamentary and governmental arenas do not diverge significantly from the expectations of existing theories in which power, policy and institutions jointly determine the composition of governments (Martin and Stevenson 2001). In Spain, the CiU and PNV oblige mainstream parties to undertake institutional reforms in exchange for their parliamentary support; in Belgium, the VU, FDF and RW either give impulse to institutional reforms or become involved in the decision-making by entering a coalition government. Regional nationalist parties set the agenda when they exercise a strong degree of bargaining power. One important difference with power-oriented theories of government formation (Riker 1962) is that size is not as relevant a factor in determining a regional nationalist party's bargaining power as the partisan distribution of power and the number of alternative feasible coalitions- which are in turn determined by the constellation of forces in the party system and the policy distance between them. In Spain, the bargaining power of CiU and PNV depends crucially on the advent of a hung parliament and is subsequently buttressed by the vote of investiture and their pivotal position in the party system. A significant departure from theories of minority governments (Strom 1990; Strom 1984) found in Spain is that minority governments will form not only if a party can set policy from the parliamentary arena without incurring the electoral costs of governing, but especially if its office-seeking motivations are satisfied at another level of government. In Belgium, the bargaining power of the VU, RW and FDF is conditioned by the fragmentation of the party system and by the two-thirds qualified majorities required for the ratification of constitutional amendments and 'special' laws. It was demonstrated that the institutions underlying the majoritarian-consensus dichotomy- the format of the party system, investiture rules and special majority requirements- restrict the set of feasible coalitions,

producing tendencies towards minimum-winning coalitions in majoritarian systems and oversized coalitions in consensus system (Strom et al. 1994; Volden and Carrubba 2004). In all three countries, wielding power over the formation of a government is a more effective strategy for setting the political agenda than threatening to withdraw parliamentary support or to exit from the government. The ideology of mainstream parties is the ultimate determinant of agenda-setting power. Claims that are situated in proximity to the median position of the mainstream party(-ies) in government are more likely to find their way onto the political agenda, corroborating the contention of Rudolph and Thompson (1985; 1989) that the receptivity of mainstream parties is inversely related to the radicalism of nationalist parties' demands

Turning finally to the examination of political outcomes, the ideology of mainstream parties exercises a profound and decisive effect on the substance and the likelihood of institutional change in all three countries. When regional nationalist parties set the agenda from the electoral arena, mainstream parties retain unfettered discretion in giving shape to the content of constitutional settlements. In Great Britain, outcomes reflect the Labour party's historical tradition, internal compromises and adjustments made in the face of pressure by the Conservative party. In Belgium, outcomes reflect compromises between the preferences of the Christian Democratic and Socialist party, which are in turn determined by traditions, internal compromises or splits, and electoral pressures. When regional nationalist parties set the agenda from the parliamentary and governmental arenas, they leave an impression on the content of institutional reforms. This is the case if their relationship with mainstream parties has a strong coalitional character, either through the establishment of explicit parliamentary pacts, such as that between CiU, PNV and PP or through their entry into the decision-making arena through power-sharing devices, as was the case with the CDC and VU, FDF. Even in this scenario, the ideology of mainstream parties defines the zone of politically acceptable demands and the contours of the compromises. Moderate stances espoused by the CDC, CiU and RW are more easily accommodated than radical demands issued by the PNV, FDF and RW. In both scenarios, the ideology of a mainstream partisan actor determines the feasibility of institutional change. Opposition from a partisan veto player- whether the Labour parliamentary group or the CVP in government- to changes in the status quo is sufficient to block constitutional reforms. The basic contention derived from the veto player approach (2002, 1995) that ideological distance is the determining factor underlying the capacity of a system to produce policy change is thus confirmed.

The value of these findings is also determined by whether they meet the methodological standards guiding social scientific enquiry, one which is the criteria of internal validity, i.e. the validity of the inferences that are drawn on the basis of the sample of countries examined. There are two possible sources of threats to the validity of the findings summarized above: 'selection bias'- the possibility that the relationship between independent and dependent variables is systematically over-(or under) estimated due to the non-random selection of case studies, and 'omitted variable bias'- the possibility that there are confounding factors unaccounted for in the analysis that affect the dependent variable or are correlated with one of the independent variables.

It was acknowledged in the theoretical framework developed in chapter three that the research design of this thesis is vulnerable to the charge of 'selection bias', because the sample consisted of countries that have all experienced an important regionalization of their territorial structures, excluding the analysis of countries that have either preserved their unitary features or broken-up. However, this potential prejudice was countered through two methods. The first was to treat the dependent variables not simply as a contemporary constitutional outcome embodying a protracted process of restructuring, but to examine the presence, timing and direction of institutional change during discrete historical periods. The second was to use the congruence procedure and disaggregate each country-case into separate temporal units, in order to increase the number of observations under scrutiny, to increase the variation observed on the dependent variable and to examine how this correlated with the variations in the value of the independent variable (agenda-setting power) and the intervening variable (decision-making threshold). So, the importance of agenda-setting power as a necessary condition for promoting institutional change was illustrated when regional nationalist parties were weak: in the case of Great Britain under Tory rule, which witnessed a centralization of authority; in the case of Belgium in the first half of the 1980s, when there was a pause in the reform of the state; in the case of Spain during the PSOE's hegemony, when the autonomic process generated an imbalance between policy autonomy and administrative and fiscal capacity. Equally, the fact that strong agenda-setting power is not a sufficient condition and must be joined with a low decision-making threshold was illustrated in the cases of the failure of devolution in Great Britain and the collapse of the Egmont Pact in Belgium, both in the late 1970s. Thus, by parsing the dependent variable into moments of institutional change and examining a full range of possible outcomes, it was possible to draw valid inferences about the relationship between cause and effect.

306

An additional threat to the validity of the findings could emanate from the extreme value of independent variables in the case of Belgium, a consensus democracy featuring a territorialized system of party competition and the absence of a Conservative party. The inclusion of Belgium was necessary to this investigation since it shed light on the mediating effect of consensus institutions- to provide regional nationalist parties with two different arenas from which to set the agenda. The particularity of the Belgian case is the gradual disappearance of state-wide political organizations- a feature that lead to the break-up of the Liberal party- the only unitarist party in the country, equivalent to the British and Conservative parties- and exacerbated the vulnerability of mainstream parties to nationalist electoral pressures. The inferences drawn in the comparative case-study could be driven by this unique feature and produce an over-estimation of the effect of electoral pressures as a source of agenda-setting power. However, it is a feature that can be parameterised simply by treating it as an extreme form of territorial imbalance in electoral support, which, as the case of the Belgian Socialist Party in the 1970s and the British Labour party in the late 1980s revealed, also affects the electoral strategy of state-wide parties. The completion of the break-up of the party system in 1978 did create an exceptional environment, as it lead mainstream parties in the regionalized party system to outbid each other on the territorial dimension, making regional nationalist parties redundant. However, this development only confirmed, by way of contrast with Great Britain and Spain, that a nationalized party system is a source of centralization, since it forces mainstream parties to extend their electoral coalitions, to consider the preferences of other constituents and moderate the extent to which they cater to nationality claims.

Assessing the validity of the claims advanced in this thesis also urges the serious consideration of potentially confounding factors, unaccounted for in this analysis, which could exercise an independent effect on the dynamic of territorial restructuring. The main structural variable that displays different values across the three countries and which could affect the demand for and feasibility of institutional change is the nature of the nationalist divide: the size and number of nationalist groups, their territorial concentration of dispersion, their degree of political mobilization. A number of scholars have argue that the type of ethnic divisions has an independent effect on political stability as well as on the willingness of governments to accommodate nationalist groups: a bipolar or multi-polar configuration between similarly sized groups tends to produce greater instability than a situation in which there is a dominant majority or fragmentation between many contending groups (Reilly 2001); however, governments concerned with building their

reputation against secessionist claims will be less accommodating in a multiethnic country than in a country where there is only a single nationalist challenger (Walter 2006). These insights bear some relevance to the present analysis: Belgium is a country with two main linguistic groups which have both issued claims for territorial autonomy and where there is no predominant culture to represent the centre, generating the pattern of bipolar centrifugalism that has so frequently forced the question of constitutional reform onto the political agenda and has engendered protracted coalition negotiations and periodic governmental crises; Spain is a country with three peripheral nationalities and a predominant Castilian culture, which has also been susceptible to 'ethnoterritorial mimetism' (Moreno 1997)- illustrated in the case of Andalusia- a development that was strongly resisted by the central government at the time.

While these structural features cannot be ignored, it is necessary to appreciate that they constitutes one among a range of different considerations that influences the predisposition of mainstream parties towards the accommodation of nationalism. In Great Britain, the fear that Irish Home Rule might bring about the unraveling of the Union through a demonstration effect in other parts of the country might played a role in shaping the hostility of the Conservative party, but it had ceased to be a relevant issue by the late 1970s and had no effect on the opposition of certain currents in the Labour party to devolution. Structural factors, if and when they play a role, do not simply exercise an independent effect on political outcomes; their consequences are filtered through the attitudes and ideologies of mainstream parties. They can therefore be taken into account in the analytical framework developed in this thesis, which can increase the range of variables it considers, while maintaining its parsimony. This can be achieved by incorporating them into the host of different factors that shape the attitudes of mainstream parties in a specific historical period and by assessing whether pressures exerted by regional nationalist parties in different arenas are sufficient to compel a shift in policy or the undertaking of institutional reforms. The same can be done with an assortment of other vectors in the political environment, such as the presence of an armed conflict in the case of the Basque country or the functional imperative of rationalizing the territorial distribution of authority, illustrated with the forging of the *Pactos Autonomicos* in Spain and the responses to the 1980 regionalization laws in Belgium. These are elements that shape the position of mainstream political parties on the territorial dimension as well as their receptivity to nationality claims and it is against this position that we must evaluate the influence of regional nationalist parties.

Theoretical Issues in the Study of Institutional Change

Incorporating the role of partisan actors in the process of territorial restructuring bears theoretical consequences for the study of institutions and institutional change. The empirical analysis revealed the utility of institutional theory as an approach for studying how micro-level interaction between political parties are subjected to different types of institutional constraints (Diermeier and Krehbiel 2003). Taking as a premise the vote-seeking and office-seeking motivations of political parties, it was shown that in the electoral arena a formal institution like the electoral system has an important effect on conditioning the perception of the regional nationalist threat. In the parliamentary and governmental arenas, formal institutions, such as the rules regulating executive-legislative relations, as well as informal institutions- the format of the party system, ad hoc power-sharing devices- affected the power relationship between regional nationalist and mainstream parties. The consequence for rational choice institutionalism (cf. Shepsle 1989; Riker 1980) is that there is a good case for extending the operational definition of institutions from formal rules to routines, such as the abhorrence of coalition politics in Great Britain or the habitual inclusion of 'sister' parties in government coalitions in Belgium, as well as norms, such as the broadening of partisan participation in the constituent assembly in Spain, since these institutions they exercise a decisive effect on the selective incentives of mainstream parties, on the association of partisan actors with majority power and thus on the range of issues and priorities featuring on the political agenda. While the consequence of such an extension may be to elide institutions with political culture, this could be avoided with the selection of theoretically relevant routines, habits and norms, i.e. those practices that condition the agenda-setting power of parties, that are necessary to any explanation of political behaviour (Dowding 1994).

The findings also bear implications for the two categories that form the core of historical institutionalism: 'critical junctures' and 'path-dependency'. The creation of regional governments- the setting-up of devolved parliaments in Great Britain in the late 1990s, the forging of the State of Autonomies in 1978, the establishment of consociational institutions in Belgium in the late 1960s, can all be considered 'critical junctures', insofar they represented intense moments of deliberation between and within regional nationalist and mainstream parties whose discrete choices introduced a new and irreversible constitutional settlement for the management of the nationalities question. The historical institutionalist literature offers only a partially accurate characterization of such moments. In accordance with the premise that political actors act under the

influence of 'bounded rationality', it was shown that their cognitive capacity was limited by the constraints of historical templates for the accommodation of nationalism. Rather enjoy the full information presumed in models of instrumental rationality, which would have enabled them to shift their policy or reform institutions in such a way as to definitively quell the regional nationalist competitors, mainstream parties designed institutions according to models with which they were familiar. This was clearly evident in Spain, where the historical reference for the State of Autonomies was the *Estado Integral* of the Second Republic, albeit extended to the entire Spanish territory, as well as in Great Britain, where devolution had a precedent in the Irish Home Rule debate and in the projects of the SHRA. The importance of cognitive constraints was however not better illustrated than in Belgium in the late 1960s, where in spite of the presences of the principles of subsidiarity functional federalism in the ideologies of the Christian Democratic and Socialist parties, neither of them exhibited a tradition of accommodating linguistic nationalism with territorial autonomy. The parties thus turned to what they knew best- reforming the linguistic regime and establishing consociational measures- in order to pacify community tensions. This idea however jars with the conceptualization of 'critical junctures' as a moment in which the range of plausible institutional choices expands substantially and with the contention that discrete institutional choices are highly susceptible to contingent events (Mahoney 2001; Capoccia and Kelemen 2007). What the evidence suggests is that the range of plausible choice was in fact circumscribed by the influence of past templates on the individual responses of mainstream parties, that the discrete choices were determined not by an element of randomness, but by the distribution of power between political parties following an election (although the antecedents to institutional choices may be contingent, the choices themselves are not), and that the substance of those choices reflected the compromise between mainstream parties' preferences. Historical institutionalist approaches could thus maintain a more consistent line by explicitly acknowledging these cognitive constraints and by reducing the significance assigned to contingency in the explanation of outcomes.

The consequences of 'critical junctures' for future institutional development is, in part, what makes them so critical. These moments have been conceived as a 'punctuated equilibrium' (Krasner 1984): occasional bursts of institutional change that are succeeded by long periods of stability. Institutions become 'locked-in' a specific path and are sustained over time by different reproduction mechanisms, the principal one being the logic of sunk costs and increasing returns: new institutions are costly to reverse or replace

and political actors thus slowly adjust their preferences and behaviour according to these new institutions, sustaining their reinforcement over time (Thelen 1999; Pierson 2000). The empirical analysis revealed however that rather than encourage an alignment of preferences in favour of the initial constitutional settlement, critical junctures actually set-off 'reactive sequences' (Mahoney 2000) or a 'negative feedback loop'(Greif and Laitin 2004), in which regional nationalist and mainstream partisan actors adapted their preferences in reaction, and often in opposition, to the institutional status quo. Institutions selected during a critical juncture reflect the specific partisan distribution of power extant at the time and embody the preferences of those partisan actors. Thus, the main reproduction mechanism underlying an institution is the maintenance of that specific constellation of partisan forces. Meanwhile, other partisan will adjust their preferences to the different aspects of institutional status quo and await a shift in the partisan distribution of power to advance them. The 'reactive sequence' was clearly illustrated in the case of Spain: a dramatic shift in power in 1982 allowed the PSOE to assert its constitutional preferences by curtailing the asymmetric format of the State of Autonomies and introduce its own policies for ensuring inter-territorial solidarity; this was followed by another shift in power that allowed the nationalist parties to alleviate the problem of inadequate fiscal capacity at the regional level introduced during the PSOE's term. Similarly in Belgium, the regional nationalist parties reacted to the consociational settlement by pushing the process of regionalization during their electoral apogee in the 1970s, even if this was periodically halted by the impasse over the issue of Brussels; this was followed by a period which saw the weakening of regional nationalist parties and the implementation of reforms that were driven by mainstream parties' dissatisfaction with the degree of autonomy conferred by the regionalization law 1980. Two implications follow from this analysis for the study of institutional change. The first is that following the creation of regional institutions, partisan preferences are set endogeneously and reflect not simply current attitudes, older traditions, and electoral considerations, but also the nature of institutional status quo. The second is that path-dependency displays a more open-ended and less deterministic quality that hitherto acknowledged. If the institutional status quo embodies a specific configuration of power, it will sow the seeds of its own replacement by influencing the preferences of other parties that are not included in the original coalition or that are dissatisfied with the compromise. It will also will create future opportunities for alterations, and possibly reversals, that are prompted not by external punctuations, but by shifts in the partisan distribution of power.

Accommodation in Multi-Level Systems

Obtaining a finer understanding of the dynamics of institutional change will demand that the study of accommodation be extended to the contemporary context. As was suggested in the introduction, the process of territorial restructuring in Great Britain, Spain and Belgium over the last thirty to fourty years has not put an end to nationalist claims but it has introduced a new institutional environment in which they are accommodated. Extending the temporal reach of the analysis enables us to control for the identity of mainstream parties and to appreciate how multi-level electoral competition has altered the electoral incentives, the institutional constraints, and the consequent inducement for mainstream parties to undertake adjustments in their position. The nascent literature in this field has suggested that a number of additional institutional variables could affect the pressures exerted by regional nationalist parties in the electoral arena, such as the timing of regional elections relative to national elections (Jeffery and Hough 2003) and the implication of regional elections for policy-making at the federal level (Deschouwer 2003), both of which will affect the extent to which regional elections are treated by the electorate as 'second-order' contests. The receptivity of mainstream parties to nationalist claims will depend on the balance between competing ideological traditions which will, in turn, be influenced by the party's organizational adaptation to the structures of the state- evinced in the autonomy of regional branches and their influence in the mainstream party executive- as well as by the position of the regional and central branches in government or in opposition (Hopkin 2003; Swenden and Maddens 2009). In the parliamentary and governmental arenas, the willingness of mainstream parties to coalesce with regional nationalist parties will be influenced by their wish to establish 'vertical congruence' between governing alliances at the regional level (Stefuriuc 2009).

As the country with the longest experience of conducting multi-level elections, the recent reforms of the Catalan Statute of Autonomy in Spain illustrates the influence of these variables. After its second defeat in general elections in 2000, the PSOE found itself in opposition both in Madrid and in Catalonia. The PSC's federated relationship with the PSOE entailed a degree of organizational autonomy that enabled the party to develop its own brand of Catalanism and its separate projects for the federal reform of the Spanish state (Roller and Van Houten 2003). In the regional elections of 2003, it established a coalition with ERC and ICV (the former Catalan communist) on the basis of a commitment to revising the Catalan Statute of Autonomy. The PSC had also been able to exert considerable influence on the position of the PSOE leadership. Pasqual Maragall,

leader of the PSC, alongside Manuel Chaves, regional president of Andalusia, supported the election of José Luis Zapatero as party leader in 2000, in exchange for which they negotiated a commitment to extend the powers of ACs through the reforms of the Statutes of Autonomy, formalized in the declaration of 'Santillana del Mar' (Hopkin 2009). The PSOE was then forced to make good on its pledge following its narrow victory in the 2004 general elections, which had produced a hung parliament and obliged the PSOE to seek a parliamentary alliance with ERC, the party's coalition partner in Catalonia, in order to satisfy the investiture requirement and the imperative of establishing 'vertical congruence'. Thus, Catalan nationalist parties operated in two arenas to push the Socialist party to undertake the first comprehensive constitutional reform since 1978. The need to compete against CiU in Catalonia and the predominance of the federalist tradition-visible in the continuing influence of regional barons within the party- compelled a shift in the PSOE's position, which the party was forced to honour when it returned to government. The negotiations followed the established method: the Generalitat and central government negotiated the new statute in the parliament's constitutional commission on the basis of draft text ratified by the Catalan parliament. The new statute of autonomy reflected the continuing capacity of the mainstream party in government to delimit the contours of the constitutional compromise. At the symbolic level, the affirmation of the existence of a Catalan nation was replaced by the term 'nationality', because of a fear that the term would attribute sovereignty to the Catalan people. The legislative competences of the A.C was however extended to the new areas of justice, banking, immigration and infrastructure and the financial resources of the A.C were augmented with an increase in the shared tax on income (IRPF). The PSOE continued to oppose any measure that would compromise the power of the central government in the management of the fiscal resources of A.C in the common regime

The Catalan case can shed light on the electoral and institutional parameters likely to influence contemporary developments in Scotland. Coinciding with the Tercentenary of the Treaty of Union, the result of the May 2007 election for the Scottish parliament gave the SNP 47 seats, one more seat than the Labour party. Competing in an election that was held at midpoint in the cycle of general elections, with little influence on policy-making at Westminster, the SNP benefited from the fact Scottish voters were grounding their voting decision based Scottish-level political factors (Jones and Scully 2006). This represented a new phase in the devolution settlement, as the election broke Labour's traditional hold over Scotland and installed a party in Holyrood that opposed to the

existing constitutional basis of the UK. The belief that devolution had taken the wind out of the sail of the nationalists was laid to rest. The SNP failed to reach an agreement with the Liberal Democrats, once more the kingmaker of the Scottish parliament, because of the former's unwillingness to abandon its electoral pledge to hold a referendum on independence. In spite of having established a minority administration, the SNP set Scotland's agenda by projecting itself as 'Scotland's party', capable of governing and improving Scottish society and by committing itself to reforming the British constitution and organizing a referendum on independence. By triggering the issue of Scottish independence, the SNP compelled the Labour party to shift its position. Although it entered the election with a commitment to the status quo, former First Minister, Henry McLeish, pleaded to the UK government to adopt a more subtle position on the question of constitutional reform following the Labour party's defeat. In February 2008, Gordon Brown acknowledged the potential need for reviewing the tax-raising powers to ensure the greater responsibility and accountability of the Scottish government. In May, the Scottish Labour party leader, Wendy Alexander undertook a dramatic u-turn by accepting the possibility of holding a referendum on devolution, hoping to call the SNP's bluff. But her claim that she had received Gordon Brown's backing was unsubstantiated, creating tensions with the Labour party in Westminster, which was caricatured as having lost control over its Scottish branch. Thus, although the Labour party had decentralized authority to the Scottish branch in 2003, in particular in matters of candidate selection (Bradbury 2009), the lack of regional influence the party's executive combined with the party's position in central government made it difficult for the Scottish branch to emulate the PSC's strategy. As this thesis was being at long last completed, there was little change in the state of the devolution debate in Scotland. The question of how, if at all, the SNP could negotiate a separation from the UK remains however shrouded in constitutional ambiguity. Should it one day find itself with the parliamentary support to organize a referendum, it is unclear whether it would have the constitutional right to initiate it, since the constitution is a reserved matter. Constitutional theorists have however highlighted that, in principle, the Scottish Executive has unlimited powers to negotiate with Westminster whatever matters it deems significant, even those outside its field of competence, and as such would be entitled to seek to call an advisory but politically binding referendum on independence (MacCormick 2000). The Scottish government could manipulate this ambiguity to extend the scope of its powers, but its capacity to do so will hinge critically on the outcome of the next general election…

The comparison with Belgium is more tenuous; given the absence of federal parties, the organizational adaptation of mainstream parties to the structures of the state is not a relevant factor in considering the adjustments in a party's position. Nevertheless, the case illustrates the important effects of two variables- the timing of elections and 'vertical incongruence'- on the dynamics of coalition formation at the federal level. In 2001, the VU splintered into two new parties- the SPIRIT and NVA- as a result of its failure to push the Liberal-Socialist federal government (parties with which it was in coalition in the Flemish Council) to undertake its demands for a comprehensive reform of the constitution, based on a resolution passed by the Flemish parliament in 1999. Although the nationalist party was weakened and unable to exert strong electoral pressures in the Flemish party system, its successors established electoral cartels with the CD&V, the successor of the CVP, and with the SP, while the remaining members of the party fled to the VLD. All mainstream parties had thus accepted former VU members into their fold and taken on board its demands for institutional reform. Following its unprecedented defeat in 1999 and its fall into opposition both at the regional and federal level, the CD&V in particular, began to nurture strong ambitions for moving beyond the settlement forged during the St Michel Accords. The party was able to project its vision more forcefully following the 2004 regional elections- the first not to be held with federal elections- in which the incumbent Liberal and Socialist parties were heavily defeated, while the Christian Democratic party CD&V and the *Vlaams Belang* saw a sizeable increase in their support, becoming the first and second party in Flanders. This asymmetric coalition raised serious problems of coordination for the CD&V that found itself 'isolated'- in government at the regional level but in opposition at the federal level. Rather than attempt to reconcile this role to its electorate, the party focused on its governing functions in the Flemish region and sought to build a reputation for effectiveness in anticipation of the federal elections of 2007 (Deschouwer 2007). There was thus a reversal of situation with respect to the period of simultaneous election: whereas in the past, the regional tier was of marginal value and federal politicians were parachuted to regional executives, regional institutions were viewed as an arena in which to foster the necessary support to be trampolined into office at the federal level. The result of the 2007 federal elections vindicated this strateg. Following a emphatic victory, the former Minister President of the Flemish region Yves Leterme began negotiations for the formation of a coalition government with an ambitious programme for constitutional reform that included many items of the resolution previously passed by the Flemish parliament-

including the transfer of competences in employment and health policy, greater fiscal autonomy and the scission of the electoral district of BHV. The CD&V's cartel partner, the NVA wielded a strong direct influence on the political agenda during this moment, because its seats provided the 'orange-blue' coalition with a majority. These demands were however unpalatable to the francophone parties, which resisted any attempts at decentralisation that implied a retrenchment of inter-territorial financial solidarity and refused to consider the splitting of the electoral district of BHV as long as there was no agreement on the voting rights of the francophone minority. The francophone Christian democratic party was in the most difficult position, as it had conducted a left-wing campaign and found itself in government with centre-right parties while also in government at the regional level with the Socialist party. Attempts to bring the Socialist party family into the coalition to establish greater 'vertical congruence' were however blocked by the francophone Liberals, which had been thrown out of the Walloon and French community executive in 2004. Regional political factors emerged as significant determinants of the negotiation dynamics at the federal level. The deep gulf in the position of parties appeared impossible to reconcile, and more than two years after the election, the governing of Belgium remains in a woeful state.

This synoptic analysis of contemporary developments in Great Britain, Spain and Belgium confirms the contention advanced in this chapter that partisan brokerage lies at the source of reforms to the structures of the state. In a multi-level system, nationalist parties can use the regional electoral arena to exert electoral pressures on mainstream parties that display the ideological openness necessary for accommodating their claims. This is more likely if these find themselves in opposition in the region and at the centre, as was the case with the PSOE and the CD&V, and if the regional branch is able to exert influence on the policy of the central branch, as was the case with the PSC. Reasoning by analogy, the SNP's influence on the position of the Labour party is thus only likely to take full effect once the latter confers greater autonomy and influence to its Scottish branch and once it finds itself in opposition in Westminster. Politics in the parliamentary and government arenas remain crucial for the instigation of institutional change, and the position of political parties are key for understanding the timing and substance, as well as failure, of institutional reforms. The choice of electoral, institutional and ideological variables that guide the analysis of partisan brokerage in different spheres of political action throughout this thesis, thus provide a powerful and parsimonious analytical framework for understanding the accommodation of nationalism.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Interviewees

Great Britain

William Wolfe (SNP). Former leader (1969-1979). Glasgow. 10 December 2007
Gordon Wilson (SNP) Former leader (1979-1990). Dundee. 12 December 2007.
Jim Sillars (SNP) Former MP (Lab: 1970-1979; SNP 1988-1992). Glasgow. 9 December 2007
Shirley Williams (Labour Party) Former Secretary of State for Education (1974-1979).   17 December. London
Ian Lang (Conservative Party) Former Secretary of State for Scotland (1990-1995). 18 December 2007. London
Malcom Rifkind (Conservative) Former Secretary of State for Scotland (1986-1990).   20 December

Spain

Inaki Anasagasti (PNV). Former parliamentary spokesman (1986-2005). 15 October 2006. Bilbao
Emilio Olabarria (PNV). Deputy. 10 October 2006. Madrid
Paco Letamendia (EE). Deputy (1977-1979). 13 October 2006. Bilbao
Jordi Pujol (CiU). President CDC. 3 November 2006. Barcelona
Carles Campuzano (CiU). Deputy (1996-2004) 20 October 2006. Barcelona
Joaquín Almunia (PSOE). Former Minister of Public Administration (1986-1991). 7 December 2006. Brussels
Gabriel Cisneros (UCD). Deputy (1978-1982). 7 October. Madrid

Belgium

Henri Gendebien (RW). Former President (1974-1979). 6 July 2007. Namur
Vic Anciaux (VU). Former President (1979-1986). 12 July 2007. Brussels
Guy Spitaels (PS). Former President (1981-1992). 10 July 2007. Brussels
Philippe Busquin (PS) Former President (1992-1997). 4 July 2007. Brussels
Anne-Sylvie Mouzon (PS). Former member of ministerial committee of Brussels region. (1981-1987). 15 July 2007
Wilfried Martens (CVP). Former President (1972-1979) and Prime Minister (1979-1992) .8 July 2007
Jean-Luc Dehaene (CVP) Former Prime Minister (1992—1997). 17 July 2007

Party Documents and Manifestos.

The manifestos in electronic form were made available by Paul Pennings and Hans Keman, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Comparative Electronic Manifestos Project, in cooperation with the Social Science Reserach Centre Berlin (Andrea Volkens, Hans-Dieter Klingemann) the Zentralarchiv für empirische Sozialforschung, GESIS, Universität zu Köln, and the Manifesto Research Group (chairman: Ian Budge). Financed by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO project 480-42-005).

Great Britain

CP. 1970. "A Better Tomorrow." London: Conservative Party.
———. 1974a. "Firm Action for a Fair Britain." London: Conservative Party.
———. 1979. "Conservative Manifesto." London: Conservative Party.
———. 1991. "Archives of the British Conservative Party." London: Research Publication International.
———. 1992. "The Best Future for Britain." London: Conservative Party.
LP-TUC. 1982. "Economic Planning and Industrial Democracy: the framework for full employment." London: Labour Party.
LP. 1970. "Now Britain's Strong- Let's Make it Great To Live In." London: Labour Party.
———. 1974a. "Let us work together- Labour's way out of the crisis." London: Labour Party.
———. 1981-1983. "Report of the Annual Conference of the Labour Party." London: Labour Party.
———. 1983. "The New Hope for Britain." London: Labour Party.
———. 1984-1986. "Reports of the Annual Conference of the Labour Party." London: Labour Party.
———. 1987. "Britain will win with Labour." London: Labour Party.
———. 1997. "Britain will be better with new Labour." London: Labour Party.
LP.SC. 1981. "Interim Policy Statement on Devolution." Glasgow.: Scottish Council. Labour Party.
PC. 1974b. "Power for Wales." In *Oct 1974 Election Manifesto*. Cardiff.
———. 1976. "Constitution of Plaid Cymru." In *Mimeo*. Cardiff.
———. 1979. "Conference of 1979." In *Plaid Cymru*. Cardiff.
———. 1983. "Plaid Cymru- the only alternative: General Election Manifesto 1983.". Cardiff: Plaid Cymru.
———. 1987. "Winning for Wales. General Election Programme." Cardiff: Plaid Cymru.
SNP. 1968. "Constitution and Rules of the Scottish National Party." Edinburgh: Scottish National Party.
———. 1974. "General Election Manifesto, February 1974." Edinburgh: Scottish National Party.
———. 1983. "Choose Scotland. The Challenge of Independence." Edinburgh: Scottish National Party.
———. 1987. "Play the Scottish card: SNP general election manifesto." Edinburgh: Scottish National Party.
———. 1992. "Independence in Europe. Make it Happen Now! The 1992 manifesto of the Scottish national party." Edinburgh: Scottish National Party.

Spain

AP. 1977. "Quien es Alianza Popular? Sintesis." Madrid: Afanias.

———. 1982. "Programma Electoral." Madrid: Alianza Popular.

CDC. 1977. "Programma Electoral ". Barcelona: Convergencia Democratica per
       Catalunya.

CiU. 1986. "Programma Electoral." Barcelona: Convergencia i Unio.

———. 1993. "Programma Electoral." Barcelona: Convergencia i Unio.

———. 1996. "Programma Electoral." Barcelona: Convergencia i Unio.

CP. 1986. "Programma Electoral." Madrid: Coalicion Popular.

PCE. 1975. "Seconda Conferencia Nacional del Partido Communista de Espana." Paris:
       Collecion Ebro.

PNV. 1977. "Programa Electoral del Partido Nacionalista Vasco." Bilbao: Partido
       Nacionalista Vasco.

———. 1986. "Programma Electoral." Bilbao: Partido Nacionalista Vasco.

———. 1993. "Programma Electoral." Bilbao: Partido Nacionalista Vasco.

PP. 1989. "Programma Electoral." Madrid: Partido Popular.

———. 1993. "Programma Electoral." Madrid: Partido Popular.

———. 1996. "Programma Electoral." Madrid: Partido Popular.

PSOE. 1977. "Programa Electoral 1977." Madrid: partido Socialista Obrero Espanol.

———. 1989. "Programma Electoral." Madrid: Partido Socialista Obrero Espanol.

———. 1993. "Programma Electoral." Madrid: Partido Socialista Obrero Espanol.

———. 1996. "Programma Electoral." Madrid: Partido Socialista Obrero Espanol.

UCD. 1977. "La solucion a un reto. Tesis para una sociedad democratic occidental.".
       Madrid: Union Editorial.

———. 1979. "Programma Electoral." Union del Centro Democratico.

Belgium

CVP. 1968. "Programma." Brussels: CEPESS.

———. 1978. "Samen Vooruit. Programma Electoral." Antwerp: Christelijke Volkspartij.

———. 1987. "Programma van de Vlaamse Christen-Democraten voor de wetgevende
       verkiezwingern." Antwerp: Christelijke Volkspartij.

FDF. 1968. "Programme Electoral du FDF." Brussels: Front Democratique des
       Francophones.

———. 1971. "Programme Electoral. ." Bruxelles: Front Democratique des
       Francophones.

———. 1974. "Programme Electoral. ." Bruxelles: Front Democratique des
       Francophones.

PLP. 1965. "Programme Electoral." Bruxelles: Parti de la Liberte et du Progres.

———. 1968. "Message du PLP. Programme Electoral." Bruxelles: Parti de la Liberte et
       du Progres.

———. 1971. "Programme Electoral." Bruxelles: Parti pour la Liberte et le Progres.

———. 1974. "Programme Electoral." Bruxelles: Parti de la Liberte et du Progres.

PRL. 1985. "Liberte en Action. Programme Electoral." Parti Reformateur Liberal.

———. 1987. "Programme Electoral." Parti Socialiste.

PRLW. 1978. "Le Programme en Principe." Parti des Reformes et la Liberte de la
       Wallonie.

PS. 1985. "Programme Electoral." Parti Socialiste.

———. 1987. "Programme Electoral." Parti Socialiste.

PSB-BSP. 1974. "Programme pour un Societe Progressiste." Bruxelles: Parti Socialiste
       Belge.

PSB. 1961. *Programme Electoral du Parti Socialiste Belge*. Bruxelles: Parti Socialiste Belge.

———. 1980. *La Charte de Quaregnon. Declaration de Principe du Parti Socialiste Belge. Histoire et Developpement*. Bruxelles: Editions Fondations Louis de Brouckere.

PSC-CVP. 1965. "Plateforme Electorale du PSC-CVP. Contrat '65-'70." Brussels: CEPESS.

PSC. 1945. "Les chantiers sont ouverts..Quel sera l'architecte Programme de Noel 1945." Bruxelles: CEPESS.

———. 1968. "Un Nouveau Contrat des Belges. Programme Electoral du PSC." Namur: CEPESS.

———. 1987. "Programme Electoral." Parti Social Chretien.

PVV. 1974. "Het Tijd! Programma Electoral." Antwerp: Partij voor Vrijheid en vorruitgang.

———. 1987. "De PVV zet door." Partij voor Vrijheid en Vooruitgang.

RW. 1968. "Programme Electoral du RW." Liege: Rassemblement Wallon.

———. 1971. "Rassemblement Wallon. Une doctrine. Une foi. Une Action." Liege: Rassemblement Wallon.

———. 1974. "Batir la Wallonie Asainir la politique." Liege: Rassemblement Wallon.

Stienlet, G. 1999. "Institutional Reforms and Belgian Fiscal policy in the 90s." In *Institutions, Politics and Fiscal Policy*, ed. R. Straunch and J. Von Hagen. Boston: Kluwer.

VB. 1991. "Programma Electoral." Antwerp: Vlaams Blok.

VU. 1965. "Programma Electoral." Antwerp: Volskunie.

———. 1971. "Programma Electoral. Maak de Volskunie no sterker." Antwerp: Volskunie.

———. 1985. "Meer Werk en Minder lasten in een vrij Vlaanderen ". Antwerp: Volksunie.

———. 1991. "Iemand Moet z'n nek uitseken:Vierkiezingsplatform." Antwerp: Volskunie.

Official Documents

Great Britain

Royal Commission on the Constitution. 1973a. "Devolution and other aspects of government. An attitudes survey. Research paper no.7." London: HMSO.Cmnd 5460.

———. 1973b. "Report." London: HMSO. Cmnd. 5460.

Scottish Constitutional Convention. 1990. "Towards Scotland's Parliament. A report to the Scottish people." Edinburgh: The Convention.

———. 1995. "Scotland's Parliament, Scotland's Right." Edinburgh: Scottish Constitutional Convention.

White Paper. 1974. "Democracy and Devolution: Proposals for Scotland and Wales." London: HMS0. Cmnd. 5732.

———. 1975. "Our Changing Democracy. Devolution to Scotland and Wales." London: HMSO. Cmnd 6348.

———. 1976. "Devolution to Scotland and Wales: A Supplementary Statement." *London: HMSO* (6585).

———. 1997a. "Scotland's Parliament." London: HMSO. Cmnd 3658.

———. 1997b. "A Voice for Wales." London HMSO: Cmnd 3718.

Spain

"Constitution of Spain." 1992. In *Constitutions of the Countries of the World Online*: Ocean Law.

Ley 1/1977. 1977. "Ley para la Reforma Politica." Boletin Oficial del Estado. 5 Enero.

Ley 7/1985. 1985. "Ley Reguladora de las Bases del Regimen Local. 2 Abril." Base de Datos de Legislacion http://noticias.juridicas.com/base_datos/Admin/l7-1985.html.

Ley Organica 8/1980. 1980. "Ley Organica de Financiación de las Comunidades Autónomas. 22 Septiembre." Bases de Datos de Legislacion. http://noticias.juridicas.com/base_datos/Admin/lo8-1980.html.

Ley Organica 9/1992. 1992. "Ley Organica de Transferencia de Competencias ": Boletin Oficial del Estado 24 Diciembre.

Ley Orgánica 8/1985. 1985. "Ley Organica Reguladora del Derecho a la Educación. 3 Julio." Base de Datos de Legislación.http://noticias.juridicas.com/base_datos/Admin/lo8-1985.html.

Ley Orgánica 11/1982. 1982. "Ley Orgánica de Transferencias Complementarias a Canarias." Boletin Oficial del Estado. 10 Agosto.

Ley Orgánica 311/1982. 1982. "Ley Orgánica de Armonización del Processo Autonómico." Boletin Oficial del Estado. 5 Agosto.

Belgium

"The Coordinated Constitution of the Kingdom of Belgium." 2005. In *Constitutions of the Countries of the World Online: Ocean Law*: Oceanlaw

"Loi Ordinaire de reformes institutionelles. 9 Aout." 1980. Moniteur Belge. 15 Aout.

"Loi speciale de reformes institutionelles. 8 Aout." 1980. Moniteur Belge 15 Aout.

"Loi speciale relative au financement de communautes et des regions. 16 Janvier." 1989. Moniteur Belge. 17 Janvier.

"Loi speciale relative aux institutions bruxelloise. 12 Janvier." 1989. Moniteur Belge. 16 Mars.

Senelle, Robert. 1972. *The revision of the Constitution 1967-1971*. [Brussels] Ministry of Foreign Affairs: External Trade and Cooperation in Development.

———. 1979. *The Reform of the Belgian state*. Brussels: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, External Trade and Cooperation in Development.

 Press Articles

Guardian, The. March 8th, 1986. "Kinnock lays claim to a 'free and fair patriotism' / Labour leader addresses Scottish party conference in Perth." *The Guardian*, March 8th

———. May 14th, 1988. "Mrs Thatcher urges fight: PM says 'no devolution under me'." *The Guardian*.

———. October 2nd, 1985. "Labour Party Conference: Lawful democracy the only path-Kinnock/Keynot speech by leader." *The Guardian*.

Scotsman, The. April 26th 1997. "Robertson maps out new destiny." *Scotsman*.

———. August 28th, 1995. "Forsyth in call to scrap plans for tartan tax." *The Scotsman*.

Times, The. February 10, 1992. "Lang rules out any move to devolution." *The Times*.

———. March 11th, 1989. "Kinnock gives Scots firm commitment on assembly; Scottish Parliament." *The Times*.

El Pais. 20th July 1998. "El PP acus a los nacionalistas de buscar la extincion del estado." *El Pais*.

———. 23rd July 2008. "Declaracion de Barcelona." *El Pais*.

Secondary Sources

Abs, R. 1979. *Histoire du Parti Socialiste Belge de 1885 a 1978*. Bruxelles: Foundations Louis de Brouckere.

Adams, J, S Merrill, and B Grofman. 2005. *A Unifed Theory of Party Competition. A Cross-National Analysis Integrating Spatial and Behavioural Factors.* Cambridge: Cambrige University Press.

Adcock, R., and D. Collier. 2001. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *American Political Science Review* 95 (3):529-45.

Agnew, J. 1996. "Mapping Politics: how context counts in electoral geography." *Political Geography* 15 (2):129-46.

Agranoff, R. 1993. "Inter-governmental Politics and Policy: Building Federal Arrangements in Spain." *Regional Politics and Policy* 3 (2):1-28.

Agranoff, R., and J. A. R. Gallarin. 1997. "Toward federal democracy in Spain: An examination of intergovernmental relations." *Publius-the Journal of Federalism* 27 (4):1-38.

Aguilera de Prat, C. 2001a. "Convergencia i Unio ante los pactos de gobernabilidad de 1993 y 1996." *Sistema* 165:99-129.

———. 2001b. "Los socialistas ante los pactos de gobernabilidad de 1993 y 1996." *Revista de Estudios Politicos* 111 (enero-marzo):9-45.

———. 2002a. *Partidos y estrategias nacionalistas en Cataluna, Escosia y Flandes*. Valencia: Tirant lo Blanch.

Aguilera de Prat, C. R. 2002b. *Partidos y estrategias nacionalistas en Cataluña, Escocia y Flandes*. Valencia, Spain: Tirant lo Blanch.

Aja, E. 1995. "La construccion y evolucion del Estado Autonomico Espanol (1977-1995)." *Revista Mexicana de Sociologia* 58 (3):169-91.

———. 1999. *El Estado Autonomico. Federalismo y Hechos Diferenciales*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

Almendral, V R. 2003. "The Asymmetric Distribution of Taxation Powers in the Spanish State of Autonomies: The common system and the Foral Tax Regimes." *Regional and Federal Studies* 13 (4):41-66.

Ansell, C, and G. Di Palma. 2004. *Restructuring Territoriality. European and the United States Compared.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Arango, E.R. 1963. *Leopold III and the Belgian Question*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Arcq, E, P Blaise, and E Lentzen. 1991. "Enjeux et Compromis de la legislature 1988-1991." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 1991 (1332-1333):1-74.

Axelrod, R. 1970. *Conflict of Interest: A Theory of Divergent Goals with Applications to Politics*. Chicgo: Markham Pub.Co.

Aznar, J.M. 1994. *Espana. La Segunda Transicion*. Madrid: Espasa Calpe.

Balcells, A. 1996. *Catalan Nationalism*. London: MacMillan.

Baldi, B. 2003. *Stato e Territorio. Federalismo e decentramento nelle democrazie contemporanee*. Roma: Laterza.

Balfour, S. 1996. "Bitter Victory, Sweet Defeat. The March 1996 General Elections and the New Government in Spain." *Government and Opposition* 31 (3):275-87.

Balsom, D, and I McAllister. 1979. "Scottish and Welsh Devolution Referenda of 1979:Constitutional Change and Popular Choice." *Parliamentary Affairs* 22 (4):394-409.

Banon, R, and E Carillo. 1993. *Gobierno y Administracion Publica*. Edited by S. Campo. Bilbao: Fundacion BBV.

Banon, R., and M. Tamayo. 1997. "The transformation of the central administration in Spanish intergovernmental relations." *Publius-the Journal of Federalism* 27 (4):85-114.

Bar, A. 1988. "Spain." In *Cabinets in Western Europe*, ed. F. a. B. Muller-Rommel, J. New York: St Martin's Press.

Barnes, S, P McDonough, and A Pina. 1985. "The development of partisanship in a new democracy: the case of Spain." *American Journal of Political Science* 29 (4):695-720.

Bartolini, S. 1993. "On Time and Comparative Research." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 5 (2):131-67.

———. 1999. "Collusion, Competition and Democracy." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 11 (4):435-70.

———. 2004. "Old and New Peripheries in the Processes of European Territorial Integration." In *Restructuring Territoriality. Europe and the United States Compared*, ed. C. Ansell and G. Di Palma. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 2005. *Restructuring Europe*. Oxford Oxford University Press.

Bartolini, S , and P Mair. 1990. *Identity, Competition and Electoral Availability. The Stabilisation of European Electorates 1885-1985*. Cambridge: Camrbidge University Press.

Beaufays, J. 1985. "Le Socialisme et les problemes communautaires." In *1885-1985. Du Parti Ouvrier Belge au Parti Socialiste*. Bruxelles: Institute Emile Vandervelde.

Beech, M. 2007. *Labour's Thinkers. The intellectual roots of Labour from Tawney to Gordon Brown*. London: Tauris Academic Studies.

Benet, J. 1979. *Cataluna bajo el regimen Franqusita*. Paris.

Bergman, T. 1993. "Formation rules and minority governments." *European Journal of Political Research* 23 (1):55-66.

Blas Guerrero, A. 1978. "El Problema Nacional Regional Espanol en los Programmas del PSOE y del PCE." *Revista de Estudios Politicos* 4 (1):155-70.

———. 1989. "El problema nacional-regional espanol en la transicion." In *La transicion democratica espanola*, ed. J. F. Tezanos, R. Cotarelo and A. Blas Guerrero. Madrid: Editorial Sistema.

Bogdanor, V. 1999. "Devolution: Decentralisation or Dinsintegration?" *Political Quarterly* 70 (2):185-94.

———. 2001. *Devolution in the United Kingdom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bonal, X. 1998. "La politica educativa: dimensiones de un proceso de transformacion (1976-1996)." In *Politicas Publicas en Espana*, ed. R. Goma and J. Subirats. Barcelona: Ariel.

Bonnemine-Blanc, C. 1987. *Spain's Transition to Democracy. The politics of Constitution-Making*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Bowler, S. 1990. "Voter Perception and Party Strategies: An Empirical Approach." *Comparative Politics* 23 (1):61-83.

Bradbury, J. 2009. "Devolution and Party Organisation in the UK." In *Territorial Party Politics in Western Europe*, ed. W. Swenden and B. Maddens. London: Palgrave.

Brady, H and Collier D 2004. *Rethinking Social Inquiry. Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Brancati, D. 2005. "Pawns take queen: the destabilising effects of regional parties on national governments in Europe." *Comparative Political Economy* 16 (2):143-59.

———. 2006. "Fueling or dampening the flames of ethnic conflict and secessionism." *International Organisation* 60 (3):651-85.

Brand, J, J Mitchell, and P Surridge. 1994. "Social Constituency and Ideological Profile: Scottish Nationalism in the 1990s." *Political Studies* 42 (4):616.

Brassine, J. 1974. "La regionalisation: la loi du 1er Aout 1974 et sa mise en oeuvre. ." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 665:1-25.

———. 1979a. "Les 99 jours de la crise communautaire du 18 decembre 1978 au 26 mars 1979 (I)." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 847-848:1-65.

———. 1979b. "Les 99 jours de la crise communautaire du 18 decembre 1978 au 26 mars 1979 (II)." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 1979 (849-850):1-73.

Brasslof, A. 1989. "Spain: The State of the Autonomies." In *Federalism and Nationalism*, ed. M. Forsyth. New York: St Martin's Press.

Budge, I, H-D Klingemann, A Volkens, and J Bara. 2001. *Mapping Policy Preferences. Estimate for Parties, Electors and Governments 1945-1988*. Oxford OUP.

Budge, I, D Robertson, and D Hearl. 1987. *Ideology, Strategy and Party Change in 19 Democracies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Buelens, J, and R Van Dyck. 1998. "Regionalist Parties in French-Speaking Belgium. The Rassemblement Wallon and The Front Democratique des Francophones." In *Regionalist Parties in Western Europe*, ed. L. De Winter and H. Tursan. London: Routledge.

Bulpitt, J. 1983. *Territory and Power in the United Kingdom*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Burke, E. 2003. *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. New Haven: Yale University PRess.

Buthe, T. 2002. "Taking temporality seriously: modeling history and the use of narratives as evidence." *American Political Science Review* 96 (3):481-93.

Butler, D, and D Kavanagh. 1974. *The British General Election of February 1974*. London: MacMillan.

———. 1984. *The British General Election of 1983*. London: MacMillan.

———. 1988. *The British General Election of 1987*. London: MacMillan.

———. 1993. *The British General Election of 1992*. London: MacMillan.

Butler, D, and M Pinto-Duschinsky. 1971. *The British General Election of 1970*. London: MacMillan.

Butler, D, and Stokes. 1975. *Political Change in Britain*. Second ed. London: MacMillan.

Caciagli, M. 1984. "Espana 1982: Las elecciones del cambio." *Revista Espanola de Investigaciones Sociologicas* 28 (3):63-84.

———. 1986. *Elecciones y partidos en la transicion espanola*. Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociologicas. Siglo XXI.

Callaghan, J. 1987. *Time and Chance*. London: Collins.

Caminal, M. 1988. *Nacionalisme i Partits Nacionals a Catalunya*. Barcelona: Empuries.

Capoccia, G, and R.D Kelemen. 2007. "The study of critical junctures: theory, narrative and counterfactual in institutional theory." *World Politics* 59 (2):341-69.

Capron, M. 1989. "Cockerill Sambre de la fusion a la privatisation." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 665:1-22.

Carr, R. 1982. *Spain. 1808-1975*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Castillo, P, and P Delgado. 1994. "Las elecciones legislativas de 1993: movilidad de las preferencias partidistas." In *Comportamiento Politico y Electoral*, ed. P. Castillo. Madrid: CIS.

Castles, F, and P Mair. 1984. "Left-Right Political Scales: some expert judgments." *European Journal of Political Research* 12 (1):73-88.

CEPESS. 1971. "La Reforme de l'Etat." *Cahiers-CEPESS* (2).

Chhibber, P., and M. Torcal. 1997. "Elite Strategy, Social Cleavages, and Party Systems in a New Democracy: Spain." *Comparative Political Studies* 30 (1):27-53.

Claeys- Van Haegendoren, M. 1970. "La Formation du Gouvernment Eysens-Merlot." In *Politique Belge '68*, ed. W. De Wachter. Brussels: Institut Belge de Science Politique.

Clark, R. 1984. *The Basque Insurgents. ETA. 1952-1980*. Madison: University of Wisconsin.

Clark, R. 1979. *The Basques. The Franco Years and Beyond.* Reno: Nevada University Press.

Cobb, R.W, and C.D Elder. 1983. *Participation in America Politics: The Dynamics of Agenda-Building.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Colome, G. 1991. "The Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya." In *Socialist Parties in Europe*, ed. J. M. Maravall. Barcelona: ICPS.

Colomer, J. M. 1976. *Assemblea de Catalunya.* Barcelona: L'Avenc.

Colomer, J.M. 1995. *Game Theory and the Transition to Democracy : the Spanish Model.* Hants, England: Aldershot.

Connor, W. 1967. "Self-Determination: The New Phase." *World Politics* 20 (1):30-53.

———. 1977. "The Politics of Ethnonationalism." *Journal of International Affairs* 27 (1):1-21.

———. 1994. *Ethnonationalism: a quest for understanding.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Converse, P. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics." In *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. D. Apter. New York: Free Press.

Conversi, D. 1997. *The Basques, the Catalans, and Spain. Alternative Routes to Nationalist Mobilisation.* London: Hurst

Coombes, D, and R Norton-Taylor. 1968. "Renewal in Belgian Politics. The election of March 1968." *Parliamentary Affairs* 22:63-72.

Cornell, S. 2002. "Autonomy as a source of conflict. Caucasion conflicts in theoretical perspective." *World Politics* 54 (1):245-76.

Cox, G. 1990. "Centripetal and centrifugal incentives in electoral systems." *American Journal of Political Science* 23:903-35.

Crewe, I. 1982a. "Is Britain's Two-Party System Really About to Crumble?" *Electoral Studies* 1:275-313.

———. 1982b. "The Labour Party and the Electorate." In *The Politics of the Labour Party*, ed. K. Kavanagh. London: Allen and Unwin.

———. 1985. "Great Britain." In *Electoral Change in Western democracies. Patterns and Sources of Electoral Volatility.* London: Croon Helm.

Crewe, I, A Fox, and N Day. 1995. *The British Electorate 1963-1992.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Crewe, I, B Sarvlik, and J Alt. 1977. "Partisan de Alignment in Britain 1964-1974." *British Journal of Political Science* 7 (2):129-90.

Crick, B. 1970. "Parliament in the British Political System." In *Legislatures in Developmental Perspective*, ed. A. Kornberg and D. Musolf. Durham: Duke University Press.

———. 1991. "National Identities." In *Te consitutional of the UK.* Cambridge: CambridgeBlackwell.

CRISP. 1961. *La reforme du Parti Liberal. Naissance du Parti de la Liberte et du progres- PLP.*

———. 1962. "Le bilan du gouvernment Lefevre apres 18 mois d'existence." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 174-75:1-24.

———. 1965. "Le Phenomene FDF." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 299:1-20.

———. 1971a. "Le FDF-RW." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 516:1-21.

———. 1971b. "Structure et Evolution du Monde Liberal en Belgique." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 522:1-19.

———. 1971c. "Les elections legislatives du 7 Novembre 1971." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 544-45:1-19.

———. 1974. "Le gouvernment Tindemans (1974-1977): Evolution de sa composition et de son assise parlementaire." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 754:1-43.

———. 1977a. "Du dialogue communautaire de L'hiver 1976-1977 au pacte communautaire de mai 1977 (I)." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 767:18.

———. 1977b. "Du dialogue communautaire de l'hiver 1976-1977 au pacte communautaire de Mai 1977 (II)." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 772:22.

———. 1977c. "Du Dialogue Communautaire de l'Hiver 1976-1977 au pacte communautaire de mai 1977 (III)." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 783-784:43.

———. 1992. "Accords gouvernementaux, reformes institutionelles et politique budgetaire: janvier-juin 1992." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 1363-1364:1-60.

Crouch, C. 2004. *Post-Democracy*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Crouch, C, and D Marquand, eds. 1989. *The New Centralism: Britain out of step in Europe?* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Curtice, J, and M Steed. 1980. "An Analysis of the Voting." In *The British General Election of 1979*, ed. D. Butler and D. Kavanagh. London: MacMillan.

———. 1984. "An Analysis of the Voting " In *The British General Election of 1983*, ed. D. Butler and D. Kavanagh. London: MacMillan.

———. 1988. "Analysis." In *The British General Election of 1987*, ed. D. Butler and D. Kavanagh. London: MacMillan.

———. 1993. "The Results Analysed." In *The British General Election of 1993*, ed. D. Butler and D. Kavanagh. London: MacMillan.

Daalder, H. 1974. "The Consociational Democracy Theme." *World Politics* 26 (4):604-21.

Dahl, R. 1966. *Political Opposition in Western Democracies*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

———. 1989. *Democracy and its Critics*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Dalton, R, S Flanagan, and P Beck. 1984. *Electoral Change in Advanced Industrial Societies. Re-alignment or De-alignment?* . Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Dalyell, T. 1977. *Devolution: the End of Britain?* London: Jonathan Cape.

De Swaan, A. 1973. *Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formation*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

De Vries, M. 1999. *Governing with your closest neighbour. An assessment of spatial coalition formation theories*. Nijmegen: Beleidswetenschapp. Universiteit Nijmegen.

De Wachter, W. 1970. "Les Elections du 31 Mars 1968." In *Politique Belge '68*, ed. D. Wachter. Brussels: Institut Belge de Sciences Politiques.

De Winter, L. 2000. *Liberal Parties in Belgium: from freemasons to free citizens*. Edited by L. De Winter. Barcelona: ICPS.

———. 2002. "Parties and Government Formation. Portfolio Allocation and Policy definition." In *Political Parties in the New Europe*, ed. K. R. Luther and F. Muller-Rommel. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

De Winter, L and Dumont, P. 2003. "Belgium: Delegation and Accountability under Partitocratic Rule." In *Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies*, ed. K. Strom, Muller, W and Bergman, T. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

De Winter, L, and P Dumont. 1999. "The Belgian party system on the eve of dinsintegration." In *Changing Party Systems in Western Europe*, ed. D. Broughton and M. Donovan. London: Cassell.

De Winter, L, A-P Frognier, and B Rihoux. 1996. "Belgium: Still the Age of Party Government?" In *Party and Government*, ed. J. Blondel and M. Cotta. London: MacMillan.

De Winter, L, A Timmermans, and P Dumont. 2000. "Belgium: on government agreements, evangelists, followers and heretics." In *Coalition Governments in Western Europe*, ed. W. a. S. Muller, K. Oxford Oxford University Press.

De Winter, L., and H. Tursan. 1998. *Regionalist Parties in Western Europe*. London: Routledge.

Delpérée, Francis. 1993. "Le fédéralisme belge." *Revue européenne de droit public. - 5(1) été 1993 : 29-40*.

Delruelle-Vosswinckel, N et al. 1980. "L'opinion publique et les problemes communautaires." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 880:39.

———. 1981. "L'opinion publique et les problemes communautaries." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 1981 (927-28):39.

———. 1982. "L'opinion publique et les problemes communautaires." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 996 (966):32.

———. 1983. "L'opinion publique et les problemes communautaires." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 991-992:49.

Delruelle, N, R Evalenko, and W Fraeys. 1970. *Le Comportement Politique des Electeurs Belges*. Bruxelles: Institut de Sociologie de l'ULB.

Delruelle, N, Vosswinkel, N. 1974. "Evolution de l'opinion publique belge: 1971-1974." *Res Publica* 16 (2):347-67.

Denver, D. 2002. "Voting in the 1997 Scottish and Welsh devolution referendums: Information, interests and opinions." *European Journal of Political research* 41 (6):827-43.

Deschouwer, K. 1992. "Belgium." In *Party Organisation: a Data Handbook*, ed. R. a. M. Katz, P. London: Sage.

———. 2003. "Political Parties in Multi-layered systems." *European Urban and Regional Studies* 10 (3):213-26.

Deschouwer, K. 1990. "Patterns of participation and competition in Belgium." *West European Politics* 12 (4).

———. 1994. "Termination of Coalition in Belgium." *Res Publica* 36 (1):43-55.

———. 1996. "Waiting for the big one. The uncertain survival of the Belgian parties and party systems." *Res Publica* 38 (2):295-306.

———. 1999. "From Consociation to Federation. How the Belgian parties won." In *Party Elites in Divided Societies. Political Parties in Consociational Democracy. London. Routledge.*, ed. K. a. D. Luther, K.

Destree, J. 1916. *Belgium and the principle of nationality*. London: Council for the Study of International Relations.

Destree, U, and J-M Dehousse. 1963. "Les institutions federales dans les projets socialistes wallon." *Res Publica* 5 (1):21-36.

Deutsch, K. 1953. *Nationalism and Social Communication*: MIT Press.

Diaz-Lopez, C. 1981. "The State of the Autonomic Process in Spain." *Publius* 11 (Summer):193-217.

Dierickx, G. 1978. "Ideological Opposition and Consociational Attitudes in the Belgian Parliament." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 3:133-60.

Diermeier, D , and K Krehbiel. 2003. "Institutionalism as a Methodology." *Journal of Theoretical politics* 15 (2):123-44.

Diez Medrano, J. 1995. *Divided Nations: Class, Politics and nationalism in the Basque Country*. Cornell: Cornell University Press

Donaghy, P. J. Newton Michael T. 1987. *Spain : a guide to political and economic institutions*. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]: New York.

Dowding, K. 1994. "The compatibility of behaviouralism, rational choice and the new institutionalism." *Journal of Theoretical politics* 6 (1):105-17.

Downs, A. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row.

Drower, G. 1994. *Kinnock*: Woodham Ferrers.

Drucker, H. 1978. *Breakaway: the Scottish Labour Party*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Duchacek, I. 1970. *Comparative Federalism: The Territorial Dimension of Politics*. New York: St. Martins' Press.

Dunn, J. 1972. "Consociational Democracy and Language Conflict: A comparision of the Belgian and Swiss Experiences." *Comparative Political Studies* 5:11-4.

Easton, D. 1990. *The Analysis of Political Structure*. New York: Routledge.

Eguiguren, J.M. 1994. *El socialismo y la izquierda vasca: 1886-1994*. Madrid: Editorial Pablo Iglesias.

Elazar, D. 1987. *Exploring Federalism*. Birmingham: University of Alabama Press.

———. 1994. *Federalism and the way to peace*. Kingston: Queens university.

———. 1997. "Contrasting unitary and federal systems." *International political science review* 18 (3):237-51.

Elster, J. 1983. *Sour Grapes: Studies in the Subversion of Rationality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Erk, C;Gagnon, A. 2000. "constitutional ambiguity and federal trust:codification of federalism in Canada,Spain and Belgium." *Regional and Federal Studies* 10 (1):92.

Esman, M. 1973. "The Management of Ethnic Conflict." *Public Policy* 21 (1):49-78.

———. 1977. "Perspective on Ethnic Conflict in Industrialised Socities." In *Ethnic Conflict in the Western World*, ed. M. Esman. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Fesler, J.S. 1965. "Approaches to the understanding of decentralisation." *Journal of Politics* 27 (4):536-66.

Field, B. N. 2005. "De-thawing democracy - The decline of political party collaboration in Spain (1977 to 2004)." *Comparative Political Studies* 38 (9):1079-103.

Fraeys, W. 1966. "Les resultats de elections legislatives du 23 Mai 1965." *Res Publica* 8:132-46.

Fraga, M. 1993. *Administracion Unica. Una propuesta desde Galicia*. Barcelona: Planeta.

Franklin, M. 1984. "How the Decline of Class Voting Opened the Way to Radical Change in British Politics." *British Journal of Political Science* 14 (4):483-508.

———. 1985. *The decline of class voting in Britain. Changes in the Basis of Electoral Choice, 1964-1983*. Oxford: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS.

Freeden, M. 1998. "Is Nationalism a Distinct Ideology?" *Political Studies* 46.

Friedrich, C. 1968. *Trend of Federalism in Theory and Practice*. London: Pall Mall Press.

Frognier, A-P , M Quevit, and A Steinbock. 1982. "Regional Imbalances and Centre-Periphery Relationships in Belgium." In *The Politics of Territorial Identity. Studies in European Regionalism*, ed. S. Rokkan and M. Urwin. London: Sage Publishers.

Fry, A. 1987. *Patronage and Principle. A Political History of Modern Scotland*. Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press.

Fusaro, A. 1979. "Two faces of British nationalism:the Scottish national party and Plaid cymru compared." *Polity* 11 (3):362-84.

Gagnon, A, and J Tully. 2001. *Multinational Democracies*. Cambridge Cambridge University Press.

Gallego-Diaz, S, and B De la Cuarda. 1989. *Cronica Secreta de la Constitution*. Madrid: Tecnos.

Gamble, A. 1988. *The Free Economy and the Strong State. The Politics of Thatcherism*. London: MacMillan Press.

Garcia-Fernandez, J. 1980. ""Cronica de la descentralizacion: el panorama descentralizador al acabar." *Revista de Estudios Politicos* 17 (9-10):175-2002.

Geddes, B. 1990. "How the cases you choose affect the answers you get: selection bias in comparative politics." *Political Analysis* 2.

Geekie, J , and R Levy. 1989. "Devolution and the Tartanisation of the Labour Party." *Parliamentary Affairs* 42 (3):399-411.

Geertz, C. 1963. "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentimens and Civil Politics in New States." In *Old Societies and New States: The Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa*, ed. C. Geertz. New York: Free Press.

Gellner, E. 1983. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Genieys, W. 1996. "Les elites peripheriques espagnoles face au changement de regime. Le processus d'institutionalisation de l'Etat autonomique." *Revue Francaise de science politique* 46 (4):650-80.

George, A. 1979. "Case Studies and Theory Development. The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison." In *Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory and Policy*, ed. P. G. Lauren. New York: Free Press.

George, A and McKeown. 1985. "Case Studies and Theories of Organisational Decision-Making." In *Advances in Information Processing in Organisations*, ed. R. a. S. Coulam, R. Conn: JAI Press.

George, A, and A Bennett. 2005. *Case studies and Theory Development*. Boston: MIT Press.

Gerard, E. 1998. "The Christian Worker's movement as Mass Founcations of the Flemish Movement." In *Nationalism in Belgium. Shifting Identities. 1780-1995*, ed. K. De Prez and L. Vos. London: Basingtoke. MacMillan.

Gheude, J. 2007. *L'incurable mal belge. Sous le scalpel de Francois Perin*: Editions Mols.

Gibbons, John. 1999. *Spanish politics today*. Manchester: Manchester University Press

Gillespie, R. 1989a. "Spanish socialism in the 1980s." In *Gallagher, M Williams, C*, ed. S. E. Socialism. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

———. 1990. "The Break-Up of the Socialist Family: Party-Union Relations in Spain." *West European Politics* 13 (2):47-61.

———. 1994. "The resurgence of factionalism in the Spanish Socialist Worker's Party." In *Conflict and Cohesion in West European Social Democratic Parties*, ed. D. Bell and E. Shaw. London: Pinter.

Gillespie, Richard. 1989b. *The Spanish Socialist Party . A History of Factionalism*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Gonzales, F, and A Guerra. 1977. *Partido Socialista Obrebro Espanol*. Bilbao.

Gordin, J. 2001. "The electoral fate of ethnoregionalist parties in western europe: a boolean test of extant explanations." *Scandinavian Political Studies* 24 (2).

Greif, A, and D Laitin. 2004. "A Theory of Endogeneous Institutional Change." *American Political Science Review* 98 (4):633-52.

Grootaers, J. 1971. "La revision de la constitution(I): L'evolution des idees et des textes jusqu'en juillet 1970." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 518-519.

———. 1972. "La revision constitutionnelle de decembre 1970." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 555-556.

Guerra, A. 1985. "Los Horizontes Politicos del Socialismo." In *El Futuro del Socialismo*, ed. A. De Blas, V. Zapatero, M. Escudero, J. F. Tezanos, R. G. Cotarelo, E. Menendez and F. La Porta. Madrid: Sistemas.

Gunther, R. 1989. "Electoral Laws, Party Systems and Elites: The Case of Spain." *American Political Science Review* 83 (3):835-58.

———. 1992. "Spain: the very model of the elite settlement." In *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin American and Southern Europe*, ed. M. a. G. Higley, R. Cambridge Cambridge University Press.

———. 1996. "The Impact of Regime Change on Public Policy: The Case of Spain." *Journal of Public Policy* 16 (2):157-201.

Gunther, R, G Sani, and G Shabad. 1986. *Spain after Franco : the making of a competitive party system*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Gurr, T.R. 2000. *Peoples versus States : Minorities at Risk in the New Century*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Gurr, T.R. 1993. *Minorities at Risk. A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.

———. 1994. "Peoples against States. Ethnopolitical Conflict and the Changing World System." *International Studies Quarterly* 38 (2):347-77.

Guthrie, R, and I McLean. 1978. "Another part of the periphery: reactions to devolution in an English development area." *Parliamentary Affairs* 31 (2):190-200.

Hale, H. 2004. "Divided we stand. Institutional sources of ethnofederal state survival and collapse." *World Politics* 56 (1):165-93.

Hall, P. 2004. "Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comperative research." In *Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. J. a. R. Mahoney, D. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hall, P, and R Taylor. 1996. "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms." *Political Studies* 44:490-512.

Hamann, K. 1999. "Federalist institutions, voting behavior, and party systems in Spain." *Publius-the Journal of Federalism* 29 (1):111-37.

———. 2000. "Linking policies and economic voting - Explaining reelection in the case of the Spanish Socialist Party." *Comparative Political Studies* 33 (8):1018-48.

Hascal, V, and M Detaille. 1981. "Vingt Ans de liberalisme en Wallonie et a Bruxelles." *Res Publica* 23:345-58.

Hassan, G, and P Lynch. 2000. *Almanac of Scottish Politics*. London: Politico's.

Heath, A, R Jowell, and J Curtice. 2001. *The Rise of New Labour*. Oxford Oxford University Press.

Hechter, M. 1975. "Internal Colonialism." In *The celtic Fringe in British national development*, ed. A. Unwin. London.

———. 2000. *Containing Nationalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hechter, M, and M Levi. 1985. "A rational choice approach to the rise and decline of ethnoregionalist political parties." In *New Nationalisms in the Developed West*, ed. E. Tiryakian and R. Rogowski. Boston: Allen and Unwin.

Heller, W. 2002. "Regional Parties and National Politics in Europe: Spain's estado de las autonomas, 1993 to 2000." *Comparative Political Studies* 35 (6):657-85.

Herremans, M-P. 1962. "Le Mouvement Populaire Flamand." *Res Publica* IV (2):185-207.

Heywood, P. 1991. "Governing a New Democracy: The Power of the Prime Minister in Spain." *West European Politics* 14:97-115.

Hill, K. 1974. "Belgium: Political Change in a Segmented Society." In *Electoral Behaviour: A Comparative Handbook*, ed. R. Rose. London: Free Press.

Hindmoor, A. 2004. *New Labour at the Centre: constructing political space*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2005. "Reading Downs:New Labour and an economic theory of democracy." *British Journal of Politics and international relations* 7:402-17.

Hinich, M, and M Munger. 1997. *Analytical Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hogwood, B. 1987. "Recent Developments in British regional policy." *Studies in Public Policy. Centre for the Study of Public Policy. University of Strathclyde.* 51:1-23.

Hollyman, J. 1995. "The Tortuous Road to Regional Autonomy in Spain." *ACIS* 8 (1):18.

Hooghe, L. 1992. "National Movements and Social Factors: Theoretical Perspectives." In *The Social Origins of Nationalist Movements. The contemporary West European Experience*, ed. J. Coakley. London: Sage.

———. 1993. "Belgium:From Regionalism to Federalism." *Regional Politics and Policy* 3 (1):44-68.

Hopkin, J. 1999. *Party Formation and Democratic Transition in Spain. The Creation and Collapse of the Union of the Democratic Centre*. New York: St Martin's Press.

———. 2003. "Political decentralization, electoral change and party organizational adaptation: A framework for anaysis " *European Urban & Regional studies* 10 (3):227-37.

———. 2009. "Party Matters. Devolution and Party Politics in Britain and Spain." *Party Politics* 15 (2):179-98.

Huber, J., and G.B Powell. 1994. "Congruence between citizens and policymakers in two visions of liberal democracy." *World Politics* 46 (1):291-326.

Huneeus, C. 1985. *La Union de Centro Democratico y la transicion a la democraci en Espana*. Madrid: CIS.

Inglehart, R. 1977. *The Silent Revolution. Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics*: Princeton University.

Irving, R.E.M. 1979. *The Christian Democratic Parties of Western Europe*. London: Allen&Unwin.

Iversen, T. 1994. "The Logic of Electoral Politics: Spatial, Directional and Mobilisational Effects." *Comparative Political Studies*. 27 (2):155-89.

Jeffery, C, and D Hough. 2003. "Regional Elections in Multi-Level Systems." *European Urban and Regional Studies* 10 (3):199-212.

Jones, B, and M Keating. 1979. "The Labour Party as a Centralising Force." *Studies in Public Policy. Centre for the Study of Public Policy. University of Strathclyde.*:1-46.

———. 1982a. "The British Labour Party: Centralisation and Devolution." In *The Territorial Dimension in United Kingom Politics*, ed. P. Madgwick and R. Rose. London: MacMillan.

———. 1982b. "The resolution of internal conflicts and external pressures. The Labour party's devolution policy." *Government and opposition* 17 (3):279-92.

———. 1985. *Labour and the British State*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

———. 1988. "Beyond the Doomsday Scenario: Governing Scotland and Wales in the 1980s." *Studies in Public Policy. Centre for the Study of Public Policy. University of Strathclyde*. 58:1-35.

Jones, R., and R. Scully. 2006. "Devolution and electoral politics in Scotland and Wales." *Peace Research Abstracts Journal* 43 (4).

Kauppi. 1982. "Decline of the SNP 1977-1981: Political and Organisational factors." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 5:326.

Kavanagh, D. 1990. *Thatcherism and British Politics. The End of Consensus?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Keating, M. 1992a. "Do the workers really have no country?Peripheral Nationalism and socialism in the United Kingdom, France, Italy and Spain." In *The Social Origins of Nationalist movements*, ed. J. Coakley. London: Sage.

———. 1998. "Reforging the Union: Devolution and Constitutional Change in the United Kingdom." *Publius* 28 (1):217.

———. 2001a. *Nations Against the State. The New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland*. London: Palgrave.

———. 2001b. *Plurinational Democracy: Stateless Nations in a Post-sovereignty Era*: Oxford University Press.

Keating, M 1992b. "Regional Autonomy in the Changing State Order: A Framework of Analysis." *Regional Politics and Policy* 2 (3):45-61.

Keating, M. 1976. "Administrative Devolution in Practice: the Secretary of State and the Scottish Office." *Public Administration* 54 (2):133-44.

Keating, M;, and D Bleiman. 1979. *Labour and Scottish Nationalism*. London: MacMillan.

Kerchove, A.M, and X Mabille. 1979. "Mesure du pouvoir des partis politiques en Belgique." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 862:32.

Kestlekoot, C. 1993. "The Growth of the Walloon Movement." In *Nationalism in Belgium. Shifting Identities. 1780-1995*, ed. J. Deprez and L. Vos. London: Basongtoke. MacMillan.

King, G ; Keohane, R and Verba,S. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry* Edited by S. I. i. Qualitative. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kingdon, John W. 1995. *Agendas, alternatives, and public policies.* 2nd ed. New York: Longman.

Kiser, L, and E Ostrom. 1982. "Three World of Action: A Metatheoretical Synthesis of Institutional Approaches." In *Strategies of Political Inquiry*, ed. E. Ostrom. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Kitschelt, Herbert. *The Transformation of European Social Democracy* [Book; Internet Resource Date of Entry: 19930329]. Cambridge University Press 1994 [cited.

Knight, J. 1992. *Institutions and Social Conflict.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Krasner, S. 1984. "Approaches to the state: alternative conceptions and historical dynamics." *Comparative Politics* 1:223-46.

Kymlicka, W. 1995. *Multicultural Citizenship.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Ladriere, J. 1970. "Le Systeme Politique Belge: situation en 1970." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 938:1-37.

Lancaster, T, and M Lewis-Beck. 1986. "The Spanish Voter: Tradition, Economics, Ideology." *The Journal of Politics* 48 (3):648-74.

Lapidoth, R. 1997. *Autonomy. Flexible Solutions to Ethnic Conflicts.* Washington D.C.: Institute of Peace Press.

Laporte, C. 1999. *L'Affaire Louvain.* Bruxelles: De Boeck.

Laver, M. 1999. "Divided Parties, Divided Government." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 24 (1):5-29.

Laver, M, and K. Benoit. 2006. *Party Policy in Modern Democracies.* London: Routledge.

Laver, M, and B Hunt. 1992. *Policy and Party Competition.* London: Routledge.

Lemaitre, H. 1982. *Les Gouvernements Belges de 1968 a 1980.* Bruxelles: Chauvheid.

Lentzen, E, and E Arcq. 1981. "Les secteurs nationaux." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 938:1-37.

Lepere-Brahimi, C. 1972. *Andre Cools. De la contestation a la gestion progressiste.* Bruxelles: Editions Labor.

Levy, P. 1960. *La querelle du recensement.* Bruxelles: Institute Belge de Science Politique.

Lichbach, M. 1997. "Social Theory and Comparative Politics." In *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture and Structure*, ed. M. Lichbach and M. Zuckerman. Cambridge Cambridge University Press.

Lichtheim, G. 1969. *The Origins of Socialism.* London: Weidenfeld&Nicolson.

Lieberman, R. 2001. "Causal Inference in Historical Institutional Analysis: A Specification of Periodisation Strategies." *Comparative politcal studies* 34:1011-35.

Lijphart, A. 1969. "Consociational Democracy." *World Politics* 21 (2):207-25.

———. 1971. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review* 65:682-93.

Lijphart, A. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy : Government Forms and Performance in thirty-six countries.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Lijphart, Arend. 1981. *Conflict and coexistence in Belgium : the dynamics of a culturally divided society.* Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California.

Linz, J. 1966. "Spain." In *Political Opposition in Western Democracies*, ed. R. Dahl. New Haven: Yale University Press.

———. 1973. "Early State-Building and Later Peripheral Nationalism Against the State: the Case of Spain." In *Building States and Nations*, ed. S. Eisenstadt and S. Rokkan. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Linz, J, M Gomez-Reino, F Orizo, and D Vila. 1981. *Informe Sociologico sobre el cambio politico en Espana 1975-1981.* Madrid: Fundacion Foessa.

Linz, J, and J.R Montero. 1999. "The Party System of Spain: Old Cleavages and New Challenges." *Working Paper Series. Juan March Institute.* (138):1-119.

Linz, J, and J.R. Montero. 1986. *Crisis y cambio : electores y partidos en la España de los años ochenta.* Vol. 27. Madrid: Centro de Estudios Constitucionales.

Linz, J, and A Stepan. 1996. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation.* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Lipset, M. 1985. *Consensus and Conflict. Essays in Political Sociology.* New Brunswick: Transaction Books.

Lipset, S.M, and S. Rokkan. 1967. "Introduction." In *Party Systems and Voter Alignments. Cross National Perspectives*, ed. S. M. Lipset and S. Rokkan. New York: Free Press.

Livingston, W. 1956. *Federalism and Constitutional Change.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Llera, F. 1993. "The Construction of the Basque Polarized Pluralism." *Working Papers. ICPS.* (64):1-54.

Llera, Francisco. 1999. *Pluralismo y gobernabilidad en Euskadi, 1980-1994 / Francisco J. Llera Ramo.* Barcelona: Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials.

Lopez-Nieto, L. 1988. *Alianza Popular. Estructura y evolucion electoral de un partido conservador (1976-1982).* Madrid: CIS.

Lopez Guerra, L. 1984. "Partidos Politicos en Espana: Evolucion y perspectivas." In *Espana: Un Presente para el Futuro. 2*, ed. Garcia de Enterria. Madrid: Instituto de Estudios Economicos.

Lopez Nieto, L. 1997. "Il lungo camino della destra espagnola. L'ascesa eletorrale di Alianza Popular/Partido Popular (1976-1996)." *Quaderni dell'Osservatorio Elettorale* 37:93-132.

Lorenz, A. 2005. "How to Measure Constitutional Rigidity." *Journal of Theoretical Politics 17, no* 3:339-61.

Lorwin, V. 1966. "Belgium: Religion, Class and Language in National Politics." In *Political Opposition in Western Democracies*, ed. R. Dahl. New Haven: Yale University Press.

———. 1974. "Belgium: Conflict and Compromise." In *Consociational Democracy: Political Accommodation in Segmented Society*, ed. K. Mc Rae. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

Loumaye, S. 1989. "Les nouvelles institutions Bruxelloises." *Courrier Hebdomadaire du CRISP* 1232-1233:1-55.

Lutz, D. 1994. "Toward a Theory of Constitutional Amendment." *American Political Science Review* 88 (2):355-70.

Lynch, P. 2002. *SNP: the history of the Scottish National Party.* Cardiff: Welsh Academic Press.

Mabille, X. 1977. "Le Gouvernement Tindemans (1974-1977). Evolution de sa composition e de son assise parlementaire." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 754:1-21.

———. 1981. "Les elections legislatives du 8 novembre 1981 (I) (II)." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 943-944:1-21.

———. 2000. *Histoire politique de la Belgique. Acteurs et Facteurs de Changement.* Brussels: CRISP.

———. 2005. "Le Parti Socialiste." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 1867:1-66.

Mabille, X, E Lentzen, and P Blaise. 1991. "Les elections du 24 Novembre 1991." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 1335-1336:1-54.

Mabille, X, and V Lorwin. 1977. "The Belgian Socialist Party." In *Social Democratic Parties in Western Europe*, ed. W. Paterson and A. Thomas. London: Croon Helm.

MacCormick, N. 2000. "Is there a Constitutional Path to Scottish independence?" *Parliamentary Affairs* 53 (4):721-36.

———. 2004. *Questioning Sovereignty.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

MacDonald, S, O Listhaug, and G Rabinowitz. 1991. "Issue and Party Support in Multuparty Systems." *American Political Science Review* 85 (4):1107-31.

MacKintosh, J. 1968. *The Devolution of Power: Local Democracy, Regionalism and nationalism.* London: Penguin.

MacMullen, A. 1978. "The Belgian Election of December 1978: the Limits of Language-Community Politics?" *Parliamentary Affairs* 31:331-8.

Madison, James, A Hamilton, and J Jay. 1987. *The Federalist Papers.* Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Mahoney, J. 2000. "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology." *Theory and Society* 29:507-48.

———. 2001. "Path Dependent Explanations of Regime Change." *Comparative and International Development* 36 (1):111-41.

Mahoney, J , and D Rueschemeyer. 2004. *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Science.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Mahoney, J, and G Goertz. 2004. "The Possibility Principle: Choosing Negative Cases in Comparative Research." *American Political Science Review* 98 (4):653-69.

Mair, P. 1983. "Adaptation and Control: toward an understanding of party and party system change."." In *West European Party Systems. Continuity and Change.* London: Sage.

———. 1997. *Understanding Party System Change. Approaches and Interpretations*: Oxford University Press.

Mair, P, and C Mudde. 1998. "The Party Family and its Study." *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (1):211-43.

Mair, P., W. Muller, and F. Passer. 2004. *Political parties and electoral change: party response to electoral markets.* London: Sage.

Maravall, J. 1982. *The Transition to Democracy in Spain.* London: Croom Helm.

Maravall, J.M. 1980. "La Alternativa Socialista: la Politica y el Apoyo Electoral de PSOE." *Sistema* 35 (May).

———. 1985. "The Socialist Alternative: The Policies and Electorate of the PSOE." In *Spain at the Polls 1977, 1979 and 1982*, ed. H. Penniman and L. Mujal. Washington: AEI.

Maravall, J.M , and J Santamaria. 1986. "Political Change in Spain and the Prospects of Democracy." In *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*, ed. G. O'Donell, Schmitter, P and Whitehead, L. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

March, J, and J Olsen. 1984. "The New Institutionalism: Organised Factors in Political Life." *American Political Science Review* 78:734-49.

Marks, G, L Hooghe, and A Schakel. 2008. "Measuring Regional Authority." *Regional and Federal Studies* 18 (2):111-21.

Martens, W. 2006. *Memoires mon pays.* Brussels: Editions Racines.

Martin, L, and R Stevenson. 2001. "Cabinet Formation in Parliamentary Democracies." *American Journal of Political Science* 45:33-50.

Maurage, E. 1997. *La longue marche vers la regionalisation. Les carnets politiques d'Andre Cools (1973-1979).* Ottignies: Quorum.

McAllister, I, and D Studlar. 1992. "Region and Voting in Britain, 1979-1987: Territorial Polarisation or Artifact." *American Journal of Political Science* 36 (1):168-99.

McGarry, J. 2005. "Asymmetrical Federalism and the Plurinational State." In *Third International Conference on Federalism.* Brussels.

Mean, A. 1989. *La Belgique de Papa. Le commencement de la fin.* Bruxelles: Pol-His.

Meguid, B. 2005. "Competition between unequals: the role of mainstream party strategy in niche party success." *American Political Science Review* 99 (3).

———. 2008. *Party Competiton Between Unequals. Strategies and Electoral Fortunes in Western Europe.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mendez-Lago, M. 2000. *La Estrategia Organizativa del Partido Socialista Obrero Espanol (1975-1996)*. Madrid: CIS.

Menu, P. 1994. *Congressresolutie van de Vlaamse Politieke Partijen 2. The Christelijke Volkspartei 1945-1993*. Gent: Steentpunt Socio-Politieke System.

Meynaud, F, J Ladriere, and F Perin. 1965. *La decision politique en Belgique: le pouvoir et les groupes*. Paris: Colin.

Midwinter, A, M Keating, and J Mitchell. 1991. *Politics and Public Policy in Scotland*. London: MacMillan.

Mill, J.S. 2001. *Considerations on Representative Government*. London: Electric Book Co.

Miller, W. 1981. *The End of British Politics. Scots and English political behaviour in the seventies*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Mitchell, J. 1990. *Conservatism and the Union: a study of Conservative Party attitudes to Scotland*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

———. 1996. *Strategies for Self-Government. The Campaigns for a Scottish Parliament*. Edinburgh: Polygon.

———. 1998. "The Evolution of Devolution: Labour's Home Rule Strategy in Opposition." *Government and Opposition* 33 (4):479-96.

Molas, Isidre. 1972. *El sistema de partits politics a Catalunya (1931-1936)*. Vol. 62. Barcelona: Edicions.

Montero, J. R. 1998. "Stabilising the Democratic Order: Electoral Behaviour in Spain." *West European Politics* 21 (53-79).

Montero, J.R. 1987. "Los fracasos y electorales de la derecha espanola: Alianza Popular 1976-1986." *Revista Espanola de Investigaciones Sociologicas* 34 (1):131-59.

———. 1988. "More than Conservative, Less than NeoConservative: Alianza Popular in Spain." In *The Transformation of Contemporary Conservatism*, ed. B. Girvin. London: Sage.

Montero, J.R, and M Torcal. 1990. "Autonomias y Communidades Autonomias en Espana: preferencias, dimensiones y orientaciones politicas." *Revista de Estudios Politicos* 70:33-91.

Montilla Martos, J.A. 1996. "Las Leyes Organicas de Transferencia en el Proceso de Homogenizacion Competencial." *Revista de Administracion Publica* 140 (May-August):281-313.

Montreal, A. 1986. "The New Spanish Structure." In *Federalism and Federation in Western Europe*, ed. M. Burgess. London: Croon Helm.

Moral, F. 1998. *Identitad regional y nacionalismo en el Estado de las Autonomias*. Madrid: CIS.

Morata, F. 1997. "El estado de las Autonomias." In *Politica y Gobierno en Espana*, ed. M. Alcantara. Valencia: Tirant lo Banch.

Moreno, L. 1997. "Federalization and Ethnoterritorial Concurrence in Spain." *Publius-the Journal of Federalism* 27 (4):65-84.

———. 2001. *The Federalisation of Spain*. London: Frank Cass.

Mughan, A. 1981. "The Belgian Election of 1981: The Primacy of the Economic." *West European Politics* 5 (3):298-304.

———. 1982. "The Failure of Conservative Politics in Belgium." In *Conservative Politics in Western Europe*, ed. Z. Layton-Henry. New York: St. Martin's Press.

———. 1983. "Accommodation or Defusion in the Management of Linguistic conflict in Belgium." *Political Studies* 31:434-51.

———. 1985. "Belgium." In *Electoral Change in Western Democracies. Patterns and Sources of Electoral Volatility*, ed. I. a. D. Crewe, D. London: Croon Helm.

Munoz Machado, S. 1992. "Los pacto autonomico de 1992: La ampliacion de competencias y la reforma de los estatutos." *Revista de Administracion Public* 128 (Mayo-Agosto):85-105.

Nairn, T. 1975. "Old Nationalism and New Nationalism." In *The Red Paper on Scotland*, ed. G. Brown. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

———. 1981. *The Breakup of Britain.Crisis and Neo-Nationalism*. London: NLD.

Nettl, J.P. 1968. "The State as a Conceptual Variable." *World Politics* 20 (4):559-92.

Newman, S. 1995. "Losing the electoral battles and winning the policy wars:ethnoregional conflict in Belgium " *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 1 (4):44-72.

Newman, Saul. 1994. "Ethnoregionalist parties in comparative perspective." *Regional Politics and Policy* 4 (2):28-66.

———. 1996. *Ethnoregional Conflict in Democracies : Mostly Ballots, Rarely Bullets*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press.

Nielsen, F. 1985. "Towards a Theory of Ethnic Solidarity in Modern Societies." *American Sociological Review* 50 (2):133-49.

Nordlinger, E. 1972. *Conflict Regulation in Deeply Divided Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Norton, P. 1980. *Dissenssion in the House of Commons, 1974-1979*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Nozick, R. 1974. *Anarchy, State and Utopia*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Nunez-Seixas, X-M. 2005. "From National-Catholic Nostalgia to Constitutional Patriotism: Conservative Spanish Nationalism since the early 1990s." In *The Politics of Contemporary Spain*, ed. S. Balfour. London: Routledge.

Oakeshott, M. 1962. *Rationalism in Politics*. New York: Basic Books.

Ortega y Gasset, J. 1937. *Invertebrate Spain*. New York: W.W.Norton&Company.

Pallarés, F., and M. Keating. 2003. "Multi-Level Electoral Competition: Regional Elections and Party Systems in Spain." *European Urban and Regional Studies* 10 (3):239-55.

Pallares, F., J. R. Montero, and F. J. Llera. 1997. "Non state-wide parties in Spain: An attitudinal study of nationalism and regionalism." *Publius-the Journal of Federalism* 27 (4):135-69.

Paterson, L. 1998. *Diverse Assembly: the debate on a Scottish parliament*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Peces-Barba, G. 1978. *La Izquierda y la Constitucion*. Barcelona: Taula de Canvi.

Pereira, J, C Villoders, and E Nieto. 2003. "Electoral Systems and Electoral Success of Regionalist parties in Western Europe." In *ECPR Joint Sessions*. Edinburgh, UK.

Perin, F. 1960. *Democracie Enrayee. Essai sur le Regime Parlementaire de 1918 a 1958*. Bruxelles: Institute Belge de Science Politique.

———. 1962. "Le Mouvement Populaire Wallon." *Res Publica* 4 (2):188-209.

Peters, B.Guy. 1998. *Comparative politics.Theory and Methods*. New York: New York University Press.

Pierson, M-A. 1953. *Histoire du socialisme en Belgique*. Brussels: Institute Emile Vandervelde.

Pierson, P. 2000. "Increasing returns, paths dependence and the study of politics." *American Political Science Review* 94 (2):251-67.

Poirier, J. 2001. "The functions of intergovernmental agreements:post-devolution concordats in a comparative perspective." *Public Law*:134-57.

Pombeni, P. 2000. "The Ideology of Christian Democracy." *Journal of Political Ideologies* 3 (1):289-300.

Powell, G. B. 1989. "Constitutional Design and Citizen Electoral Control." *Journal of Theoretical Politics*. 1 (2):107-30.

Powell, G.B. 2000. *Elections as Instruments of Democracy. Majoritarian and Proportional Visions*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Preston, Paul. 1975. "The Spanish Right under the Spanish Republic." *Occasional Publications. University of Reading* 3:1-39.

Przeworski, A, and J Sprague. 1986. *Paper Stones. A History of Electoral Socialism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Puhle, H-J. 1986. "El PSOE: Un Partido Predominante y Heterogeneo." In *Crisis y Cambio*, ed. J. Linz and J. R. Montero. Madrid: CIS.

———. 2001. "Mobilizers and Late Modernisers. Socialist Parties in the New South Europe." In *Parties, Politics and Democracy in the New South Europe*, ed. P. Diamandouros and R. Gunther. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Pulzer, P. 1967. *Political Representation and Elections in Britain*. London: MacMillan.

Rabinowitz, G, and S MacDonald. 1989. "A Directional Theory of Issue Voting." *American Political Science Review* 83 (1):93-121.

Rabushka, A, and K Shepsle. 1972. *Politics in Plural Societies: A Theory of Democratic Instability*. Columbus: Charles.E. Merrill.

Ragin, C. 1987. *The Comparative Method*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

———. 2000. *Fuzzy-Set Social Science*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Rallings, C, and M Thrasher. 2000. *British Electoral Facts*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Rasch, B.E. 2003. "Rigidity in Constitutional Amendment Procedures." In *The Constitution as an Instrument of Change*, ed. E. Smith. Stockholm: SNS Forlag.

Rawkins, P. 1978. "Outsiders as Insiders: the implications of minority nationalism in Scotland and Wales." *Comparative Politics* 10 (4):519-34.

Reilly, B. 2001. "Democracy, Ethnic Fragmentation and International Conflict. Confused Theories, Faulty Data and the Crucial Case of Papua New Guinea." *International Security* 25 (3):163-85.

Reniu i Vilamala, J. 2001. "Merece la pena coligarse?" *Revista Espanola de Ciencia Politica* 5:111-42.

Requejo, F. 1999. "Cultural pluralism, nationalism and federalism: a revision od democratic citizenship in plurinational states." *European Journal of Political Research* 35 (2):255-86.

———. 2001. "National Pluralism and Federalism: Four Potential Scenarios for Spanish plurinational democracy." *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 2 (2):306-27.

Riker, W. 1962. *A Theory of Political Coalitions*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

———. 1964. *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co.

———. 1975. "Federalism." In *Handbook of Political Science*, ed. F. Greenstein and N. Polsby. Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley.

———. 1980. "Implication from the Disequilibrium of Majority rule for the Study of Institutions." *ASPR* 74 (2):432-46.

Robertson, D. 1976. *A Theory of Party Competition*. London: Wiley.

Robinson, R. 1987. "From Change to Continuity: The Spanish 1986 Election." *West European Politics* 10 (3):120-7.

Roca, M. 2000. "To reform or not to reform the Constitution? A Catalan view." In *Consensus Politics in Spain: insider perspectives*, ed. M. Threlfall. Oxford: Intellect.

Rodden, J. 2004. "Comparative federalism and decentralization:On Meaning and Measurement." *Comparative Politics* 36 (4):481-500.

Rodrigues-Pose, A, and N Gill. 2003. "The global trend towards devolution and its implications." *Environment and Planning C* 21 (333-351).

Rogowski, R. 1981. Minority Nationalisms: The Question of Regime Accessibility. Paper read at Annual Meeting of APSA, at New York.

Rokkan, S, and D Urwin. 1982. *The Politics of Territorial Identity. Studies in European Regionalism*. London: Beverly Hills.

Rokkan, S., and D. Urwin. 1983. *Economy, Territory, Identity. The Politics of West European Peripheries*. London: Beverly Hills.

Roller, E, and P Van Houten. 2003. "A National Party in a Regional Party System: The PSC-PSOE in Catalonia." *Regional and Federal Studies* 13 (3):1-22.

Rudolph, J , and R Thompson. 1985. "Ethnoterritorial Movements and the Policy Process: Accommodating Nationalist Demands in the Developed World." *Comparative Politics* 17 (4):291-311.

Rudolph, J. , and R. Thompson. 1989. *Ethnoterritorial Politics, Policy and the Western World.* Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Santamaria, J. 1984. "Elecciones generales 1982 y consolidacion de la democracia." *Revista Espanola de Investigaciones Sociologicas* 28:9-17.

Sartori, G. 1969. "From the Sociology of Politics to Political Sociology." In *Politics and the Social Sciences*, ed. S. M. Lipset. New York: Oxford University Press.

Sartori, Giovanni. 1976. *Parties and party systems : a framework for analysis.* Cambridge [Eng.]: New York.

Scharpf, F. 1989. "Decision Rules, Decision Styles, and Policy Choices." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 1 (2):149-76.

Schattschneider, E. 1960. *The Semi-Sovereign People:A Realist's Fiew of Democracy in America.* New-York: Rinehart and Winston.

Schumpeter, J. 1954. *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy.* London: Allen&Unwin.

Sewell, W. 1999. "Three Temporalities: Towards an Eventful Sociology." In *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, ed. T. McDonald.

Seyd, P. 1998. "Tony Blair and New Labour." In *New Labour Triumphs: Britain at the Polls*, ed. A. King, D. Denver and I. McLean. Chatham, N.J: Chatham House.

Shapley, L.S, and M Shubik. 1954. "A Method for Evaluating the Distribution of Power in a Committee System." *American Political Science Review* 48 (3):787-92.

Share, D. 1989. *The Making of Social Democracy. The Spanish Socialist Worker's Party in the 1980s.* London: Greenwood.

Share, D. 1986. *The Making of Spanish Democracy.* New York: Praeger.

———. 1987. "Transition to Democracy and transition through transaction." *Comparative Political Studies* 19 (4):525-48.

Shaw, E. 1993. "Towards Renewal? The British Labour Party's Policy Review." *West European Politics* 16 (1):112-32.

Shepsle. 1989. "Studying Institutions:Some Lessons from Rational Choice." *Journal of Theoretical politics* 1 (2):131-47.

Simon, A. 1962. "L'Influence de L'Eglise dans l'entre-deux guerres." *Res Publica* 4:387-96.

———. 1986. "La communautarisation de l'enseignement " *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 1121:1-48.

Simon, H. 1991. "Bounded Rationality and Organisational Learning." *Organization Science* 2 (1):125-34.

Smith, G. 1990. "In Search of Small Parties: Problems of Definition, Classification and Significance." In *Small Parties in Western Europe*, ed. F. Muller-Rommel and G. Pridham. London: Sage.

Snyder, J. 2002. *From Voting to Violence.* New York: WW. Norton.

Sole-Tura, J. 1985. *Nacionalidades y nacionalismos en Espana.* Madrid: Alianza Editorial.

Sole-Vilanova, J. 1990. "Regional and Local Finance in Spain: Is fiscal responsibility the missing element?" In *Decentralisation, local governments and markets: towards a post-welfare agenda.*, ed. R. J. Bennett. Oxford: Clarendo Press.

Steed, M. 1974. "The Results Analysed." In *The British General Election of February 1974*, ed. D. Butler and D. Kavanagh. London: MacMillan.

———. 1975. "The Results Analysed." In *The British General Election of October 1974*, ed. D. Butler and D. Kavanagh. London: MacMillan.

———. 1986. "The Core-Periphery Dimension of British Politics." *Political Geography Quarterly* 5.

Stepan, A. 1999. "Federalism and Democracy: Beyond the US Model." *Journal of Democracy* 10 (4):19-24.

Stienlet, G. 1999. "Institutional Reforms and Belgian Fiscal policy in the 90s." In *Institutions, Politics and Fiscal Policy*, ed. R. Straunch and J. Von Hagen. Boston: Kluwer.

Story, J. 1977. "Spanish political arties before and after the election." *Government and Opposition* 12:475-92.

Strom, K 1984. "Minority Governments in Parliamentary Democracies." *Comparative Political Studies* 17 (2):199-217.

Strom, K, W Muller, and T Bergman. 2003. *Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Strom, K. *Minority Government and Majority Rule*. Cambridge University Press 1990a [cited.

Strom, Kaare. 1990b. "A Behavioral Theory of Competitive Political Parties." *American journal of political science* 34 (2):565.

Strom, Kaare, Ian Budge, and Michael J. Laver. 1994. "Constraints on Cabinet Formation in Parlliamentary Democracies." *American journal of political science* 38 (2):303.

Swenden, W, and B Maddens. 2009. "Concluding Observations." In *Territorial Party Politics in Western Europe*, ed. W. Swenden and B. Maddens. London: Palgrave MacMillan.

Tansey, O. 2007. "Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing. A Case for Non-Probability Sampling." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 40 (4):765-72.

Thatcher, M. 1995. *The Path to Power*. London: Harper Collins.

———. 1997. *The collected speeches of Margaret Thatcher*. London: Harper Collins.

Thelen, K. 1999. "Historical institutionalism in Comparative politics." *Annual review of Political Science* 2:309-404.

Tindemans, L. 1973. *Dagboek van de werkgroep Eyskens*. Gent: Lier.

Tomas y Valiente, F. 1993. "La Primera Fase de Construccion del Estado de la Autonomias (1978-1983)." *Revista de Administracion Publica* 36 (3):45-67.

Tsebelis, G. 1995. "Decision Making in Political Systems: Veto Players in presidentialism, parliamentarism, multicameralism and multipartyism." *British journal of political science* 25 (3):289-325.

———. 2002. *Veto Players. How Political Institutions Work*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation.

Urwin, D 1983. "Harbinger, Fossile or Fleabite? Regionalism and the West European Party Mosaic." In *West European Party Systems. Continuity and Change*, ed. H. Daalder and P. Mair. London: Sage

Valles, J., and M. Fox. 1988. "Decentralisation in Spain: a review." *European Journal of Political Research* 16:395-407.

Velaers, J. 1996. "Les Forces Vives de toute une generation: la reforme de l'etat de 1968 a 1995." In *Un parti dans toute l'histoire. 50 ans du Parti Social Chretien*, ed. W. Dewachter, G. Dumont, M. Dumoulin, M. Gerard, E. Lamberts, X. Mabille and V. Wijngaert. Bruxelles: Duculot.

Ventura, S. 2004. "Federalismo e Nazionalismo:il federalismo asimmetrico." *Revista Italiana de Scienza Politica* 3:405-32.

Verba, S. 1967. "Some Dilemmas in Comparative Research." *World Politics* 20:111-28.

Verdoodt, A. 1976. "Les problemes communautaires a la lumiere des etudes d'opinion." *Courrier Hebdomadaire CRISP* 742:1-45.

Viddick, G. 1967. "Le system electoral belge: democratie ou oligarchie." *Res Publica* 9 (3):353-68.

Vos, L. 1992. *The Flemish Movement: a documentary history, 1780-1990*. London: Atlantic Highlands.

Walter, B. 2006. "Building Reputation: Why Governments Fight Some Separatists but Not Others." *American Journal of Political Science* 50 (2):313-30.

Wert, J. 1994. "La vida interna de los partidos politicos." In *V informe sociológico sobre la situación social en España : sociedad para todos en el año 2000* ed. M. a. C. Juarez, D. Madrid: Fundacion Foessa.

Whiteley, P. 1983. *The Labour Party in Crisis*. London: Methuen.

Williams, C. 1982. "Separatism and the Mobilization of Welsh National Identity." In *National Separatism*, ed. C. Williams. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Witte, Els. 1992. "Belgian federalism : towards complexity and asymmetry." *West European politics. - 15(4) Oct. 1992 : 95-117.*

Witte, Els, and J Craeybeckx. 1987. *La Belgique politique de 1830 a nos jours: les tension d'une democracie bourgeoise*. Bruxelles: Labor.

Woodworth, P. 2004. "Spain Changes Course. Aznar's Legacy, Zapatero's prospects." *World Policy Journal* 21 (2):7-26.

Zariski, R. 1989. "Ethnic Extremism among Ethnoterritorial Minorities in Western Europe: Dimensions, Causes and Institutional Response." *Comparative Politics* 21 (3).

Zirakzadeh, C. 1991. *A Rebellious People. Basques, Protests and Politics*. Reno: Nevada University Press.

Zolberg, A. 1977. "Splitting the Difference:Federalistation without Federalism in Belgium." *Ethnic Conflict in the Western World, Cornell University Press*:103-42.